

Framing of People's Blueprint – Key Topics and Content Summary for Chapters 7, 8, and 10

This summary was developed by California Air Resources Board Office of Community Air Protection as a quick reference during meetings. To view the complete content please refer to [The Writer's Group Draft Assembly Bill 617 People's Blueprint \(2021\)](#).

Chapter 7 Analysis and Opportunities

Conducting sound, useful, and informative analyses reflecting technical and community knowledge (pg. 38)

Defining technical analysis

- The People's Blueprint (PBP) recommends using all relevant data sets that use and reflect community knowledge, and local data collected from local agencies for effective technical analyses. This includes "community comments, monitoring data, mapping of pollution sources, mapping of data, and other data sources as needed."
- Analysis may vary in scope/complexity but should respond to community air monitoring objectives to include what the community wants to discover about their own environment and pollution hazards. The analyses "must be understood by the community, since the results will inform planning and action."

Identifying parties who will conduct analyses (pgs. 38-39)

- "The [Community Steering Committee] (CSC) needs to determine who will conduct the analysis and share back key findings" and consider several options to conduct analysis:
 - Internally (air districts) – if capacity exists, objectively performed
 - Outsource (third-party) – with a transparent bidding and vetting process

Reporting: effective and meaningful communication of data (pg. 39).

- "Communicating results is critical for ensuring that air monitoring results in effective action."
 - Presented in manner that's accessible to community representatives and the public.

Data-driven community action (pg. 39)

- Reemphasizes the need to make materials accessible to the community. The CSC, CARB and District should consider the following in the analysis plan:
 - "How will these data inform updates to the implementation of [Community Emission Reduction Program] CERP, [Community Air Monitoring Plan] CAMP, and public health policy?"

Framing – Key Topics and Content Summary from the People’s Blueprint

- “How will data analyzed be disseminated with the larger community? And how often?”
- PBP recommends that when varying perspectives of technical information arise, “finding common ground, rather than concluding who is right or who is wrong.”

Using data for transformational community change (pg. 39-40)

- “There will be an opportunity to leverage findings to ensure stakeholders and policymakers are responsive to the needs identified by the data.”
- “Empowerment occurs when local governments are influenced... this influence comes from having the data from land use, permits, and proximity.”
- PBP recommends the following conditions must be met for developing proper conclusions:
 - Community engagement must be high from the scoping phase to analysis and conclusion.
 - Data must be suitable to develop mitigation strategies.
 - Data must be utilized in local planning and development.

Ultimately the understanding and use of the data and analyses will be up to the governance of the project (CERPs/CAMPs), such as the co-leads or the CSC. Authentic and transparent collaboration is essential (pg. 40)

- The PBP recommends that the goal is collaboration among agencies, stakeholders, and community representatives during the analysis process and plan development, while striving for an equitable balance. This may require an independent facilitator.
- The plans should be culturally relevant and in the appropriate languages without technical jargon and allow sufficient time for data analyses review and community response.
- Funding resources must be leveraged to develop adequate implementation plans and recommendations: (pg. 40)
 - CARB’s involvement: “...leverage CARB resources (both financial resources and knowledge) to effectively execute the plans.”
 - Other budget considerations: “...community representatives will likely need to leverage other financial resources”
 - Air District involvement: “...air district leadership can leverage funds from their operating costs or from a supplementary inter-project, or another grant through climate investment.”
- Community participation (pg.41):
 - Community representatives and CSCs have the right to ask questions and be skeptical of conclusions [reached by industry and government].
 - An underlying goal should be to build the capacity of community members so that they can actively participate and help drive conclusions.
- Local agency (City, County, etc.) involvement in the process is necessary to develop feasible plans and projects based on a local knowledge.

Framing – Key Topics and Content Summary from the People’s Blueprint

- Industry involvement is helpful to provide relevant knowledge, however “it could lead to inequities where community members do not feel like they are empowered to speak because they may feel like they do not have anything else to add.”
- CARB and air district staff must build their capacity in cultural competence and effective community engagement, if this is lacking CBOs need to educate the community members outside of the air district to help community representatives feel comfortable in engaging in funding decisions in the community.
- CARB must be more active, accountable, and responsive and leverage their expertise to develop valid conclusions in partnership with the community at large.

Chapter 8 Developing Solutions and Action Plans

Action plans (CERPs/CAMPs) work effectively only when community members are engaged equitably with dignity and respect.

Identifying strategies for needed emissions reductions. (pg. 42)

- A shared understanding of the technical data, air quality analysis, and issues is needed first (see chapter 7) to identify effective solutions/strategies.
- The PBP recommends that “the goal of the Program is to put the power back in the hands of the community to craft solutions that will create real change.” (pg. 42)
- The PBP notes that “while the legislation emphasized reductions in emissions, to accomplish the community health goals of the legislation, consideration also has to be given to the effects of proximity and exposure levels.”

