PORTSIDE

COMMUNITY AIR PROTECTION PROGRAM

5 YEAR REPORT

FEBRUARY
2026

San Diego County
Air Pollution
Control District

With deep appreciation, the San Diego Air Pollution Control District would like to thank Community Steering Committee Members past and present for their dedication, perseverence, and commitment to improving air quality, health, and quality of life in the Portside area.

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. The data shows a clear downward trend. Overall annual emissions and cancer risk is decreasing.

2. Meaningful progress has been made in reducing pollution through AB617-funded projects, rule development, and Port of San Diego initiatives. These efforts, combined with increased SDAPCD compliance, have improved air quality, reduced health risks, and enhanced overall quality of life.

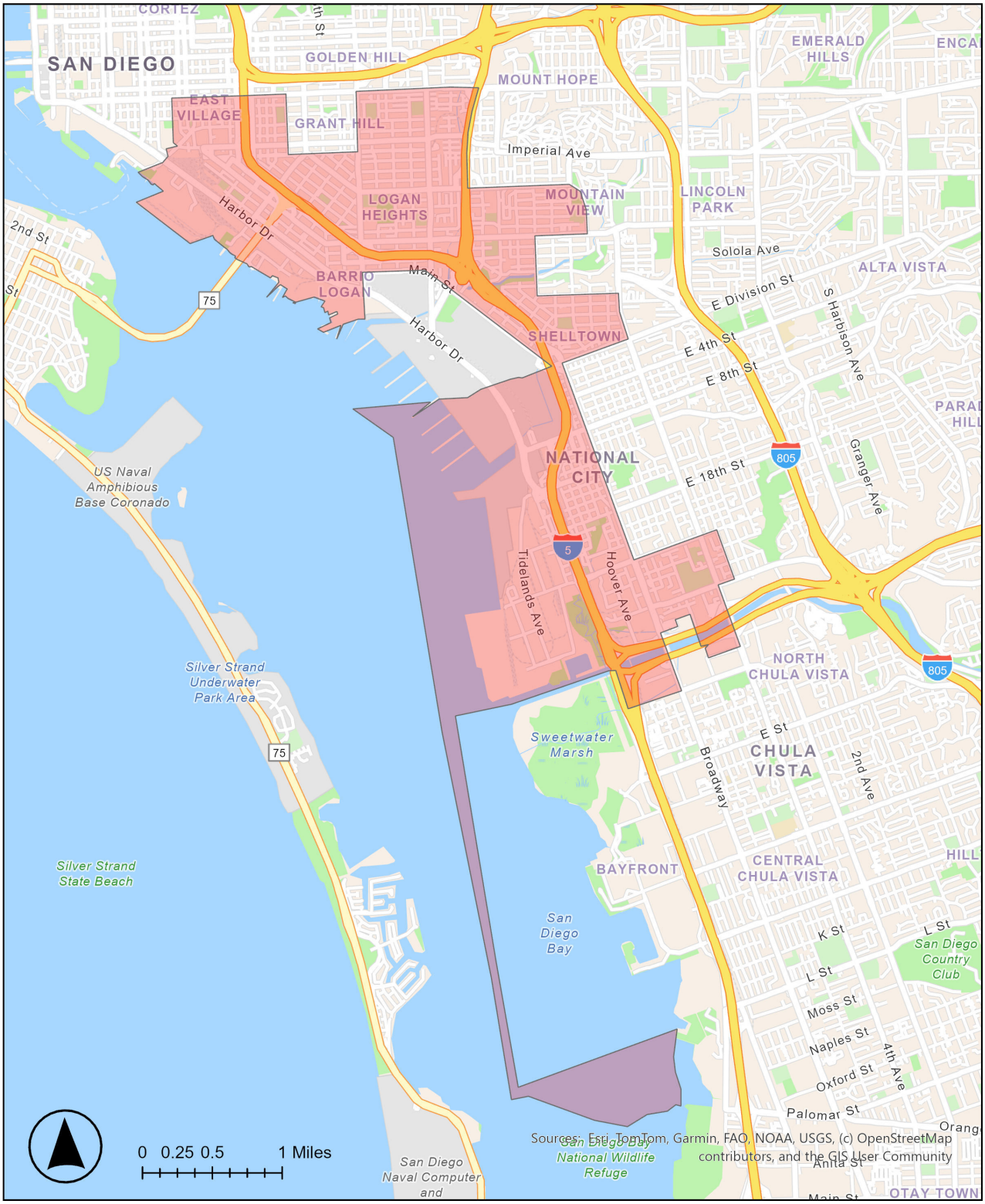
3. The Community Air Protection Program's benefits reach far beyond immediate emissions reduction but have fostered collaborative spaces and have influenced planning locally and regionally.

4. We continue to see progress in moving forward the strategies and actions in the CERP and getting closer to reaching our goals for cleaner air.

5. The Portside CSC and our partner organizations have played, and will continue to play, a central role in the success of the program.

6. SDAPCD remains committed to serving the community and collaborating with our partners to bring clean air for all.

PORTSIDE COMMUNITIES
(AB 617- COMMUNITY AIR PROTECTION PROGRAM)



BACKGROUND

In 2017, Assembly Bill 617 (AB 617) was passed to ensure that all Californians, especially those living in areas most affected by air pollution, can breathe cleaner air and live healthier lives. In response, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) created the Community Air Protection Program (CAPP), a first-of-its-kind statewide initiative that places communities at the center of air quality improvement efforts.

Rather than relying only on traditional top-down or region-wide approaches to managing air pollution, CAPP empowers residents in the most impacted communities to identify local air quality concerns and help design solutions that protect their health, environment, and future. This program has been especially meaningful for the Portside Environmental Justice Neighborhoods of Barrio Logan, Logan Heights, Sherman Heights, and West National City. Residents of these neighborhoods experience unequal environmental burdens and higher health risks as a result of long being forced to share space with busy freeways, port operations, rail lines, and industrial facilities. The goal of the Community Air Protection Program is simple but powerful: to reduce pollution, protect health, and ensure that community voices lead the way toward a more just and sustainable future for the residents of the Portside Environmental Justice Neighborhoods.

PORTSIDE COMMUNITIES

Located on unceded Kumeyaay territory, the Portside Communities—including Barrio Logan, Logan Heights, Sherman Heights, and West National City—are among the oldest and most culturally rich neighborhoods in San Diego County. These neighborhoods are known for their strong community activism, vibrant traditions, and world-renowned art, including Chicano Park, a National Historic Landmark celebrated for its murals and its powerful message of resilience and cultural pride. West National City, with its deep Latino and Filipino heritage, is home to treasured community spaces such as Paradise Creek Educational Park and Pepper Park along the bay. Together, the Portside neighborhoods reflect generations of families, culture, and community spirit that have shaped the social and cultural heart of San Diego.

Despite their cultural strength, the Portside Communities have long faced some of the highest levels of air pollution in the region. Surrounded by freeways, rail lines, port operations, industrial facilities, and heavy truck traffic, residents are exposed to multiple pollution sources each day. These conditions are the result of decades of inequitable land-use and transportation policies, which placed major industrial and transportation infrastructure next to homes, schools, and parks.

Today, community-led efforts continue to focus on reducing pollution from vehicles, ships, cranes, and other waterfront sources, while protecting public health and ensuring that residents have a voice in decisions that affect their environment. The Portside Environmental Justice Neighborhoods span approximately 8 square miles and is home to about 53,000 residents. Within this area are 24 schools, 16 licensed daycare centers, and 2 hospitals, making the protection of community health an urgent priority. The area includes major pollution sources such as the Port of San Diego, industrial manufacturing sites, and high-traffic corridors including Interstates 5 and 15. Other sources—such as metal recyclers, welding shops, and auto body repair businesses—are often located just steps away from homes. As a result, Portside residents face elevated rates of asthma and greater cumulative exposure to pollution than most other parts of the region.

DEFINING SUCCESS

This Five-Year Report marks an important milestone in the Portside Communities' ongoing effort to create cleaner air and healthier neighborhoods. It provides a high-level review of the progress and impact of the Community Air Protection Program, drawing on metrics from the Portside Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP), input from the Community Steering Committee, and findings from statewide research led by UC Davis. The report highlights key areas of success, including community engagement, emissions reduction, and interagency collaboration, while identifying opportunities for continued improvement. These efforts demonstrate the power of community-led action in shaping a more just, sustainable, and healthy future for Portside residents.

The Portside CERP was completed in July 2021, and implementation began shortly thereafter. The year 2026 marks the fifth year of implementation. This report provides a high-level review of progress and impact during this period. Success is evaluated using three main sources:

1. Assessment of the goals and strategies established in the Portside CERP
2. Feedback and insights gathered during the five-year check-in, including focus group discussions with Community Steering Committee (CSC) members and CSC meetings held in Fall 2025
3. Findings from the UC Davis research project, Assessing the Successes, Challenges, and Lessons Learned from AB 617 to Map a Collaborative Way Forward

This report discusses key elements of Community Steering Committee (CSC) defined success observed during the first five years of implementation, including:

- Community Emissions Reduction Program Implementation
  - Goals Evaluation
  - Strategies Evaluation
- Reducing Pollution, Improving Public Health and Quality of Life
  - Community Monitoring Trends
  - Cancer Risk Reduction
  - AB 617 Incentives Funding
  - Local and Statewide Regulations
  - Compliance Actions
  - Maritime Emissions Inventory
- Governance and Stakeholder Engagement
  - Interagency coordination and alignment
  - Shared decision-making and meaningful community engagement
  - Establishment and impact of SDAPCD's Office of Environmental Justice

TIMELINE OF THE PORTSIDE COMMUNITY AIR PROTECTION PROGRAM

With gratitude and inspiration, we acknowledge the generations of environmental justice activism that laid the foundation for progress in the Portside Communities long before the passage of AB 617. Their tireless efforts paved the way for AB 617 and the establishment of the Community Air Protection Program, ensuring that community voices remain at the heart of clean air initiatives.

2017
AB 617 Passes

2018
CARB Selected the Portside Communities to participate in the Community Air Protection Program

July 2018
Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP) adopted

CERP IMPLEMENTATION

In 2018, the San Diego County Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) nominated the Portside Communities for inclusion in the AB 617 program. CARB selected the area as one of California's first community air monitoring sites, recognizing both the environmental challenges faced by residents and their strong history of community advocacy.

To better understand local air quality, SDAPCD developed the Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP), released in June 2019. This plan was designed to:

- Measure local air pollution levels in detail;
- Identify areas of greatest concern;
- Quantify major pollution sources; and
- Provide data to guide community-driven emission-reduction strategies.

Unlike traditional monitoring efforts, this plan was shaped directly by community input. The Community Steering Committee (CSC), which is composed of residents, advocates, industry, and local organizations, worked side by side with the District and CARB to determine where monitors should be placed, what pollutants to measure, and how to ensure that data reflected real community experiences. The planning process drew on local health statistics, community concerns, and statewide environmental and socioeconomic data to identify areas of greatest need. The result was a community-designed air monitoring network, a foundation for lasting and data-driven change.

