



San Diego County
**Air Pollution
Control District**

**AB 617 Portside Community Steering Committee
Meeting Agenda + Notes**

3/26/2024

5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

[Click here for meeting materials](#)

Meeting Objectives

- Receive update from San Diego County Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) on Portside Community Air Monitoring data for metals
- Receive update and consider position on Caltrans and San Diego Association of Government's (SANDAG) alternative improvements for the Harbor Drive 2.0 Project
- Learn about the California Air Resources Board's new evaluation study of the Community Air Protection Program

Action Items

- [Approval of 2/27/2024 meeting notes and 3/26/24 agenda](#)

Agenda

- I. Welcoming Remarks** (Ana Cuevas-Flores and Chuy Flores, Co-Facilitators) **5:00 pm**
- a. Review Meeting Objectives & Agenda
 - b. Roll call Community Steering Committee (CSC) members
 - c. General Updates
 - i. The Facilitation team welcomed the San Diego Gas & Electric's (SDG&E) new representative, **Jonathan Torres**, to the Portside Committee who will be replacing Dinah Willier as she will be retiring from SDG&E.
 - ii. SDG&E shared that EV Fleet Day took place on April 19th from 9:00am to 2:00pm and there was an exposition showcasing solutions for fleet electrification.
 - iii. The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) shared three announcements:
 1. SANDAG completed the [San Diego & Imperial Counties Sustainable Freight Implementation Strategy Final Report](#). This has been posted on SANDAG's website on the [Project Page](#).
 2. SANDAG was awarded \$11 million for the Harbor Drive 2.0 Right-of-Way Phase via the U.S Department of Transportation's Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods program, which the Portside CSC provided a letter of support on. This award completes the funding package for the design and right-of-way phases for the Harbor Drive 2.0 and Vest Bridge projects.
 3. Last year, SANDAG received another award for the Harbor Drive 2.0 project from the California Transportation Commission of \$18.2 million through the Trade corridor Enhancement Program. Last week the Commission approved the 2022 Trade Corridor Enhancement Program baseline agreement which set forth agreed upon benefits, delivery schedule, project costs, and funding plan.



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- iv. The Port of San Diego shared four announcements:
 - 1. The Port of San Diego hosted a career fair on April 16th on B Street Pier for folks interested on jobs in the hospitality and ship and repair industries along the waterfront.
 - 2. The Port of San Diego announced that their tenant Crowley received the electric tugboat and is located at the Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal. The tugboat will displace gallons of diesel.
 - 3. The Port of San Diego entered into an exclusive negotiating agreement with Sky Charger at the March Port Board meeting to design, construct, and operate a zero emission stop truck for heavy duty trucks that visit the port.
 - 4. The Port of San Diego postponed its “Day at the Park” event at Pepper Park to Saturday, May 18. More information will be shared in the coming weeks.
- v. The Environmental Health Coalition (EHC) elevated the California State budget and the concern regarding funding for air quality programs including AB 617. EHC asked the Portside CSC committee to consider submitting a letter to the State to advocate prioritizing funding for AB 617 and bringing this subject to a future meeting.
- vi. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) is working with members of the Community Engagement subcommittee to do a video series highlighting community members who are part of the Portside CSC. If folks have any questions or would like to get involved, please contact Amaya Hernandez (Amaya.Hernandez@arb.ca.gov).

II. Approval of 2/27/2024 Meeting Notes and tonight’s agenda

5:15 pm

- a. MOTION to approve 2/27/2024 meeting notes and 3/26/24 agenda by **Sara Giobbi**.
 - i. Seconded by **Maritza Garcia**.
 - ii. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Update: Portside Air Monitoring Data for Metals (SDAPCD)

5:20 pm

- a. [Presentation Link](#)
- b. **Kevin Bradley** from the San Diego County of Air Pollution Control District (SDPCD) provided an update on the Portside Community Air Monitoring data for metals including the levels, trends, and efforts to minimize metal effects.
- c. Questions and Discussion
 - i. **Jack Monger** asked if nickel, lead, and manganese are seeing a steady improvement from 2020 levels.
 - (A) **Kevin Bradley** responded that it is hard to definitively say “yes” as there can be reasons besides the emissions going down that affect the levels such as weather.
 - (B) **Jack Monger** asked if they would get to the point where they can definitively say “yes” or “no” just based on the emissions levels.
 - (C) **Kevin Bradley** responded that they collect meteorological data so they can work with their team to try to dig into that a little more and that they can possibly discount weather effects after seeing sustained decreases over time.
 - ii. **Jack Monger** asked what the level of risk was if you lived around Sherman Elementary School given the EPA reference levels shown.
 - (A) **Kevin Bradley** explained that the EPA limit line is saying that if 1



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million people were exposed to this level for 70 years you would expect one person to contract cancer from that exposure.