Implementation and tracking progress for community projects (pg. 42)

- All strategies or actions should be identified. “Actions to achieve solutions should be identified as completely as possible in the plan reviewed by the CSC and its advisors. If actions cannot be identified, this gap should also be identified and included as part of the findings of the planning process for possible actions by CARB and other relevant agencies.” Sharing what actions other CSCs have used to address similar issues may be helpful as well.
- Subcommittees may be used to identify air pollution impacts and mitigation strategies at the block/parcel level to use for strategy selection process.
- Co-develop metrics of success for selected strategies/projects. “Community training and co-developing adequate metrics are critical steps for ensuring AB 617 communities can track progress and elevate concerns for statewide action as appropriate.” (pg. 42)
- The PBP recommends plans should be equally owned by both the CSC and the District.
- PBP recommends that “district governing boards may consider plans for approval only after they are approved by the relevant CSC.” (pg. 43)

Framing – Key Topics and Content Summary from the People’s Blueprint

Strategies that yield inclusive processes (pg. 43)

- “The goal is to gain consensus on strategies to ensure that action planning is participatory, transparent, and successful.”
- Action Plans (CERPs/CAMPs) should center around 2 questions:
 - What are the monitoring details and who will implement the plan?
 - What emission reduction strategies will be implemented?
- The PBP states equitable plans will include:
 - Transparent approval process that ensures [community] majority input
 - Specific actionable steps, schedules, and metrics to track achievement
 - The planning process, contents and implementation and tracking of the plan are centered on equity.
 - Succinct, accessible, community-appropriate languages and writing style with infographics to help explain concepts should lead over technical aspects of the document. Technical aspects are appropriate for appendices.
 - Capacity filling and proper education on plan content for community
 - Inclusion of EJ representatives

Building Partnerships and collaborative solutions (pg. 44)

- Additional agency participation and partnerships with local jurisdiction are important to the process including city, county, transportation agencies, utilities, agriculture-related agencies, and academic organizations.
 - Can serve as experts/resources, and PBP recommends that they be “restricted to a non-voting capacity.” (pg. 44)

Decision making (pg. 44)

- Decision-making protocols or processes should be detailed early in the CSC process and recorded in written documentation.
- True problem solving requires participants to consider how they can contribute to developing solutions and how they can help other participants overcome their barriers in developing solutions.

Putting Equity at the Center (pg. 45)

- PBP states “Equity and civil rights are inextricably interrelated” and “Every AB 617 community project should consider whether and how to address equity”
- “Applying an equity methodology...could also go a long way towards meeting the obligations imposed by Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act on recipients of federal funds or other assistance (and likewise under California Code 11135 on recipients of State funds or other assistance).”
- “The PBP notes that “due diligence regarding the requirements of Title VI and California Code 11135 implies a mandate to apply a methodology along the lines of those described here. Those requirements are potentially relevant to any action taken by any entity receiving federal or state funding or other assistance. Equity and civil rights are inextricably interrelated.”

Framing – Key Topics and Content Summary from the People’s Blueprint

- Equity and Civil Rights both systematically consider:
 - “disparities in the distribution of benefits and burdens resulting from particular policies, actions or decisions,
 - consideration of options for reducing or eliminating such disparities and
 - adoption of such options or alternatives whenever reasonably possible.”

Strategies that yield exclusive processes and bad actions (pg. 45)

- Avoid decisions that shift burdens to other communities.
- To avoid strategies that will likely yield exclusive processes and produce community harm, AB 617 communities should watch out for the following warning signs:
 - CSC identifies problems, suggest actions, and the plans are written with inappropriate vocabulary such as vague language that lets industry continue with the status quo or jargon that confuses AB 617 communities.
 - A number of residents tell you the document is not comprehensible.
 - Community does not clearly understand how action plan will be implemented.
 - Approval of the Action Plan is not moderated by vote or transparent.
 - If more time is necessary, CSC can vote to approve or determine whether an official extension is needed.
 - The air districts are not directly identified as responsible for components of implementation and monitoring.
 - Community awareness, education and training is not established.

Practical recommendations for success (pg. 46)

- Statewide measures (new and existing) can have local impacts and should also be influenced by this process. “The goal is to develop implementation and tracking plans that allow communities to elevate issues that are appropriate for local or statewide action.”
- Community capacity and trust must be built so that the community can fully engage.
 - “It is the job of government to ensure that they help bring community residents along by providing proper education and training. If that is not happening at the local level, then consider bringing in outside expertise.” (pg. 46)
- Local organizations can be leveraged to provide this capacity building and build trust in the process.
 - “...several organizations that work in communities and already have groups of residents who they work with to promote data literacy, environmental justice capacity building and policy awareness.” (pg. 46)
 - “Helping community residents build their own capacity and collaboration within the CSC is essential for developing equitable plans.” (pg. 46)

Institutionalizing Community-Driven Solutions (pg. 46)

- Air districts and CARB should examine and institutionalize the solutions identified by the CSC including:
 - Incorporating community perspective at defined stages
 - Recognizing real partnerships include shared power
 - Collaboration happens at the onset of the creation of important policies, processes, and documents
 - Air district responsibility includes working towards environmental justice
 - Create checkpoints to ensure equity throughout the process

Chapter 10 Evolution: Contributing to Sustainable Communities and Achieving Justice

The PBP underscores that it is “imperative that government agencies, community organizations, and community representatives continue to advocate for bolder visions of racial and environmental justice that transcend the current application of the AB 617 legislation” to improve “disproportionately dangerous air quality”. (pg. 51)

- The PBP recommended strategies include:
 - “The state must establish a plan to eliminate air pollution disparities for all California communities by 2030.”
 - “Impacted communities must be full partners in all actions to address environmental justice.”
 - “The air pollution control sector of California must be trained, prepared, and energized to engage with impacted communities.”
 - “Systems approaches that transcend the silos of air, water, land, and materials should replace the state’s current approach to remediation. Ignoring the social and ecological interconnectedness of these systems creates further barriers to communities fighting against compounded threats in their environment.”