Building on the success of community air monitoring and the continued leadership of Portside residents, CARB recommended in 2019 that the community move forward with developing a Community Emissions Reduction Program (CERP). The Portside CERP was adopted by the District Board in July 2021 and approved by CARB in October 2021. Developed through collaboration among the District, CARB, and the Community Steering Committee, the CERP outlines concrete actions to:

- Reduce pollution from ships, trucks, rail, and industry;
- Support cleaner technologies and zero-emission equipment;
- Strengthen enforcement and compliance; and
- Improve public health and environmental equity across the Portside area.

The CERP represents more than a plan. It reflects the commitment and leadership of the Portside Communities in shaping a cleaner and healthier future for generations to come. Through AB 617, the Portside Communities have become a model for community-driven environmental action. Together, the Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP) and the CERP form a powerful framework for change which is built on science, collaboration, and respect for community knowledge.

July 2021
Community Emissions Reduction Program (CERP) adopted

2021
CERP Implementation begins

2026
Portside 5-Year Report

CERP GOALS

The goals in this plan are intended to guide community members, local businesses, organizations, and government agencies as they work together to make the Portside Community a healthier and more sustainable place to live. These goals reflect the community's vision to go beyond regulatory requirements and achieve meaningful improvements in air quality and public health. Because technology continues to evolve and new data will emerge, these goals are designed to remain flexible and adaptable over time. The focus is on maintaining progress and building on successes. Over the past five years, significant progress has been made toward these goals. Many actions are already underway, and positive results are being observed. The next couple of pages shows a high-level summary of the status of each goal.

GOAL 1. By 2031, reduce Diesel PM from 2018 levels by 80% in ambient air at all Portside Community locations.

SDAPCD is still analyzing this trend. While the charts in this report show general patterns, SDAPCD needs a deeper review from our partners at CARB to confirm any percent decreases and to convert these values to Diesel PM values. Right now, SDAPCD does not have enough information to provide an accurate percentage decrease. SDAPCD's next step is to work with CARB to complete this detailed review.

GOAL 2. Medium-Duty and Heavy-Duty trucks servicing Portside Community to be 100% ZEV 5 years ahead of the California state requirements.

Additional analysis is required to fully assess progress on this goal. However, the following documents outline the progress toward this goal.

$608,560 of AB 617 Incentive funds have been used for an electric truck pilot project in Portside.

In 2025, the Port coordinated closely with tenants to apply for the EPA Clean Ports Grant, which is an $86.3M project to build electric infrastructure which will deploy 45 medium and heavy-duty electric trucks/vehicles.

In 2024, SDAPCD funded 9 zero emission trucks for companies operating in the Portside area with $1,777,918 in AB617 incentive funding.

BAE Systems, NASSCO, and Continental Maritime have all purchased at least one zero emissions semi-trucks.

GOAL3. Establish ZEV HD/MD truck charging infrastructure in Portside, by specified dates in Action E1, with 4 sites operational by 2026.

In 2025, SDAPCD Executed contract with Skychargers LLC to install electric vehicle truck stop in National City including 35 charging stations to support electrification of drayage trucks serving Port of San Diego.

In 2025, Port of San Diego was successfully awarded $58.6M in funding from the EPA Clean Ports Program to complete an $86.3M project (Clean Port Project) advancing clean freight technologies along the Portside Communities. In addition to funding for electrical infrastructure improvements, electric trucks, and educational outreach, the funds are anticipated to result in the acquisition of 32 pieces of zero-emission cargo handling equipment with 27 EVSE charge points.

GOAL 4. Reduce emissions from HD/MD trucks servicing indirect sources by 100% 5 years in advance of regulatory requirements.

Decision Pending: The District is evaluating regulatory and non-regulatory strategies to reduce emissions from warehouse and distribution center indirect sources. Further Board direction is expected in 2026.

- Warehouse Indirect Source Rule (ISR) Framework Supplement (April 2025)
- Strategies to Reduce Indirect Source Emissions at Warehouses and Distribution Centers White Paper (January 2026)

GOAL 5. By December 2021, APCD to present the cumulative cancer risk for Portside Communities from Health Risk Assessments and modeling of cumulative risk (including freeways, rail, vessels, stationary sources, etc.) to inform Goal #6. APCD can achieve this modeling goal with CARB assistance and input from the Portside Community Steering Committee including methodology and input data.

Portside Air Toxic Modeling and Risk Assessment- CARB (English & Español)

GOAL 6. By February 2022, establish an estimated cancer risk reduction goal based on the modeling that is done in Goal #2. Estimated cancer risk at all census tracts in Portside Community from locally generated emissions, including both stationary and mobile sources, to meet goals of ___/ million by 2026 and ___ /million by 2031.

SDAPCD adopted amendments to Rule 1210 on Nov 4, 2021 to lower the cancer risk reduction threshold from 100 in one million down to 10 in one million.

GOAL 7. Conduct a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) at the Port's two marine cargo terminals to establish an updated baseline that relies on the most recent source characterization and activity from the Port's 2019 Emissions Inventory to inform aspirational goals in support of public health community priorities.

Portside Health Risk Assessment- Port of San Diego
- Fact Sheet (English & Español)
- FAQ (English & Español)

GOAL 8. By 2026 reduce cancer risk below 10/million for each permitted stationary source, including portable equipment, in the Portside Environmental Justice Community.

Additional analysis is required to fully assess this goal. Currently, SDAPCD Engineering Division publishes this information on the Air Toxics Hot Spots Annual Report and also on a mapping tool.

However, based on a study conducted by CARB, current data indicate that overall diesel particulate matter (DPM) cancer risk trends—from 2020 to 2024 across the five monitoring locations—show an improvement in air quality and a reduction in associated cancer risks at most sites during this period. Specifically, DPM-related cancer risk decreased by 21% to 48% at three of the five monitoring sites. The exceptions were Boston Avenue and Chicano Park, where data were either unavailable or less than 75% complete. Additionally, data from October 2021 to December 2022 at Sherman Elementary were unavailable. This will be further discussed in a later section of this report.

GOAL 9. By 2031 complete Harbor Drive 2.0 truck freight improvements, including enforcement and signage of truck route for National City.

SANDAG Harbor Drive 2.0 is included in the 2021 Regional Plan with project ID GM06 to be built by 2035. Additional Harbor Drive Multimodal Corridor Improvements are included in project ID GM05 to be built by 2050.

In June 2023, the California Transportation Commission announced that the Harbor Drive 2.0 project had received $18.5M in grant funding from the Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP) program to fund the project design and rights-of-way. The award required a $2,185,714 match that was funded by the Port at the February 2024 Board Hearing.

In 2024, SANDAG and Caltrans were awarded $11 million for Right-of-Way through the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhood grant programs for the Harbor Dr 2.0 Port Access Improvements project.

In 2025, the Port agreed to allocate $2M to help develop a 1.4 mile portion of the Bayshore Bikeway in National City connecting Harbor Drive/Civic Center Drive on the north and Marina Way/West 32nd Street (immediately north of Pier 32 Marina) on the south. $600K of the $2M came from the Ports Maritime Industrial Impact Fund (MIIF) to support that portion of the trail that is off-Tidelands.

In 2025, the Navy, in coordination with Caltrans, is actively seeking funding for constructing a vehicle bridge at Vesta Street. This bridge will reduce vehicle loading between the wet and dry side of the base that severely impacts surrounding city streets. The primary reduction will be at 32nd St and Harbor Drive, which not only encounters vehicle congestion, but also delays caused by freight train and trolley movements. This would result in reduced idling related emissions in the community.

GOAL 10. By 2031 increase tree canopy in the Portside Community to 35%.

Further analysis is needed to establish the baseline number of trees and compare it to the number planted over the past five years. According to reports from both the Port and the City of San Diego, approximately 2,020 trees have been planted in the Portside area and adjacent neighborhoods. Additionally, the Port of San Diego, Port Master Plan Update (PMPU) (2024) contains goals and policies aimed at greening the urban environment with particular attention to disadvantaged communities.

GOAL 11. Develop a new vision for park/green space for the Portside Community to increase park space by 30% by December 2022.

Further analysis is needed to establish the baseline of greenspace and compare it to acreage increase in the past five years. The following documents outline the progress toward this goal.

Boston Avenue (29th – 32nd street) Linear Park: Removed contaminated soil and replaced it with clean soil. The project is adding and improving the following features: pedestrian/bike path, a privacy wall that has reduced sound pollution to the abutting community, and existing street lighting is being replaced and additional lighting is added for safety (coming soon). Funding has been impacted. The Clean California program Boston Ave Community Improvements Project completed construction in fall 2023. The Project repurposed four acres of land along Interstate 5 between 29th St and 32nd St and added a bike trail and walking path.

The Port began construction to improve the existing amenities and space at Pepper Park. Pepper Park may be expanded by 2.5 acres once the Port Master Plan Amendment request is approved by the California Coastal Commission. The Port has begun conducting community outreach for a project to improve Cesar Chavez Park in Barrio Logan, including planting of native trees and plants.

CERP ACTIONS

The Portside Community Emissions Reduction Program (CERP) is a comprehensive initiative designed to reduce air pollution from local sources through eight strategic categories:

1. Outreach and Community Engagement
2. Incentives
3. Rule Development
4. Enforcement
5. Heavy-Duty Trucks
6. Land Use
7. Working Waterfront Activities (Port, Navy, Shipyards)
8. Advocacy Measures

Within these categories, the program outlines 37 specific actions aimed at improving air quality and community health. Each action has been evaluated for progress, and completion percentages have been identified. Here's what we've achieved so far:

- 11 actions are fully completed (100%), delivering tangible improvements for the community.
- 7 actions are nearing completion (50–90%), demonstrating strong momentum.
- 1 action has reached 25% completion, marking early progress.
- 18 actions remain in progress, many of which involve broader objectives which make it challenging to assign precise completion percentages but reflect sustained commitment (i.e., "Supporting Emission Reduction Opportunities").

This progress underscores the program's success in driving measurable change while continuing to advance long-term goals. Below, you'll find a high-level analysis of each action and its completion status. For a detailed breakdown of outcomes achieved for every action, please refer to Appendix A.

