

Excerpts from the September 23, 2020 memo from Placeworks to County staff and the Sustainability Committee concerning Draft Goals, Policies, and Actions on Environmental Justice for the General Plan Update.

Goal EJ-A Equitable distribution of social and economic advantages among all communities in the county so that no community is disproportionately burdened by environmental pollution or other hazards.

Policy EJ-A.3 Until fossil fuel industries are phased out, require any proposed project requiring a use permit for a fossil fuel industry or its accessory infrastructure that would impact a disadvantaged community to include early and substantial community engagement as part of the permitting process. As conditions of approval, such projects must include substantial community benefits that support the goals identified by the community in the community profile.

Policy EJ-A.4 Phase out existing fossil fuel industries and transition to just, equitable, and clean industries that offer good-wage jobs.

Policy EJ-A.5 In order for an application for a major development project to be deemed complete, require applicants to document to the County's satisfaction how the project will promote environmental justice, including how the project will ensure the following: (a) Its costs and benefits will be shared equitably; (b) Its economic opportunities will be shared equitably; (c) It will not displace existing residents or businesses in disadvantaged communities; and (d) It will avoid direct, indirect, or unintended negative impacts on the quality of life of residents within disadvantaged communities. Source: EJ Assessment tool developed by Sustainability Commission

Policy EJ-A.6 Prioritize clean-up of illegal dumping in disadvantaged communities.

Action EJ-A.1 In coordination with impacted communities, workers, and business/industry, develop and implement a plan to phase out fossil fuel industries and transition to just, equitable, and clean industries that offer good-wage jobs. The plan should address site remediation responsibility and strategies to improve the health, safety, infrastructure, job opportunities, and revenue opportunities during the shift to a zero emission economy, paying special attention to helping develop new opportunities for how disadvantaged communities will realize economic, health, and other benefits.

Action EJ-A.2 Develop criteria for evaluating projects that would potentially impact a disadvantaged community. For projects that would adversely impact a disadvantaged community, establish required project approval findings to ensure that community benefit agreements or other mitigation efforts would achieve the community goals identified in the community profile. As part of this work, define what constitutes a major development project in or adjacent to a disadvantaged community; as indicated in other policies and actions in this General Plan, such projects may be subject to additional requirements compared to projects that don't meet that definition.

Action EJ-A.3 Develop a checklist that establishes criteria to evaluate how new development supports the County's environmental justice and health goals and the environmental justice and health-related community goals identified in the relevant community profile.

Action EJ-A.7 Improve code enforcement and public works maintenance practices to keep disadvantaged communities hazard free, safe, and clean, emphasizing enforcement actions on issues identified by the community in its community profile.

Goal EJ-C Equitable access to safe and sanitary homes among all communities in the county so that no resident has to live in an unsafe or unhealthy place.

Policy EJ-C.2 Ensure adequate living conditions for tenants through ongoing and effective code enforcement, with priority given to rental properties in disadvantaged communities

Action EJ-C.4 Obtain funding for, address barriers to, and increase participation in the County's weatherization program for extremely low, very low, and low-income homeowners, landlords, and renters, as well as in other programs like the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative, to provide resources to bring older properties up to Code and improve their livability, make minor home repairs and energy improvements, and improve health and quality of life. Focus these resources on homes in disadvantaged communities, and in particular rental housing and high density housing.

Action EJ-C.5 Create a bulk buying program that allows people to purchase air conditioners, air purifiers, heaters, and other electric appliances at wholesale prices to increase energy efficiency and replace hazardous appliances. Work with volunteer groups to help people install air conditioners and other electrical appliances if they are unable to do so themselves, focusing on disadvantaged communities and other areas with high levels of vulnerable people. Consider augmenting energy efficiency programs to reduce electricity use and help offset the cost of operating electrical appliances.

Action EJ-C.12 Continue to support the Contra Costa Lead Poisoning Prevention Project's programs, including services for children, public health nurse case management, home environmental investigation, education and outreach, and information and referrals for parents, home remodelers and child care providers. (from <https://cchealth.org/lead-poison/>)

Goal EJ-E Equitable engagement with all communities in the county so that all residents share an equal voice in decisions that affect their community.

Action EJ-E.2 Establish an ongoing environmental justice advisory group comprised of community members from disadvantaged communities to advise and assist the County in addressing disproportionate health, safety, and welfare in disadvantaged communities.

Goal EJ-F Equitable, convenient access to a safe, affordable, multi-modal transportation network among all communities in the county so that all residents, regardless of age, ability, race, culture, or economic status, are less dependent on cars and enjoy opportunities to walk, bike, roll, or take transit to their destinations.

Action EJ-F.4 Develop a program to establish, maintain, and enforce truck routes in the unincorporated county. This program should establish criteria for designating truck routes, signage, and enforcement mechanisms.

Goal EJ-J Equitable and healthy air quality among all communities in the county so that all residents, including those with high sensitivity to unhealthy air, can live in their community without facing disproportionately high risks of respiratory disease and other health problems.

Policy EJ-J.1 Require a cumulative health risk assessment, including consideration of truck traffic impacts, when a project potentially affects sensitive receptors in disadvantaged communities, and require appropriate mitigation based on the findings of the assessment.

Policy EJ-J.2 When evaluating health risk impacts of projects in disadvantaged communities, use a cancer risk of 1.0 per million as the threshold for a significant impact.

Policy EJ-J.3 Require new development to site sensitive receptors such as homes, schools, playgrounds, sports fields, childcare centers, senior centers, and long-term health care facilities as far away as possible from significant pollution sources.

Goal EJ-K: Communities that are safe and resilient from hazards associated with the use, transport, treatment, and disposal of hazardous waste and hazardous substances, including from fossil fuels, chemical refining, and power plants.

Policy EJ-K.1 Discourage construction of new large-scale hazardous waste facilities.

Policy EJ-K.2 Advocate for and coordinate with local and regional agencies in efforts to remediate or treat contaminated surface water, groundwater, or soils in or affecting disadvantaged communities.

Action EJ-K.1 Obtain grant funding and establish partnerships with local environmental justice organizations to implement the County's Brownfields and Contaminated Sites Cleanup Policy in disadvantaged communities.

Action EJ-K.2 Establish a comprehensive, long term strategy that coordinates efforts from all regulatory agencies to mitigate impacts from industrial facilities on adjacent communities, both acute and long-term, with priority given to developing strategies for disadvantaged communities. The strategies must include specific mitigations to address air pollution, pipeline risks, and accidents, including identification of and community education about evacuation routes.