

State of California Air Resources Board

Board Item Summary

Item # 21-1-8: Public Meeting to Consider Assembly Bill 617 Community Air Protection Program – Consideration of Recommended Communities

Staff Recommendation:

In February 2021, the California Air Resources Board (CARB or Board) should take action on staff's recommendations for the selection of new communities for the deployment of air monitoring systems and/or community emissions reduction programs under the Community Air Protection Program (Program).

Discussion:

CARB established the Program in response to Assembly Bill (AB) 617 (C. Garcia, Chapter 136, Statutes of 2017). AB 617 requires the Board to annually consider selection of communities within which community air monitoring systems and/or community emissions reduction programs will be implemented.

In September 2018, the Board adopted the Community Air Protection Blueprint, which includes statewide community emissions and exposure reductions strategies, and details requirements for selecting communities, preparing community emissions reduction programs, and conducting community air monitoring. The Board then selected the first ten communities.

In December 2019, the Board selected three additional communities and transitioned a previously-selected, 2018 monitoring-only community into developing and implementing a community emissions reduction program. Thirteen communities in total have been selected for participation in the Program thus far.

In 2018, the Board also provided direction to CARB staff for considering future community recommendations. This included drawing from: 1) those communities developing only a community air monitoring system for implementation of a community emissions reduction program in a following year (if supported by data and the community steering committee) and 2) priority recommendations from community groups and air districts in 2018 that were not previously selected. In 2019, the Board provided additional direction for CARB staff to develop a list of strongly supported communities and consider the communities that have shown strong community support for selection.

Staff conducted outreach in June 2020 through a virtual public meeting to initiate the public process and released a list of strongly supported communities for consideration for the community recommendation process. Air districts and community members, often in coordination, subsequently submitted recommended communities for consideration. Staff

held a statewide virtual public meeting on November 6, 2020, to discuss draft community recommendations and receive public input. Staff subsequently released final recommendations of communities to select for Board consideration in the *2020 Community Recommendations Staff Report*.

Originally scheduled for December 2020, the consideration of community selection was postponed to February 2021.

Staff’s recommendation of communities to select in this round is consistent with the requirements for community selection specified in statute. These recommendations are also consistent with a number of other relevant factors including the Board’s prior direction to staff in 2018 and 2019, lessons learned from the initial communities, and existing funding levels allocated for the Program. Table 1 provides staff’s recommendations, key sources and rationale for selection.

Table 1. Community Recommendations – In Alphabetical Order by Air District

Community (Air District)	Action	Key Sources	Rationale
Richmond-San Pablo (Bay Area)	Transition to developing a Community Emissions Reduction Program	Freeways Industry Port Rail Refinery Urban	Consistent with CARB Board direction to place priority on moving monitoring programs to emissions reduction programs. This transition is supported by the community steering committee and Air District Board.
Arvin, Lamont (San Joaquin Valley)	Develop a Community Air Monitoring Plan and Emissions Reduction Program	Agriculture Rural Warehouses	Consistent with CARB Board direction to prioritize communities recommended by community-based organizations in previous years but not selected. Nominated this year and in 2019 by Air District Board with strong support from community based organizations.
South Los Angeles (South Coast)	Develop a Community Air Monitoring Plan and Emissions Reduction Program	Freeways Industry Oil & Gas Urban	Consistent with CARB Board direction to prioritize communities recommended by community-based organizations in previous years but not selected. Nominated by Air District Board with strong support from community-based organizations.

The *2020 Community Recommendations Staff Report* is available at:
<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/community-air-protection-program-ab-617>.

Summary and Impacts:

New communities selected by the Board will see additional focused action through the development and implementation of community emissions reduction programs and/or community air monitoring. In addition, broader Program implementation will result in new strategies and resources to help reduce the cumulative air pollution exposure burden in communities throughout the State. This includes statewide measures adopted and being developed by CARB, continued incentive funding to help accelerate the deployment of cleaner vehicles and equipment, and the accelerated retrofit of pollution controls on industrial sources. The Community Air Grants Program also continues to support community groups throughout the State by providing grants for local community-run monitoring networks, outreach, capacity building, and development of emission reduction strategies.