CERP Actions	Status Update
Action A1: Incident Response Plan	100% Complete.
Action A2: Develop and Implement a Public Participation Plan	90% Complete. Inclusion of Tribal Consultation Policy: Has not been developed or implemented. Priority included in Strategic Plan.
Action A3: Develop Plan to Quantify and Prioritize the Community Health Risks from Air Pollutants	100% Complete.
Action A4: Establish an Office of Environmental Justice within the APCD	100% Complete.
Action B1: Create Additional Flexibility for Mobile Source Incentives	In progress.
Action B2: Reduce Emissions from Passenger Vehicles	In progress.
Action B3: Reduce Exposure to Air Pollution	55% Complete.
Action B4: Incentives Outreach	In progress.
Action C1: Evaluate Rule 1206 to potentially regulate residential structures between 1-4 dwelling units	25% Complete.
Action C2: Evaluate District Rule 1210 to Potentially Reduce Health Risks	100% Complete.
Action C3: Evaluating Existing Rules and Considering New Rules	60% Complete.
Action C4: Propose the amendment of District Rule 1401	100% Complete.
Action D1: Propose the Development of a Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) Program within the Violation Settlement Program	100% Complete.
Action D2: Evaluate the Feasibility of Expanding Mobile Source Enforcement Program	100% Complete.
Action D4: Increase APCD Presence in Portside Community	100% Complete
Action D5: Evaluate the Feasibility of Utilizing Portable Emission Analyzers to Verify Compliance	90% Complete. SDAPCD needs to provide an update/presentation/or memo to the CSC to show this evaluation.
Action D6: Promote enforcement of existing air quality rules and regulations pertaining to mobile sources	90%, In 2026 “no” idling signs and truck routes signs need to be installed in West National City.
Action E1: Advance the deployment of heavy-duty on-road electric trucks to demonstrate operational feasibility and reduce emissions within the Portside Community and other disadvantaged communities	In progress.
Action E2: Fair Outcome for Small Truck Owners	100% Complete.
Action E3: Support dedicated truck route and avoid truck impacts to local community	75% Complete - Signage in San Diego needs to be updated to reflect added prohibited truck routes in BLCPU. There is currently no signage in West National City
Action E4: Increase number of truck parking and staging facilities with electric charging capabilities to address regional parking needs and alleviate the truck parking burdens within the Portside Community	In progress.

CERP Actions	Status Update
Action F1: Support land uses that serve as a buffer between industrial and residential uses in the Portside Community	100% Complete and ongoing as projects are proposed.
Action F2: Reduce exposures for sensitive receptors within 500 feet of Port, freeways, and industries	In Progress. Planning and design completed, but funding impacted.
Action F3: Urban Greening	50% Complete. Pepper Park is in the construction phase and Cesar Chavez Park is in the planning/community engagement phase. Once the parks are completed this item can be marked as 100%.
Action F4: Public school exposure reduction	In progress. An indoor air filtration school is needed to complete this item.
Action F5: Support Harbor Drive Multimodal Corridor Study (HCMCS) Land Use Proposals	In progress.
Action F6: Neighborhood Resiliency & Housing Stability	In progress. Completion of transportation and health equity assessment needed to complete this strategy.
Action F7: Improve Transportation Efficiencies	In progress.
Action F8: Truck Diversion	100% Complete.
Action G1: Reduce Diesel Emissions from cargo handling equipment (CHE)	In progress. Replacement of 20 pieces of cargo handling equipment by 2026 results in a reduction of emissions by approximately 90% for NOx, 80% for DPM, and 50% for CO2e below 2019 levels needed to complete.
Action G2: Reduce Emissions from Ships at Berth	70% Complete. Need to complete at TAMT, add additional plug to existing shore power system by 2031.
Action G3: Reduce emissions from harbor craft	In progress.
Action G4: Reduce DPM and NOx emissions from portable air compressors and other diesel sources at shipyards	In progress.
Action G5: Promote best practices for reducing diesel, VOC and other emissions from ship repair activities	In progress.
Action G7: Promote adoption of ZE technologies by Port tenants, truckers, and other users of equipment	In progress.
Action G8: Reducing emissions associated with traffic at Naval Base San Diego	In progress.
Action H1: Support Emission Reductions Opportunities	In progress.


BX-802
MPLING INLET

REDUCING AIR POLLUTION TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH

The Portside Community Steering Committee (CSC) emphasizes that one of the most meaningful measures of Community Air Protection Program success in the Portside area is pollution reduction and community health and quality of life improvements. Measuring air pollution reduction comprehensively can be challenging because pollution comes from many different sources, including stationary, mobile, and area sources. Emissions from these sources change over time and are difficult to separate. Data limitations, such as infrequent updates to emissions inventories and the use of estimates or assumptions, can make it hard to identify accurate changes in emissions. Air monitoring networks may also have limited coverage or resolution, which can prevent detection of localized or short-term impacts in certain areas. Weather, seasonal changes, and pollution coming from outside the area can further influence air quality measurements, sometimes masking or amplifying local changes.

Additionally, it is important to note that reductions in emissions do not always produce immediate or easily measurable improvements in air quality. This can happen because of atmospheric chemistry, the formation of secondary pollutants, and contributions from upwind sources. Changes in activity levels, technology, and economic conditions can also offset gains from specific measures. When multiple programs are implemented at the same time, it can be difficult to determine which actions are responsible for observed improvements. For these reasons, directly linking emissions or air quality improvements to changes in community health or quality of life is challenging, since health benefits often take time to appear and are influenced by many factors beyond air quality.

Despite these challenges, SDAPCD remains committed to assessing air quality in the Portside area using the best available tools and information. This report provides a general understanding of the progress achieved over the past five years through the Community Emissions Reduction Program (CERP) in reducing pollution and supporting community health and quality of life. To do this, SDAPCD used the following tools and sources of information:

- Annual community monitoring trends, tracking air quality changes over time in the Portside area.
- AB 617 Incentive Funding, including emissions reductions achieved through funded projects.
- Local rule updates and development, along with their associated emissions reductions.
- SDAPCD Compliance Division's increased presence in the Portside area and its impact on residents' quality of life.
- 2025 Port of San Diego updated Maritime Air Emissions Inventory, tracking progress since the 2019 inventory developed for the Maritime Clean Air Strategy (MCAS), which focuses on key maritime-related source categories including ocean-going vessels, commercial harbor craft, cargo handling equipment, freight rail, and heavy-duty trucks.

COMMUNITY-SCALE EMISSIONS INVENTORY

The Portside CSC and SDAPCD staff on behalf the CSC has requested the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop a new five-year inventory using the most recent vintage of CARB emissions data. Their expressed intent is two-fold: 1) to be able to best prioritize what emissions reductions strategies in the CERP to focus on for ongoing implementation and process, and 2) to compare an updated five-year estimate against the original 2018 baseline inventory, which was developed using an older set of emissions factors and activity data.

CARB develops community-scale emission inventories to support planning and prioritization. These inventories provide a snapshot of estimated emissions by source category and are especially valuable during the development of a community's initial CERP, when stakeholders identify key sources and decide where to focus early actions. Base-year and projection-year inventories are constructed using statewide datasets, emissions models and assumptions about future activity or regulatory changes. As a result, they do not incorporate or respond to localized emission-reduction strategies implemented under a CERP. One of the main reasons for the CSC requesting an updated community-scale emissions inventory for the Portside area is to provide a current

picture of where pollution is coming from today. This information would help the CSC better understand the main sources of pollution in the community and decide where to focus CERP actions beyond Year Five. However, CARB staff have shared that the major pollution sources in Portside are not expected to have changed much since the original emissions inventory was completed in 2018. Because of this, CARB has indicated that the time and resources needed to create a new emissions inventory may not be the most effective way to support decisions about future CERP priorities.

Secondly, according to CARB staff, while comparing the original 2018 baseline inventory to a newly generated five-year inventory may seem like a useful way to assess progress, emission inventories are not well suited for tracking changes over time. Inventories rely on modeled estimates rather than direct measurements. This means values can change for reasons unrelated to actual conditions in the community. For example, updated statewide data, activity information or emission factors can shift inventory results even if no physical changes have occurred on the ground. These routine updates can make it difficult to distinguish true emission reductions from changes driven by revised methods or model improvements. For this reason, comparing inventories from different years and different vintages does not reliably show how much pollution was reduced. As recommended by CARB, a more accurate way to evaluate progress under the CERP is to focus on measurable outcomes tied directly to actions in the community. These include the number of cleaner trucks, ships or equipment deployed through incentive programs; air monitoring results that show changes in diesel PM, NOx or other pollutants; and community-level indicators such as completed projects or emission reductions reported by individual facilities. CARB suggests that these types of data provide a clearer and more meaningful picture of how CERP implementation is affecting air quality and health in the Portside community.

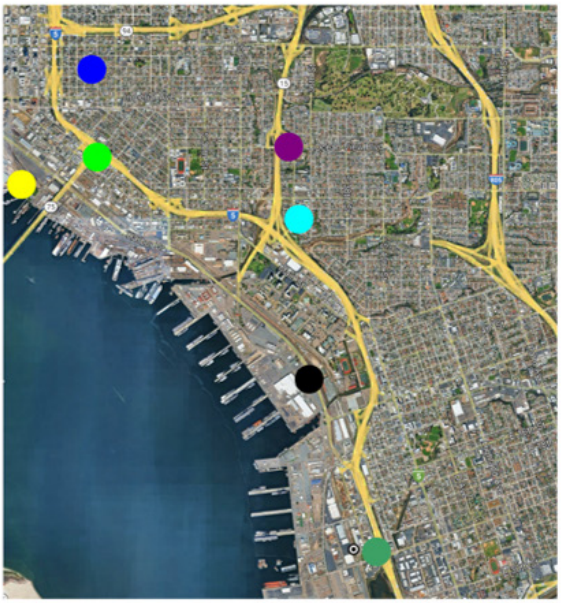
COMMUNITY MONITORING TRENDS

Monitoring air quality and contaminants play an important role in understanding current air conditions and determining whether harmful emissions and exposure to air pollution are decreasing over time. The San Diego County Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) conducts air quality monitoring throughout the air basin to ensure compliance with air quality standards for criteria pollutants (i.e., Ozone, Particulate Matter, Carbon Monoxide (CO), Nitrogen Dioxide, Sulfur Dioxide, and Lead) set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). In addition, SDAPCD is a participant in the Community Air Protection Program (CAPP, also known as AB 617), a statewide program focused on reducing pollution exposure in communities most impacted by air pollution. Through this program, SDAPCD's Community Air Monitoring Team operates community-focused air quality monitors in two San Diego County areas that experience higher pollution levels: the Portside Community near the Port of San Diego and the International Border Community near the U.S.–Mexico border.

Air monitoring in both Communities is guided by the Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP). The CAMP was developed with input from community members and participants of the Portside Community Steering Committee, who helped identify specific, local air quality concerns. The CAMP outlines how and where pollution data are collected and how this information is shared with the community by SDAPCD's Community Air Monitoring Team. In the Portside area, the following types of pollution are monitored: airborne Toxics - Metals; airborne Toxics - Volatile Organic Compounds Toxics – VOCs); and black carbon. There are five community monitoring sites in operation in the Portside communities, with two sites in West National City that are scheduled to come online in calendar year 2026. The map below shows the site locations, and the chart indicates the pollutants of concern being measured. The next section discusses these pollutants and annual emission trends in more detail.

The good news is that overall annual emission trends for Toxics – Metals, Toxics – VOCs, elemental carbon, and black carbon) are decreasing, and the data shows a clear downward trend.

