

AB 617 Consultation Group (CG) Meeting Summary

July 22, 2022, 2 pm - 5pm

DRAFT

Meeting Objectives

The primary focus of this meeting was to share latest information about AB 617 Funding and to discuss the *People's Blueprint Chapter 9 - Participatory Budgeting and Funding*. These discussions will inform the development of the *AB617 Community Air Protection Program Blueprint 2.0* (Blueprint), which must be adopted by the CARB Board by September 2023.

Next Meetings

- Agenda setting meeting – August 19th, 2022, 2 – 3 pm
- Next CG meeting – September 7th, 2022, 1 – 4 pm

Agenda Items

1. Update on program funding, AB 617 Funding 101 Webinar, FAQ
2. Public Comment on Item 1
3. Discussion on People's Blueprint, Chapter 9: Participatory Budgeting and Funding
4. Public Comment on Item 3
5. Recap of May 19th CARB Board Hearing
6. General Public Comment
7. Adjourn

Opening Remarks

- Consultation Group Co-Chairs CARB Board Member Davina Hurt and CARB Board Member Dr. John Balmes, facilitated the meeting and expressed their appreciation towards the CG, emphasizing the role of forum for diverse voices.
- New Member: Dave Edwards, PhD, Chief Deputy Director at OEHHA, was introduced as the newest CG member, backfilling a vacancy on the CG for OEHHA. Dave previously served as the Assistant Division Chief for the Air Quality Planning and Science Division at CARB.

Update on program funding, AB 617 Funding 101 Webinar, FAQ

- Deldi Reyes, Director of the Community Air Protection Program (CAPP), provided a summary of the AB617 Budget Fiscal Year 2022-2023 funding amounts. SB154 and AB 178 are the specific budget bills which provide funding for AB 617 program in FY 2022-2023. No specific budget authority was granted under AB617.

- Allocations for implementation funds and CAP Incentives funds for air districts are expected in Spring 2023.
- Currently implementation funds have not increased over time, even though more communities have been added to the program. Unless the flat funding issue is addressed, there will not be enough resources to select additional communities to join the program.
 - CG members expressed that they would like to support the request for additional funding, but that some groups may be reluctant to advocate unless participatory budgeting is increased.
 - Air Districts expressed the need to receive additional funding to support more communities.
 - Assembly members had been working on addressing additional funding while sustained funding was secured. Further efforts have stalled, and program growth will be limited given lack of proportional funding.
- FAQ available on CARB website in addition to webinar recording available [here](#).
- No public comments.

Discussion of People's Blueprint, Chapter 9: Participatory Budgeting and Funding

Discussion questions included: How should Blueprint 2.0 encourage participatory budgeting? What practices have been implemented so far that should be encouraged in other communities? What are the challenges Community Steering Committees (CSCs) have encountered with funding?

- CARB Board members emphasized how budgeting is a complex process and balancing competing priorities is always challenging. AB 617 legislation does not directly call for participatory budgeting and we must note realistic expectations, but it is an important concept of the People's Blueprint.
- CG members acknowledged that participatory budgeting can be difficult to discuss and implement and ask if there is a potential pathway to having community directed or identified projects (through CAP incentives) and use those projects to pilot participatory budgeting process. For example, the Bay Area AQMD is using the James Cary Smith Community Grant Program has an authentic participation category to provide advocacy training, leadership training and/or facilitation training.
- Air districts provided examples of how they implement participatory budgeting. CSCs can shift funding between CERP strategies. The air district relies on CSC input to shift funding between priorities to reflect community concerns. In this way, it is a community driven process.
- Participatory budgeting pairs with the goal of AB617 (reducing emissions) in different forms. Air districts' budgeting processes have evolved throughout this program. Air districts sought participation of CSCs and learned more about how to include communities in budget decisions. An example raised was how intersectional community meetings were held by an air district to aid in prioritizing funding strategies for truck incentives and funding school air filtration systems across varied

AB617 communities. Participation includes more than just budgetary issues, it includes technical details as well, like with the filtration systems. Communities were able to decide budget allocation, types of air filters, maintenance, and home prioritization.

- Air districts may also like to consider adopting rules that other districts are enacting. For example, regulations South Coast AQMD have enacted may be beneficial to other districts.
- Participatory budgeting that there is some level of discretion with regard to how funding is prioritized. Legislative allocations of funds are well defined, and CARB does not currently have the authority to change the allocation among funding pots. However, CARB does have discretion over the Community Air Grants request for applications process. Participatory budgeting requires extensive implementation support and people power (staff).
- There should be room for industry and business partners in providing suggestions on emissions reduction priorities.
- The CG should play a central role in negotiations with budgets in partnership with CAPCOA and Governor's office on budget prioritization. Budgeting should be a public process and these processes should be made public--not just for incentives.
- Regional cost of living should be reflected in the budget process and budget allocations as part of the baseline for distributing funds. Geographic disparities should be address and examined to be equitable.
- Public should have easy access to budget information including at the district level, breaking down staff costs and implementation and other key categories-- potentially online.
- The conversation should shift from how to invest funds already allocated (existing implementation and incentive funds) to forecasting funding needs. The costs of CERP implementation are not known in advance of CERP development-- the future required costs are critical. Districts and communities are not currently in alignment due to differences in perceptions.
- Timing requirements-- CERP timeline with respect to time required to build community capacity and conduct necessary outreach need to be revisited.
- Districts provide annual reporting on budgets and staff costs which are available online in addition to resources CARB have provided.
- Air districts should have the authority or discretion to quantify emissions reductions and manage staff priorities and salaries. The goal is to deliver emissions reductions, if there are additional shared goals then community and air districts should pursue additional funding to support those goals (example -- health studies). This is one example of how air districts assess dollars being invested in the staff time versus dollars invested in solutions.
- Clarifying question regarding how much air district staff salary should be covered by implementation budget
 - Air district staff salary funded by AB617 may vary by air district. Some air districts stated they go by resources needed to address CERP strategies identified by the community. Some air districts share staffing costs and estimates expenditures with the community. Staff are paid government rates