- iii. **Margarita Moreno** commented via chat agreeing there should be monitoring in National City and that hexavalent chromium was not addressed.

(A) **David Sodeman** (SDAPCD) responded that they started measuring for hexavalent chromium at Sherman Elementary School in July 2023 but have not looked at that data and will be looking at it shortly. David added that hexavalent chromium is hard to measure accurately but it is something they are looking at and will be reporting back to the community soon.

- iv. **Jonathan Torres** asked if there is conclusive proof that electrifying transportation does not eliminate metals emissions due to the breaking of certain compounds caused by batteries and vehicle weight.

(A) **Kevin Bradley** commented that metal particles can be released from the wearing down of tires or brakes from zero emission vehicles and because electric vehicles tend to be heavy it is possible that more metal particles can be released from the wear and tear of these parts but not necessarily applicable all the time. Kevin emphasized, however, that zero emission vehicles are still an important strategy for reducing other types of air pollutants.

- v. **Nick Paul** commented via chat that hexavalent chromium was a huge contributor to the risk of cancer from the Air Toxic Hotspots facilities in Barrio Logan and that it would be great to see what those trends look like in the future.
- vi. **Joy Williams** commented via the chat that it would be informative to list hexavalent chromium with the tier 1 metals.
- vii. **Kevin Bradley** added that the team is using a sperate instrument for hexavalent chromium to conduct that analysis.
- viii. **Kevin Bradley** explained that the tier 1 designation comes from an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) list.

IV. Presentation: Harbor Drive 2.0 Project Update (Caltrans)

5:40 pm

- a. [Presentation Link](#)
- b. **Jose Luis Robles** from Caltrans provided an update on the Harbor Drive 2.0 project including its design, current funding levels, and next steps. To take advantage of future funding opportunities, Caltrans asked the Portside CSC to consider a general template letter of support. SANDAG is taking the lead in the next phase for this project and the new program manager is Andrea Hoff (andrea.hoff@sandag.org).

c. Questions and Discussion

- i. **Shalem Aboody-Lopez** (SDAPCD) raised that the alternative option for the Harbor Drive improvements, which adds a lane, was selected in December as part of the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) process. Shalem asked how Caltrans and SANDAG have accounted for induced demand and its potential impacts on air quality as a result of that added lane.

(A) **Jose Luis Robles** responded that it is very similar to a managed project where even though a new lane is being proposed it's not really adding capacity to the corridor because they are managing the traffic similar to a bike lane. Jose added that they do not



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foresee any adverse air quality effects per the environmental document.

(B) **Shalem Aboody-Lopez** disagreed slightly on the point of capacity and stated that they think it would increase capacity for vehicles, particularly for heavy duty trucks and therefore not similar to a bike due to the air quality impacts these transportation modes bring. Shalem emphasized the importance of clarity and detail on the improvements being considered for Harbor Drive.

ii. **Nick Paul** asked for clarification on the directions of the truck only lane under this proposal.

(A) **Jose Luis Robles** responded that the lane is north to south between Tenth Avenue and Sampson and the section south of 32nd Steet is in both directions.

iii. **Jose Marquez-Chavez** (Caltrans and Portside CSC member) added that this project was included in Portside Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP) as one of their action items (E3) which calls for dedicated truck routes that avoid direct impacts to local community. The initial concept was identified years ago in a multimodal study led by the Port of San Diego. Caltrans then took the lead with the project initiation document. In the process of identifying solutions, they learned that folks wanted to get truck traffic outside of local streets.

(A) **Jose Luis Robles** added that this project will achieve that because upon implementation there will be restrictions limiting trucks to using local streets.

iv. **Phil Gibbons** supported a motion to approve Caltrans moving forward in creating a letter template for Caltrans to use to continue to seek funding for this project with the addition that the Portside Steering Committee be notified when Caltrans is applying for a grant and using that letter.

(A) **Maritza Garcia** added that in addition to being notified when the letter is being used, the CSC should also be notified about any changes to the project plans.

v. **Keith Corry** shared that the City of San Diego put together a regional group of about 15 entities, including public agencies and nonprofits, that talk about grants on a regular basis. When a big project comes down and they want to collect several letters of support they usually have one regional letter with everyone's letterhead on it, making things much faster. Keith suggested that the CSC could join this regional group to track grants from Caltrans.

vi. **Janice Luna Reynoso** commented via chat that they do not feel comfortable with approved blanket letter of support without their notice. They would want notification every time with advanced notice.

vii. **Nick Paul** asked if it would be possible to make this vote via email at a later time as they do not feel comfortable supporting this without being clear that the project will not add pollution to the Portside Community.

viii. **Chuy Flores** reminded folks that there is not a letter to vote on right now and that this conversation is a discussion on how to handle a proposed template letter.

ix. **Chuy flores** clarified Phil's motion on the table and noted that the letter would need to be brought back to the committee for a vote before it is utilized.