COMMUNITY AIR MONITORING LOCATIONS IN PORTSIDE



Portside Monitoring Sites Sitios de Monitoreo en Portside	Pollutants Monitored Contaminantes monitoreados
Sherman Elementary School	□ ⬡ △
10th Avenue Marine Terminal	□ ⬡ △
Chicano Park	□ ⬡ △
Caltrans at Boston Ave.	□ ⬡ △
Ocean View Blvd	□
Navy RV Lot (Future Monitor Site)	
National City Train Depot (Future Monitor Site)	

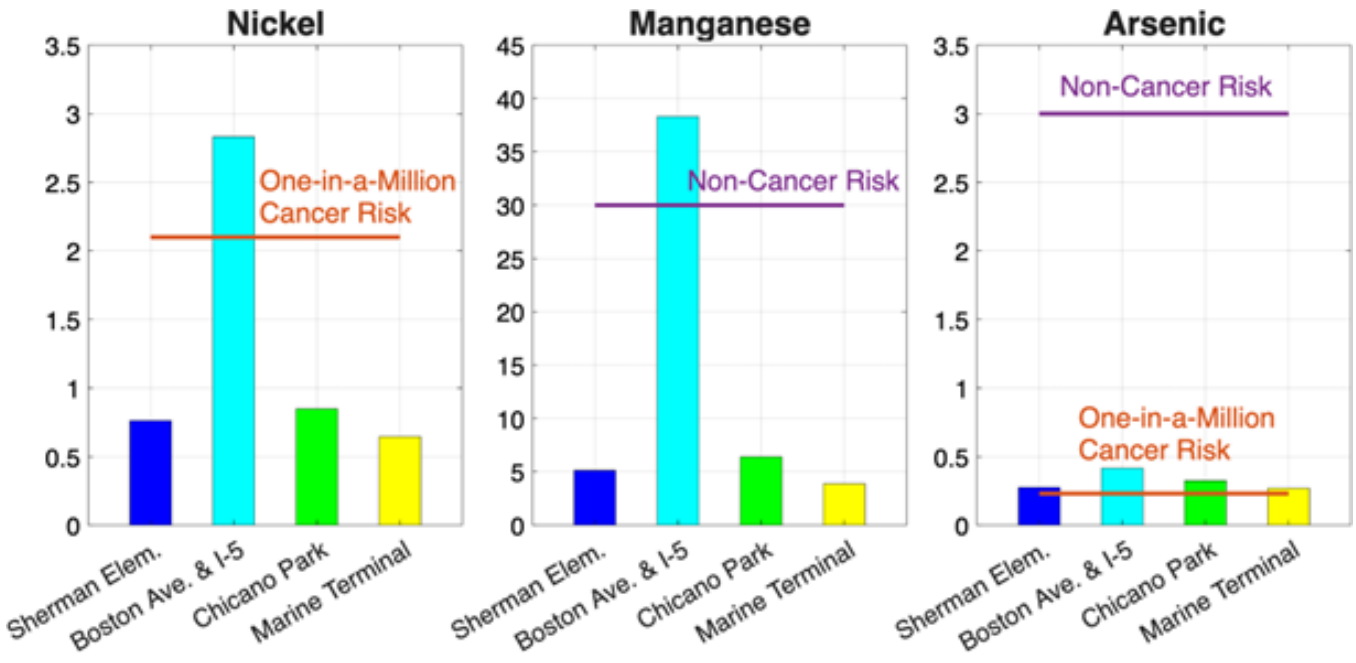
Pollutants
Contaminantes
□ Black Carbon (Continuous)
⬡ Toxics - Metals
△ Toxics - VOCs

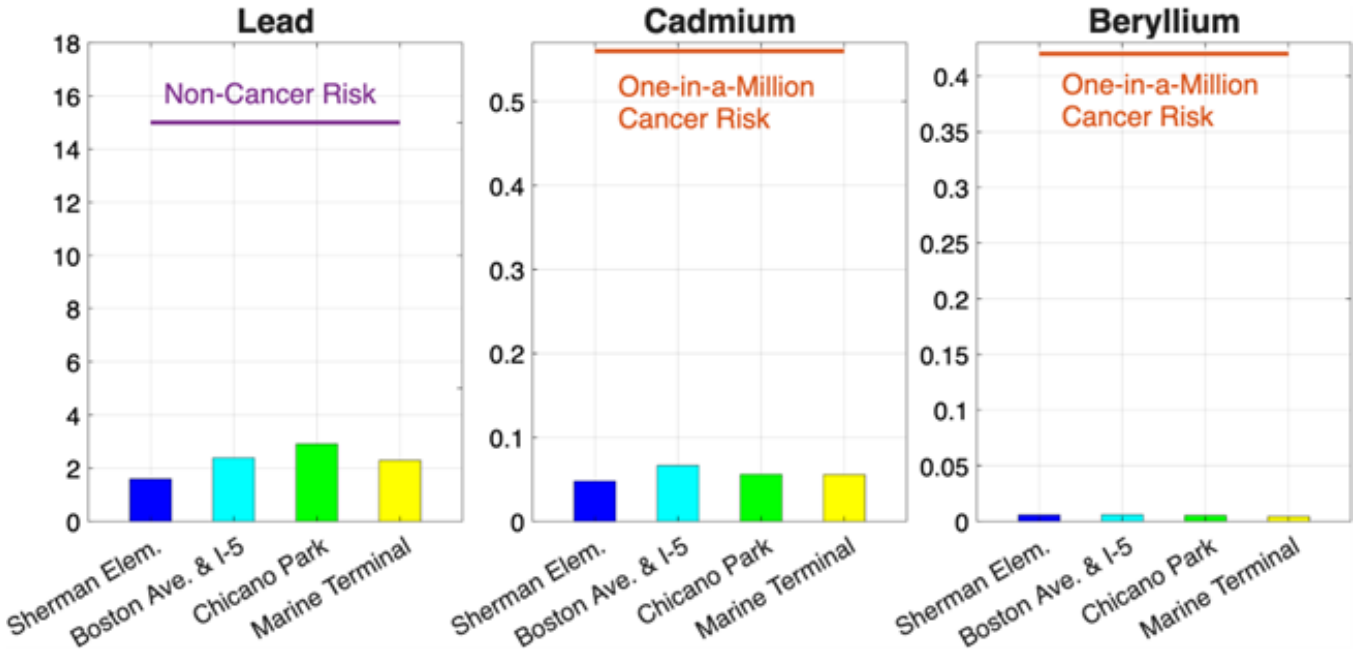
Toxics Airborne Metals

Toxic airborne metals in Portside are monitored at Sherman Elementary School, 10th Avenue Marine Terminal, Chicano Park, and at Caltrans at Boston Avenue. Typical sources of airborne metals that may be found in the Portside area include fuel combustion from cargo-handling equipment such as cranes and forklifts, as well as emissions from cargo ships, tugboats, cruise ships, freight trains, and heavy-duty trucks. Additional sources can include soil disturbance at former industrial sites, tire and brake wear, roadside dust, and various industrial activities. These industrial activities can include shipbuilding and ship repair operations (such as cutting, grinding, welding, blasting, and painting), along with plating and coating facilities, auto body shops, and scrap metal yards. Exposure to airborne metals is associated with a range of potential adverse health effects. Arsenic exposure has been linked to cancers, cardiovascular disease, immune system disorders, and neurological effects. Beryllium exposure is associated with lung cancer and berylliosis. Cadmium exposure has been linked to lung, renal, gastric, and breast cancers. Lead primarily affects the nervous system and is associated with neurological effects. Manganese exposure can affect the brain and central nervous system, while nickel exposure has been associated with respiratory effects and cancers of the nasal cavity and lungs.[1]

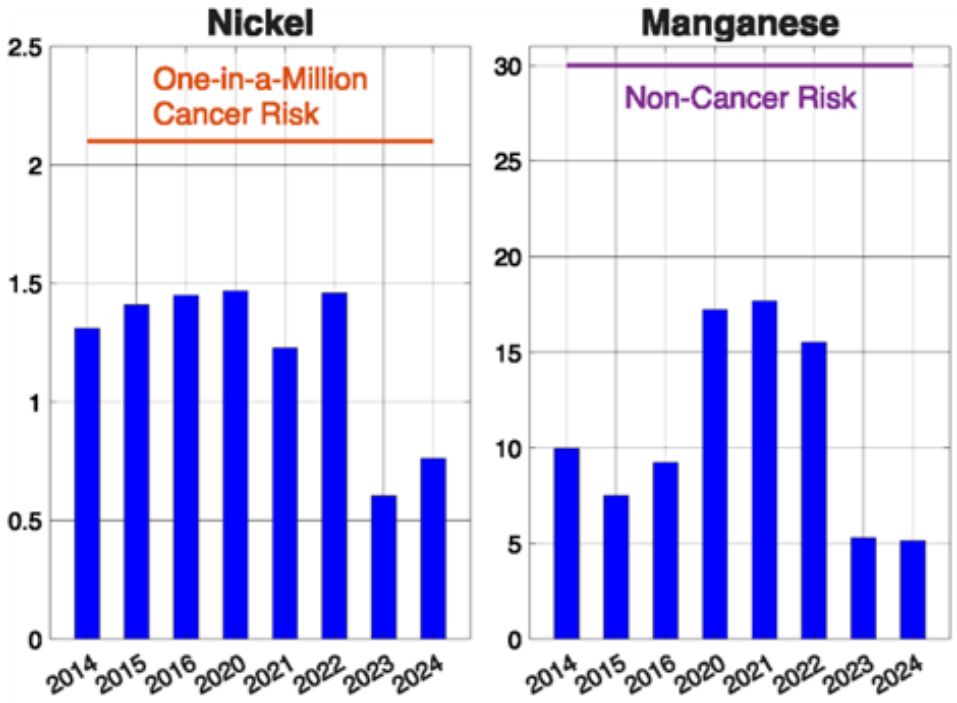
Air Quality Monitoring Trends

Averaged for 2024, the airborne Toxics - Metals are well below the EPA Health Risk thresholds except for Nickel and Manganese at Caltrans at Boston Avenue and the I-5 on-ramp. This may be due to the site's proximity to a major highway that generates a significant amount of particulate matter from tire wear and break wear. The following charts show airborne metals trends (in nanograms per cubic meter) compared to EPA Health Risks and long-term trends.





For a longer-term analysis, Nickel and Manganese are presented in the charts below. The data from 2014 through 2016 are from nearby Perkins Elementary School, while the data from 2020 onward are from Sherman Elementary School. We notice an overall downward trend of these metals' concentrations.