and qualified people for the job are selected for various projects. A lot of work, staff, and resources are required to carry out strategies and implementation.

- Air districts showed support for developing a position paper to describe the costs of the program are now versus what's needed in the future.
- Additional funds need to be allocated to communities in addition to the districts.
- AB 617 emphasizes the importance of community role. CARB and district staff have increased in response to AB 617. Perhaps staff should be reduced, and effort should be placed on building capacity to ensure equal access and participation.
- Clarification- AB 617 does not create additional authorities for districts but does create additional requirements and obligations, including accelerated BART/BACT implementation which has required additional work from the districts. Additional work to clarify what constitutes lobbying could support districts on advocating for additional funds.
- There is a continued need for more collaboration and alignment on AB 617 program development to achieve future success.
- There is a need to quantify the progress AB 617 has prompted– What are data needs and how can there be a value stacking proposition presented to the legislature to emphasize the importance of increased funding?
- At the beginning of this process there was no example or guide to follow or proper comparisons. The pioneering nature of this program has not been uplifted enough, and those with historical memory are not being well utilized. There is a need for more learning and engagement across CSCs to spread historical knowledge.
- Public involvement is critical in addition to the participation of key groups. Funds should be used to address the goals of the program and stay accountable to those goals. Outcomes are important, otherwise the program will not continue to be funded. Trust and transparency are critical.
- A question was raised about statewide emissions reductions estimates and whether these have been presented to the legislature. In rural areas, there is a lack of capacity and there was hope AB 617 would strengthen capacity of districts to address toxic emissions.
- What can be brought to the legislature to show them the impacts of AB 617? Noted barriers to implementing and funding health studies, but the goals of the legislation are to improve the health of these communities. With supporting evidence, it would be effective in demonstrating the benefits of the program to the legislature. Perhaps we should be supporting more longitudinal health impact studies as opposed to only emissions reductions.
- CARB Funding Webinars (June 7th and 9th) received positive feedback. Not only did CARB describe the funding buckets or pots, but the air districts also collaborated and presented current projects and examples. CG member recommends to everyone to view recording because they are very informative.
- CARB and Districts need to make a better effort to share emissions reductions data, health or exposure benefits, and monitoring data showing an improvement. There needs to be a clearer and more unified place on the OCAP website to describe funding and where they have been implemented.

- CARB estimates need to be backed up by credible sources.
- There was a recommendation that each CSC create a budget subcommittee to work with air district staff.
- A member stated that the process outlined in the Table for Chapter 9, is very simple and straightforward. It doesn't interfere with the Air District or CARB's authority. It does validate and support the community's choices.

Public Comments

- There are too many cooks in the kitchen on delivering benefits to the communities. Based on previous meetings, there is too much process and not enough substance. Looking forward to a revamp in the program because currently there are a few barriers to participation in the AB 617 process and some groups may not participate directly (example– enforcement organization which is helping community understand the limits of existing law/regulation). This comment was also made at the May 2022 CARB Board Hearing.

Recap of May 19th CARB Board Hearing

- CARB provided an informational update on the revision to the Statewide Strategy (Blueprint 2.0). Consultation Group Member Panelists that attended:
 - Gustavo Aguirre Jr., Central CA EJ Network
 - Veronica Eady, Bay Area Air Quality Management District
 - Ms. Margaret Gordon, West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project
 - Kevin Hamilton, Central California Asthma Collaborative
 - Kathryn Higgins, South Coast Air Quality Management District
 - Jessica Olson, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
 - Paula Torrado, Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles
 - Christine Wolfe, California Council on Environmental and Economic Balance
 - In addition, Cynthia Babich, LA EJ Network and Del Amo Action Committee also spoke on the panel about community focused enforcement work in her community.
- CG ad hoc group on governance has begun meeting.
- A newsletter was proposed for informational purposes across AB617 communities.
- CARB OCAP staff currently reviewing People's Blueprint to inform Blueprint 2.0.
- Commenter thanked and showed appreciation for CARB and air districts.
- Training programs and videos are currently being created by CARB to help individuals and support communities and air districts. CARB currently seeking new creative outlets to provide support to the public. CARB is also doing internal equity training.
- Co-design training should be offered, and Martha Dina has offered her services to train air districts and CARB.
- Summary of the Blueprint Revision process and the Community Recommendations for 2022:

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