(A) **Phil Gibbons** asked if support letters for grants and other issues



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- can be sent via email to the group and voted on via email.
- (B) **Chuy Flores** clarified that it can be voted via email if it is a time sensitive item.
 - (C) **Phil Gibbons** asked if Caltrans and SANDAG need to submit a letter template to the group for consideration.
 - (D) **Chuy Flores** responded that any letters need to be sent a week in advance to the Portside CSC before being voted on. If the Portside CSC is comfortable with a letter template, which has not been used in the past, Caltrans and SANDAG will need to submit the letter template first being any action is taken.
- x. **John Alvarado** agreed that it is too much too fast and would not want the Portside CSC to be in a position where they feel like they made a mistake.
 - xi. **Keith Corry** asked if Caltrans is continuing fundraising for the design of Harbor 2.0 or if they are already funded for the design at this point.
 - (A) **Jose Luis Robles** responded that Caltrans/SANDAG are completely funded for the design, and they are seeking funding for construction.
 - (B) **Keith Corry** added that if they are funded for the design then there will be a point when the design is fully complete and by that time the scope for the construction will not change.
 - (C) **Jose Luis Robles** responded that this is correct.
 - (D) **Keith Corry** questioned the hesitation of the group to wait for every grant application that is being pursued if the project will not change after a 100% design.
 - xii. **Diane Vermeulen** clarified that the commitments that Caltrans made to the Portside CSC were to move forward with the Boston Avenue and the Harbor Drive 2.0 projects. If the project was not lowering emissions on the community, it would not make sense to move forward with the projects.
 - xiii. **Maritza Garcia** emphasized that not everyone is fully aware of how the grant process works so the confusion can come from the lack of knowledge in that world, especially for community members. Maritza added that as a community member it is not always easy to trust new projects even if they see it in writing as they have seen several instances where they have been let down.
 - xiv. **Keith Corry** clarified that his earlier comment was made independent of whether this group should move forward with a template letter for all future construction grant applications and as a matter of policy the City of San Diego also does not endorse a blanket letter for all future grants.
 - xv. **Salvador Razo Abrica** commented that these types of support letters should be presented to the committee with time to review the project details and any potential adjustments before taking any action.
 - xvi. **Joy Williams** commented that it is true that the CERP has been in favor of Harbor 2.0 from the beginning and hopes to continue to support but they do need to follow up on the concerns regarding induced demand.
 - xvii. **Jose Marquez-Chavez** mentioned that Caltrans can draft a template for consideration and every time they go for a grant application, they can share the proposed template with the committee. Given the different timing of grant applications, Caltrans will make an effort to bring this to a future meeting but with time sensitive items they can ask for considerations via email.
 - xviii. **Chuy Flores** wrapped up the discussion to allow time for the next



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presentation item. No action was taken or voted on by the Portside CSC.

- V. Presentation: Evaluation of the Community Air Protection Program (CARB)** **6:20 pm**
- a. [Presentation Link](#)
 - b. **Nicole Bruns** from the California Air Resources Board (CARB) presented an overview on a new evaluation study of the Community Air Protection Program including key tasks, timeline, and ways the CSC can participate.
 - c. Questions and Discussion
 - i. **Chuy Flores** asked when CARB would need the nominations from potential CSC members to be on the design team.
 - (A) **Chandan Misra** (CARB) responded that this can take place over the course of the next few weeks and maybe add it as an agenda item for the next Portside CSC meeting. CARB is looking to have a kickoff meeting with the design team around June/July if things go as planned.
 - ii. **John Alvarado** said that he would like additional information regarding the requirements and details for joining the design team.
 - (A) **Nicole Bruns** responded that the main criteria required is that folks are either a CSC member or from the Air District. The design team will help inform parts of the evaluation framework, goals, and objectives.
- VI. Public Comments (Chuy Flores, Co-Facilitator)** **6:45 pm**
- a. Reserved for comments on items not listed on the agenda
 - b. Each speaker is limited to 3 minutes
- VII. Closing Remarks** **6:55 pm**
- VIII. Adjourn** **7:00 pm**

Next scheduled meeting is 04/23/2024 tentatively virtual meeting via Zoom