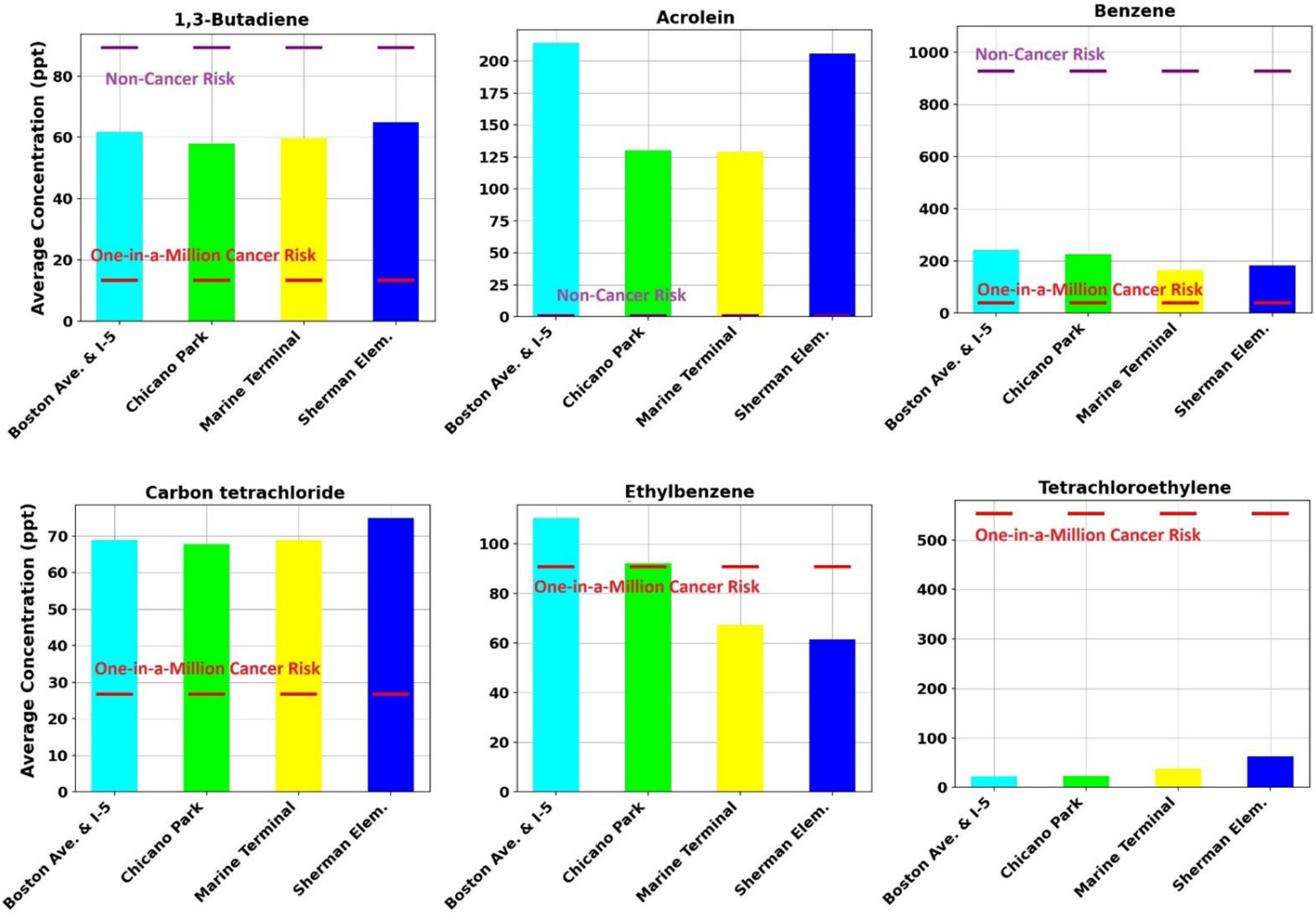


Toxics - Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)

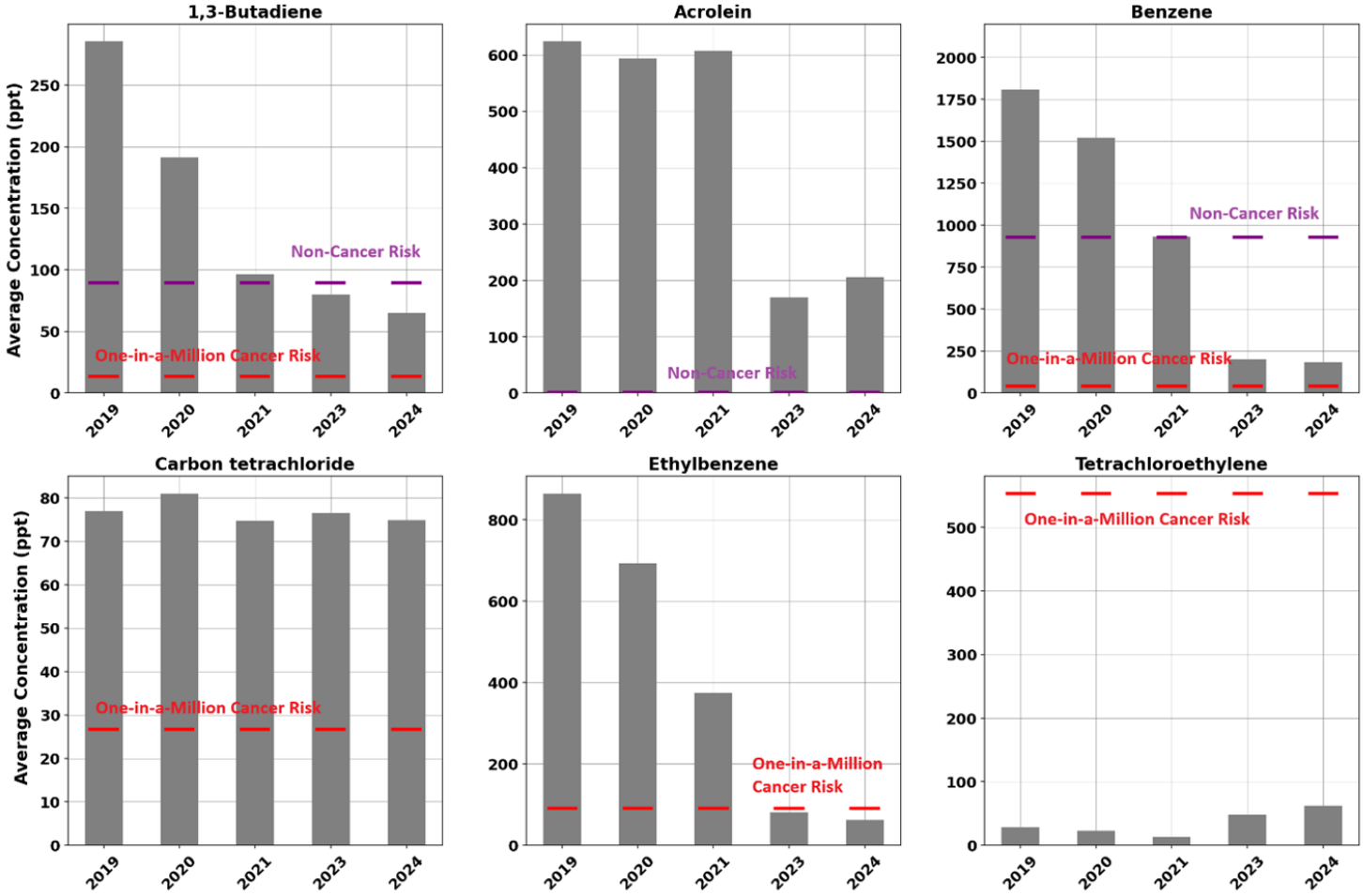
Toxics - Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the Portside area are monitored at Sherman Elementary School, the 10th Avenue Marine Terminal, Chicano Park, and Caltrans at Boston Avenue. VOCs are compounds that readily enter the air from sources such as vehicle emissions, petroleum fuel use, industrial activities, and the use of solvents, hydraulic fluids, paints, paint thinners, and dry-cleaning agents. Exposure to VOCs may result in a range of potential health effects, including eye, nose, and throat irritation; headaches, loss of coordination, and nausea; and damage to the liver, kidneys, and central nervous system. In addition, some VOCs have been shown to cause cancer in animals, and some are known to cause cancer in humans.[2]

Air Quality Monitoring Trends

The concentrations of VOCs are compared across multiple monitoring locations in the Portside Community. While vehicle-related emissions may be a primary driver, evidenced by elevated levels of Benzene and 1,3-Butadiene at high-traffic sites like Caltrans at Boston Avenue and Chicano Park, they are not the sole VOCs of concern. Other sources such as industrial operations, solvent usage, dry cleaning facilities (Tetrachloroethylene), and other background emissions (Carbon Tetrachloride) also contribute to the observed concentrations, creating a complex mixture of local and regional pollution sources and the need for measuring over 50 VOCs at the monitoring sites.



The charts below show annual trends of selected Toxics - VOCs at Sherman Elementary School that are of potential health concerns, with most compounds exhibiting an overall decline from 2019 through 2024. Concentrations for several pollutants decreased toward or below health-based reference levels in recent years, indicating improved conditions over time.

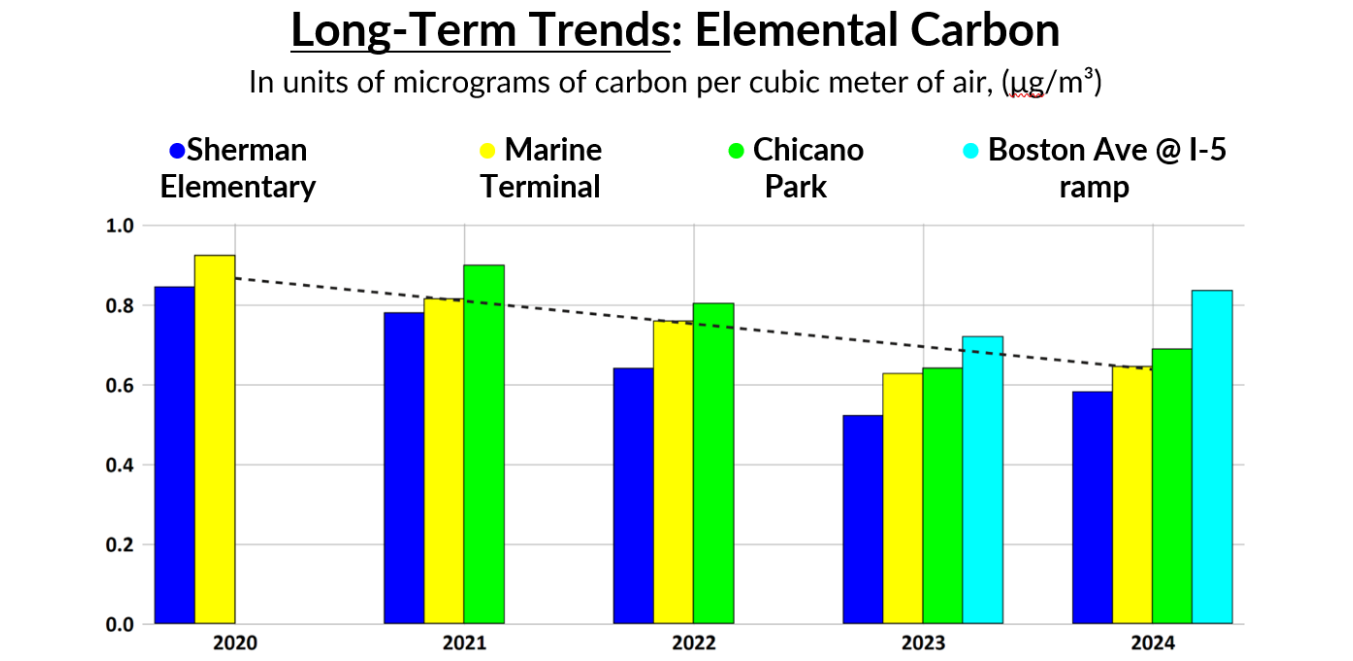


Elemental Carbon and Black Carbon

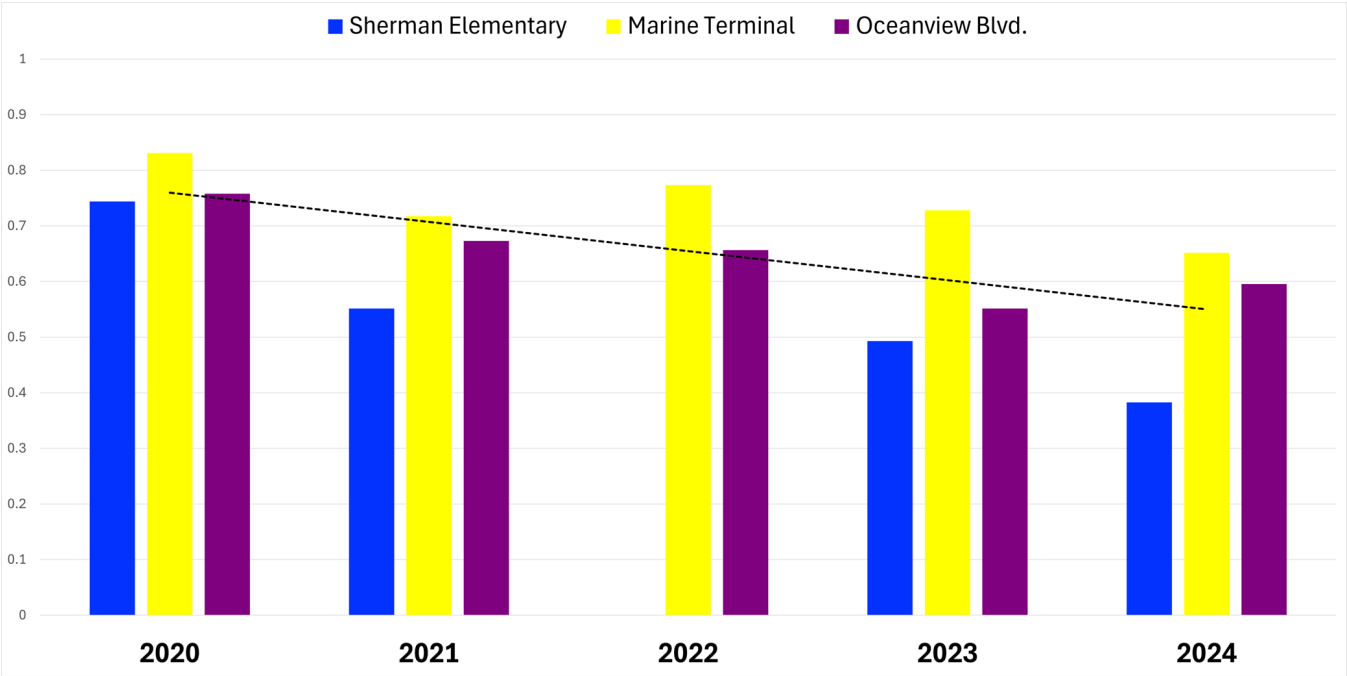
Black Carbon is measured from instruments that detect black carbon as a marker of DPM rather than DPM directly. In the Portside area, Black Carbon is monitored at Sherman Elementary School, the 10th Avenue Marine Terminal, Chicano Park, Caltrans at Boston Avenue, and Ocean View Boulevard. Typical sources of Black Carbon in the Portside area include diesel-fueled machinery such as ocean-going vessels, trucks, trains, construction equipment, and generators. Exposure to diesel exhaust can cause cancer, worsen respiratory conditions, and contribute to asthma, cardiovascular disease, and other adverse health effects. The District additionally monitored for Organic Carbon/Elemental Carbon (OC/EC) in the Portside area for several years, but this program was only able to provide a 24-hr average sample every 6 calendar days throughout each year, and then the sample required laboratory analysis – which delayed information sharing with the community. It was determined that the BC data and EC data correlated well (as presented at the November 2025 steering committee meeting), so to continue informing the community in a more real-time basis, BC was chosen to continue to be the chosen method for these data sets. Note that the overall trends of EC are still presented below.

Air Quality Monitoring Trends

Diesel particulate matter is mostly made up of elemental carbon (EC). To estimate how much diesel pollution is in the air, the Community Air Monitoring team measured EC in airborne fine particulate matter (referred to as PM2.5). Annual average Elemental Carbon (EC) concentrations are highest near Boston Ave and Chicano Park, close to the busy I-5 freeway with heavy truck traffic. Interestingly, the 10th Avenue Marine Terminal site—primarily influenced by port activity—recorded the highest EC levels in 2020 but has since shown a downward trend of concentrations. Sherman Elementary School, located in a residential area, consistently reports the lowest EC levels. Year-over-year we see that every site is trending downward, except for 2023 to 2024. This could be due to the natural variation in weather patterns, especially since 2023 had almost twice as much rain compared to other years. Overall, we see that EC levels are trending down in the Portside Community.



The following chart shows annual trends at Sherman Elementary School, 10th Avenue Marine Terminal, and Ocean Boulevard in micrograms per cubic meter for years 2020-2024 for Black Carbon. Black carbon data averaged from 2020 through 2024 show a general downward trend in levels throughout the community. Continued data collection will allow SDAPCD and its partners to evaluate post-pandemic black carbon levels and assess the effectiveness of the CERP strategies.



PORTSIDE CANCER RISK ASSESSMENT

Cancer Risk represents the likelihood of developing cancer if a person is continuously exposed to a toxic air pollutant over a lifetime, defined as 70 years.[3] This metric calculates excess risk across a population. It does not imply that cancer will occur in any specific individual, nor does it predict when a person might develop cancer.

Based on the previously calculated risk for multiple pollutants (e.g., diesel particulate matter (DPM) and volatile organic compounds) from 2020 to 2021, DPM was the primary driver of cancer risk.[4] To estimate DPM concentration, black carbon (BC) concentration is used. BC data were collected from five San Diego Air Pollution Control District monitoring sites within the Portside Environmental Justice community from 2020 to 2024. DPM concentrations are estimated by converting measured BC concentrations using an established conversion factor (i.e., 1 gram BC ≈ 1.3 grams DPM, recommended by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)).[5]

Cancer risk is calculated using annual average DPM concentrations. Results are expressed as the chance of developing cancer per million people exposed. The analysis is performed using the California Air Resources Board (CARB) HARP Risk Assessment Standalone Tool. All assessments follow the strict risk assessment guidance published by OEHHA.[6] [7]

The trend indicates an improvement in air quality and a reduction in associated cancer risks at most monitoring sites between 2020 and 2024. DPM cancer risk decreased by 21% to 48% from 2020 to 2024 at three of the five monitoring sites. The exceptions were at Caltrans at Boston Avenue and Chicano Park, where data were either unavailable or less than 75% complete. Data from Oct. 2021 to Dec. 2022 at Sherman Elementary School were also unavailable. The decrease in DPM-related cancer risk may be due to reduced activity during the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of the Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP) strategies on lowering diesel air pollution.

DPM cancer risk decreased by 21% to 48% from 2020 to 2024 at three of the five monitoring sites.

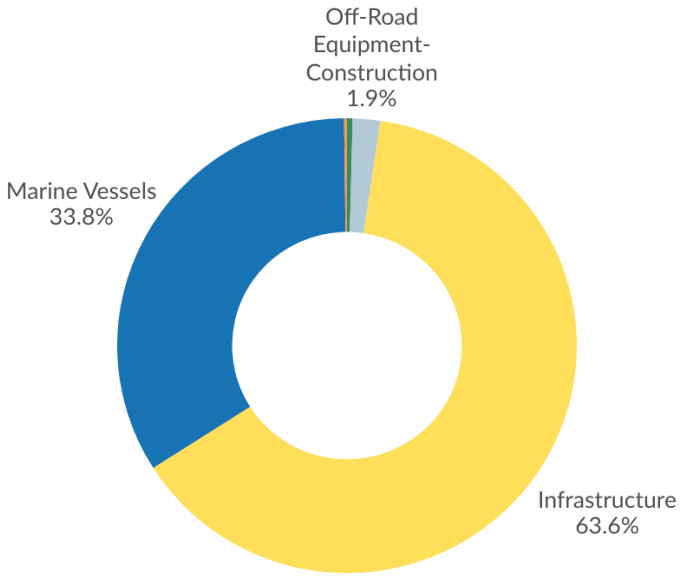
INCENTIVE FUNDING

AB 617 Incentives deliver critical financial support, primarily through California's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF), to accelerate projects that cut air pollution and deploy cleaner, low-emission technologies in communities most impacted by poor air quality. Since 2019, the San Diego Air Pollution Control District has awarded $29,648,435 to projects in the Portside area, representing 45% of all AB 617 incentives distributed region wide. To see a detailed list of projects funded by AB 617 in the Portside communities and their associated emissions reductions, see Appendix B.

These investments have enabled or will fund transformative clean-air projects, including North America's first electric tugboat, shoreside power infrastructure so ships can plug in at berth, electric cargo-handling equipment, electric heavy-duty vehicles, electric vehicle charging stations, and a community-serving solar installation. Most of the funding has gone to electric vehicle charging infrastructure projects and marine vessel replacements or repowers.

Since 2019, the San Diego Air Pollution Control District has awarded $29,648,435 to projects in the Portside area, representing 45% of all AB 617 incentives distributed region wide.

Portside AB 617 Grant Amount by Source Type



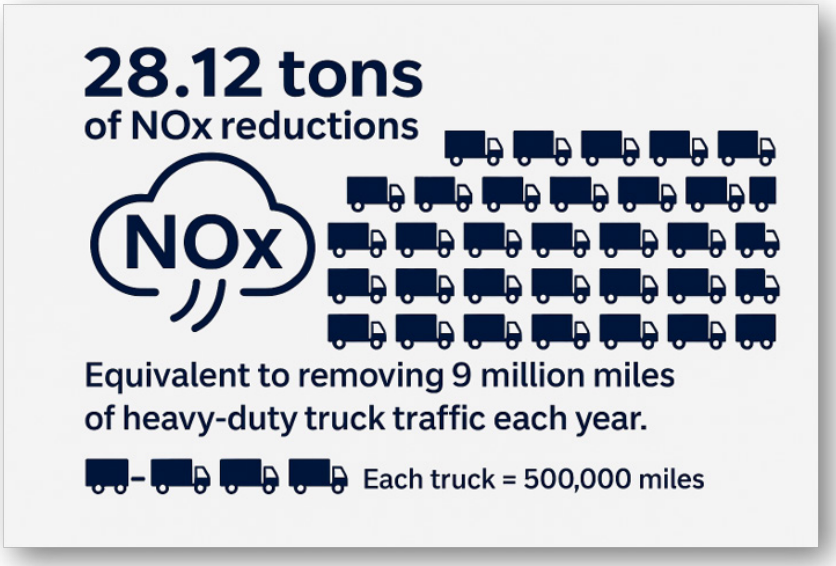
Measurable Emissions Reductions

Due to these investments, estimated emissions reductions in Portside include the following:

Estimated* Emissions Reductions in Portside	
Pollutant	**Reduction (tons/year)**
Diesel PM	2.89
NOx	28.1242
ROG	1.9675
PM	1.1505

**Estimates for emission reductions calculated from methodology in Community Air Protection Incentives Program Guidelines using Carl Moyer Clean Air Reporting Log.*

These reductions represent meaningful improvements in local air quality and public health. Reducing NOx emissions by 28.1242 tons per year is the equivalent of taking over 9 million miles of heavy-duty truck traffic off the road each year.



Community-Oriented Projects

The Community Steering Committee has consistently underscored a core principle of successful program implementation: a meaningful share of incentive funding must support initiatives that residents can experience and benefit from in their daily lives. A clear example is the Chicano Park Museum and Cultural Center's new 163 kW solar canopy and electric charging station, funded with $2.08 million in AB 617 incentives. This project will generate clean energy to power the Museum's zero-emission micro-transit service, Via Verde. Solar energy will keep Via Verde free, reliable, and accessible for the community.

To date, most incentive investments have gone toward projects led by private industries and the Port of San Diego, with approximately 7% directed to community organizations or projects that are community-oriented. This reflects the fact that the primary focus of AB 617 incentive funding has been targeting sources of air pollution in the community and funding projects that provide direct emission reductions.

Updated program guidelines, however, now provide greater flexibility to support projects that advance community mitigation—such as air purifiers or urban greening—and broader community-benefit investments. High-value opportunities that align with the Portside CERP include:

- urban greening (e.g., trees, parks);
- community solar installations and charging infrastructure;
- air purifiers for homes, community businesses, and schools;
- electric school buses and charging stations; and
- transit improvements (e.g., increased frequency, shaded stops, seating, etc.).

This review highlights a key opportunity: strengthening outreach and partnerships so that AB 617 incentive dollars more equitably support projects that directly enhance the lived experience of Portside residents. In addition, AB 617 funds for community-benefit projects can be paired with resources from the Port's Maritime Industrial Impact Fund (MIIF) to achieve greater impact—an approach reinforced in the recent Memorandum of Understanding between the Port of San Diego and the San Diego Air Pollution Control District, which will be discussed in the "Interagency Coordination and Alignment."[8]

REGIONAL REGULATIONS

One of the most effective ways to reduce air pollution is by strengthening the rules that limit emissions from the activities that create them. These rules are set at the regional, state, and federal levels. In our region, the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) is responsible for regulating stationary sources of pollution—such as industrial facilities—while the California Air Resources Board (CARB) oversees mobile sources such as cars, trucks, and other vehicles. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has the emission authority over other mobile sources such as trains, aircraft, and transiting ocean-going vessels.

As part of the Portside Community Emissions Reduction Program (CERP), eight region-wide rules (or rule-related actions) were identified for updates or development. For more detailed information on these rules, see Appendix C. Over the last five years, five rules have been strengthened to better protect public health and reduce harmful emissions. These include:

- Rule 1210: Public notification and risk reduction for toxic air contaminants (CERP Action C2)
- Rule 61.2: Transfer of organic compounds into mobile tanks (CERP Action C3)
- Rule 67.0.1: Architectural coatings (CERP Action C3)
- Rule 67.26: Commercial charbroiling operations (CERP Action C3)
- Rule 1401: General air quality provisions (CERP Action C4)

Of the remaining three actions, two — a feasibility analysis of the control of emissions from Indirect sources, and an update to Rule 1206 (Asbestos Removal, Renovation, and Demolition - CERP Action C1) are currently being assessed to determine whether they should move forward in the rule development process. The assessment for Indirect Sources will be completed in the 2026 calendar year. The assessment for the update to Rule 1206 is anticipated to be completed and shared with the CSC during the 2027 calendar year once subsequent analyses are finalized. If rule-development capacity affects the timeline, the CSC will be notified accordingly. SDAPCD evaluated an amendment to Rule 67.18 (Marine Coating Operations- CERP Action C3) but determined that changes would not meaningfully reduce emissions at this time. For Rule 67.18, staff will present their findings to the CSC within the 2026 calendar year. In addition, one rule not originally included in the Portside CERP, Rule 69.6 (Natural Gas-Fired Fan-Type Central Furnaces), has been updated in recent years and is delivering meaningful emissions reductions across the region, including in the Portside area.

What These Rules Mean for Air Quality

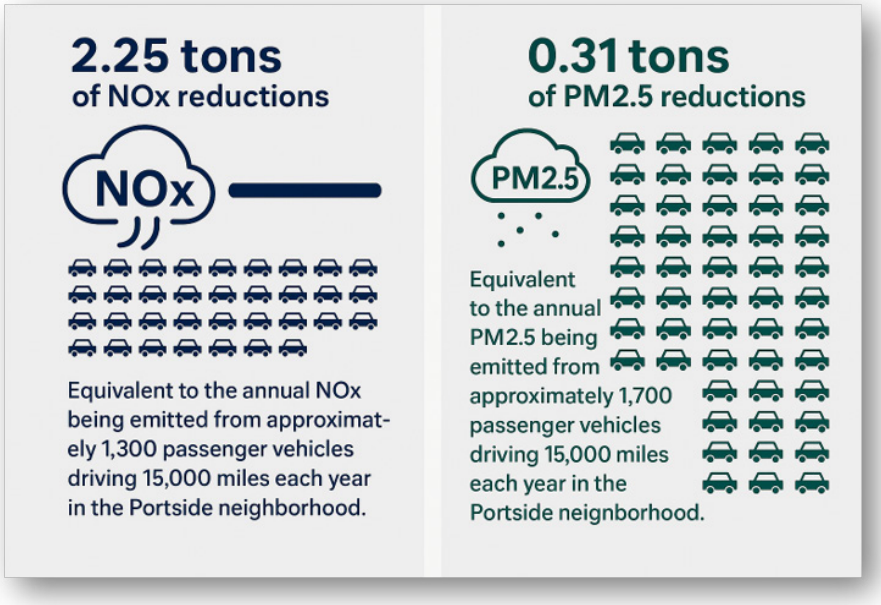
Because these rules apply county-wide, they benefit both the Portside community and the broader region. Collectively, the six amended regulations have reduced:

- 256 tons of nitrogen oxides (NOx); equivalent to the annual NOx being emitted from approximately 153,000 passenger vehicles driving 15,000 miles each year.
- 14 tons of fine particulate matter (PM2.5); equivalent to the annual PM2.5 being emitted from approximately 80,000 passenger vehicles driving 15,000 miles each year.
- 251.5 tons of reactive organic gases (ROGs); equivalent to the annual ROG being emitted from approximately 638,000 passenger vehicles driving 15,000 miles each year.

Within the Portside area specifically, the five amended rules have contributed to:

- 2.25 tons of NOx reductions; equivalent to the annual NOx being emitted from approximately 1,300 passenger vehicles driving 15,000 miles each year in the Portside neighborhood.
- 0.31 tons of PM2.5 reductions; equivalent to the annual PM2.5 being emitted from approximately 1,700 passenger vehicles driving 15,000 miles each year in the Portside neighborhood.

These cuts represent meaningful improvements, especially for communities dealing with long-standing pollution burdens.



Air Quality Monitoring Trends

Not every public health improvement can be fully captured through emission reduction numbers alone. For example, Rule 1210 now requires early notification and action when cancer risks exceed 10 in one million, a much more protective threshold than the previous level of 100 in one million. This ensures quicker response and clearer communication for communities near pollution sources. Additionally, updates to Rule 1401 lower the level at which facilities must obtain a Federal Title V Operating Permit (25 tons/year). While this change doesn't directly reduce emissions, it brings San Diego into compliance with federal requirements after our region was reclassified to a more critical level of ozone pollution. Bringing more facilities under stricter permitting will support better oversight and contribute to long-term health benefits for the community.

In short, strengthening air quality rules is making a real difference. These changes not only cut pollution today but also build a stronger, more protective system for the future, benefiting both Portside residents and the entire region.

The discussion above only highlights the emissions reduction benefits by local SDAPCD rules that have been developed or updated and does not include statewide rules indicated in the Portside Community Emissions Reduction Program (CERP). CARB estimates emissions benefits from statewide regulations cited in the CERP. These emission benefits are being updated to reflect recent changes in federal policies. Once available, CARB will provide these estimations through the CARB Statewide Regulations Portal.

SDAPCD COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

SDAPCD's Compliance Division plays a critical role in protecting the health and quality of life of residents in the Portside community by ensuring that facilities operate in compliance with local and state air quality regulations. Through the Community Emissions Reduction Program (CERP), the Division has made meaningful contributions toward accountability, transparency, and community responsiveness.

To meet CERP Action D4, Increase APCD Presence in the Portside Community, SDAPCD expanded its on-the-ground enforcement activities. In addition to conducting quarterly inspections of large stationary sources, inspectors carried out weekly idling inspections throughout the Portside community. These consistent and visible enforcement efforts resulted in a 99% compliance rate in calendar years 2024–2025, demonstrating that regular oversight can effectively improve compliance.

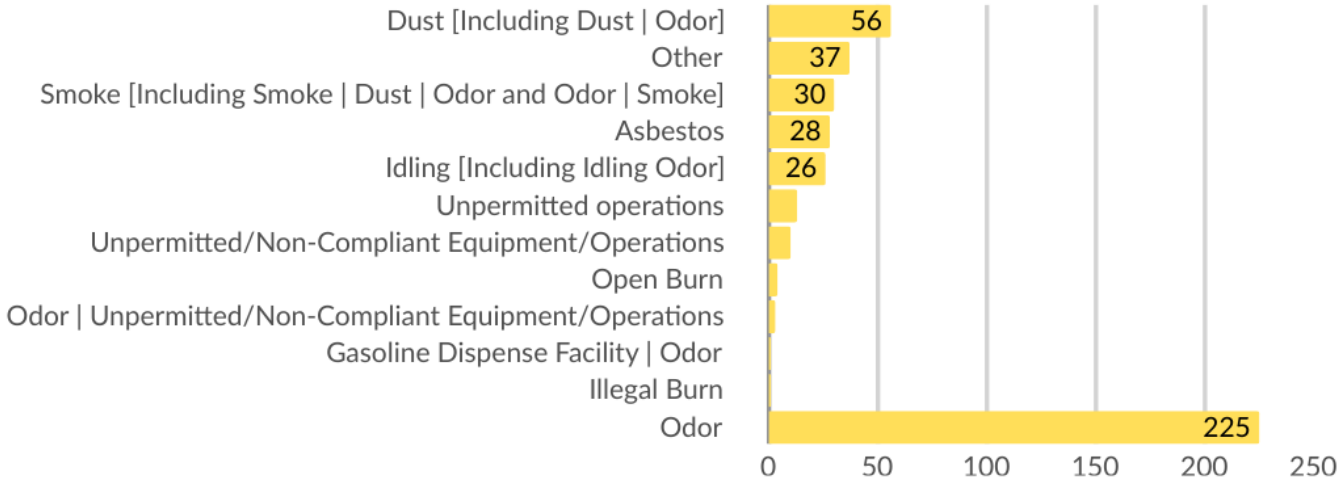
CERP Action D3 called for an evaluation of SDAPCD's air quality complaint process. In response, SDAPCD assessed its existing tools and procedures and launched the SDAPCD Complaints mobile app, making it easier for residents to report air quality concerns in real time.

Between 2018 and 2025, within zip codes in the Portside Area (91950, 92102, 92113), SDAPCD received 434 air quality complaints, averaging 54 complaints per year. Of these complaints:

- 66 resulted in enforcement action,
- 106 lacked sufficient evidence to proceed, and
- 171 did not result in enforcement action.

The most common complaint types during this period were odor (225 complaints), followed by dust (56) and smoke (37)—highlighting odor impacts as a persistent concern for Portside residents. To see more details regarding compliance data, see Appendix D.

Portside Area Complaints (2018-2025)



The importance of a strong and responsive complaint program became especially clear in 2023, which saw the highest number of complaints in a single year (96 total complaints), 59 of which were odor-related within the Portside Communities.

That year, a facility in Barrio Logan that collects used cooking oil from more than 3,000 restaurants and processed it into low-carbon diesel fuel expanded its operations. Soon after, nearby residents began experiencing intense and persistent odors associated with the biofuel production process. According to local reporting, "The smells got so bad that local residents said they had to hide in their homes with windows and doors tightly shut—and that still was not enough to shut out the stench."[9]

Community members, organized by Environmental Health Coalition, mobilized to document impacts, submitted petitions, and demand action to reduce odor exposure in the adjacent residential neighborhood. Between November 2021 and October 2023, Barrio Logan residents submitted multiple air quality complaints to SDAPCD. In response, SDAPCD conducted weekly complaint investigations, issued public nuisance Notices of Violation, and in 2022 filed a petition with the District Hearing Board seeking an abatement order. The petition was granted and required the facility to install and operate an odor control system to reduce community impacts. Following

installation, SDAPCD continued inspections to verify effectiveness and later filed abatement order amendments to expand requirements and strengthen odor reduction strategies.[10] These actions resulted in significant operational changes and a noticeable reduction in odors reported by the community. This case study underscores the vital role of SDAPCD's complaint program in empowering residents to be the experts of their community-needs and self-report air quality issues as they occur. SDAPCD's commitment to ensure that all submitted complaints are investigated in a timely manner and that investigation outcomes are publicly available online, continues to build trust within the community. It also demonstrates how sustained follow-up by the Compliance Division within their authority, paired with community engagement, can result in enforceable solutions that meaningfully improve local air quality and protect public health.

MARITIME EMISSIONS INVENTORY

In 2025, the Port of San Diego released an updated Maritime Air Emissions Inventory to track progress since the 2019 inventory developed for the Maritime Clean Air Strategy (MCAS). The purpose of the 2024 inventory is to understand how emissions have changed as MCAS measures have been implemented to date. It is important to note that this emissions inventory was prepared by the Port of San Diego and has not been reviewed or verified by the San Diego Air Pollution Control District or the California Air Resources Board. In addition, the inventory does not include all emission sources present in the Portside area. Instead, it focuses on key maritime-related source categories: ocean-going vessels, commercial harbor craft, cargo handling equipment, freight rail, and heavy-duty trucks.

The inventory covers multiple types of air pollution, including criteria pollutants, toxic air contaminants, and greenhouse gases. The primary pollutants analyzed are oxides of nitrogen (NOx), diesel particulate matter (DPM), and carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e). The table below compares overall emissions results from the 2019 and 2024 inventories.[11]

Sector	NO_x	DPM	CO_2e (MT)
Ocean-Going Vessels	-23%	-23%	-24%
Harbor Craft	-48%	-74%	+4%
Cargo Handling Equipment	-24%	-46%	-2%
Freight Rail	-19%	-23%	-22%
Heavy-Duty Trucks	-65%	-57%	+5%
Percent change vs 2019	-32%	-46%	-10%

Year	NO_x	DPM	CO_2e (MT)
2019 Revised	503.1	10.4	46,051
2024	342.0	5.6	41,654
Percent change 2019 Revised vs. 2024	-32%	-46%	-10%

Overall, emissions of NOx, DPM, and CO2e in 2024 are lower than in 2019. Diesel particulate matter emissions from all sources combined decreased by 46 percent, with notable reductions from harbor craft, heavy-duty trucks, and cargo handling equipment.[12] A second table below shows the net change between the 2019 and 2024 MCAS emissions inventories by source category.[13]

It is also important to understand that pollution control technologies do not always reduce all pollutants equally. Some strategies may reduce one or two pollutants but not others. For example, particulate filters can significantly reduce diesel particulate matter but do not reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Overall, these results reflect the Port of San Diego's significant efforts to reduce emissions to date and its continued commitment to doing more, as demonstrated by the nearly $59 million EPA grant awarded for the San Diego Clean Cargo Project, along with $28 million in matching funds, to further electrify port operations, expand shore power, deploy zero-emission equipment and trucks, and advance cleaner freight movement that will deliver additional air quality benefits to neighboring communities.[14]

Additionally, the Port of San Diego's efforts and impact is getting noticed by local and national environmental justice groups. They were recently evaluated by the Clean Ports Report Card Project which is a "collaboration of national and local partners working to make ports transparent, accountable, and healthier."[15] In the recent report the Port of San Diego scored 80.9% and a grade of "Rising Star," higher than any other port evaluated. The report card shares where there is room for improvement but affirms that, "the Port of San Diego is an exemplary model to be followed in making communities healthier, while maintaining economic prosperity. The Port is well on its way to demonstrating that cleaner and more efficient operations make adjacent communities healthier, safer and more conducive to thriving businesses."[16]

Port of San Diego Clean Ports Report Card Results

Category	Score	Grade
Emissions Inventory	9 / 9 Points = 100%	**Gold Standard**
Clean Air Planning	6.83 / 8 Points = 85.4%	**Approaching Excellence**
Emissions Reduction Actions	12.7 / 18 Points = 70.4%	**Making Progress**
Community Engagement, and Collaboration	9.5 / 12 Points = 79.2%	**Making Progress**
TOTAL	38 / 47 Points = 80.9%	**Rising Star**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2
PORT of SAN DIEGO

GOVERNANCE AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Strong governance and meaningful collaboration are at the heart of successful community-led air quality efforts. This section highlights progress and ongoing work in Interagency Coordination and Alignment and Shared Decision-Making & Meaningful Community Engagement, are two key pillars that ensure transparency, accountability, and equitable participation in implementing the Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP). The metrics of success featured here were shaped by feedback from Community Steering Committee (CSC) members during focus group discussions held in the summer of 2025, as well as insights from the 2025 UC Davis report, Assessing the Successes, Challenges, and Lessons Learned from AB 617 to Map a Collaborative Way Forward. Together, these perspectives guide a more inclusive and coordinated approach to clean air governance—one that centers community voices and strengthens partnerships across agencies and stakeholders.

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION AND ALIGNMENT

Through the Portside CERP development and implementation process, there has been strong interagency coordination and alignment of plans and actions. Building on the goals of the Portside Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP), regional partners are working together to ensure that clean air, health equity, and community priorities are embedded in key local and regional planning efforts. From maritime and transportation planning to land use and environmental justice initiatives, agencies across San Diego are aligning their strategies to achieve meaningful and lasting improvements in air quality. Collaborative efforts—such as the Port of San Diego's Maritime Clean Air Strategy (MCAS) and Port Master Plan Update (PMPU), the SDAPCD–Port of San Diego Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the Barrio Logan Community Plan Update, and SANDAG's Regional Plan—reflect a shared commitment to reducing pollution, supporting clean technology, and empowering communities most impacted by air quality challenges. Together, these coordinated actions move San Diego toward a healthier, more equitable, and sustainable future for all who live, work, and play around the Bay.

Port of San Diego

Maritime Clean Air Strategy (MCAS)

The Port of San Diego's Maritime Clean Air Strategy (MCAS), approved in October 2021, lays out a bold vision for "Health Equity for All" by reducing emissions, promoting clean technologies, and creating a healthier environment for everyone who lives, works, and plays around San Diego Bay. Developed with strong community input, the MCAS builds on the goals of the Portside Community AB 617 Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP), ensuring that local voices directly influence the Port's clean air priorities. The CERP's community-driven focus on health, transparency, and environmental justice help guide the MCAS in setting ambitious targets that go beyond state regulations. MCAS goals and/or objectives that go beyond State regulatory requirements include:

- A goal of 100 percent of cargo trucks calling on the Port of San Diego cargo maritime terminals being zero emissions (ZE) vehicles by 2030.
- A goal of 40 percent of cargo trucks calling on the Port of San Diego cargo maritime terminals being ZE vehicles by June 30, 2026.
- A goal of 100 percent of cargo handling equipment

being ZE by 2030.
- Facilitate implementation of the first all-electric tugboat in the United States by June 30, 2026.[17]

Together, the CERP and MCAS represent a shared commitment to cleaner air, healthier communities, and a sustainable maritime future for San Diego Bay.

Port of San Diego – Port Master Plan Update (PMPU), Environmental Justice Element
The Port of San Diego updated its Port Master Plan for the first time in more than 40 years. This plan serves as the long-term guide for how land and water within the Port's jurisdiction around San Diego Bay can be used and developed over the next 30 years. For the first time ever, the updated plan includes an Environmental Justice Element, a major step toward addressing the needs of nearby communities that experience higher levels of pollution, including Barrio Logan and West National City. The Port Master Plan is required under both the San Diego Unified Port District Act and the California Coastal Act. The update reflects how the region's priorities, environment, and economy have changed since the original plan was adopted in 1981. While there have been several smaller, location-specific amendments over the years, this is the first comprehensive update to the plan.[18]

SDAPCD and Port of San Diego MOU
The San Diego County Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) and the Port of San Diego (Port) have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) designed to strengthen collaboration and accelerate progress toward cleaner air in the portside communities. This agreement reflects a shared commitment to advancing the goals of both the Portside Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP) and the Maritime Clean Air Strategy (MCAS). Through this partnership, SDAPCD and the Port are prioritizing zero-emission infrastructure, zero-emission heavy-duty trucks and cargo-handling equipment programs, and emission reductions from vessels and Port-owned vehicles. Together, these actions will help drive measurable reductions in air pollution while promoting innovation and cleaner technologies across maritime and industrial operations.

The MOU also emphasizes the importance of pilot programs and incentives that support cleaner equipment and operations, as well as identifying additional emission reduction opportunities to further improve air quality. A key focus of the agreement is ensuring stronger public participation and transparency for Port leases and/or projects. By promoting open communication, inclusive engagement, and equitable access to information, the SDAPCD and Port aim to strengthen trust and ensure that clean air strategies directly benefit the residents most affected by port-related pollution. Ultimately, this collaboration underscores a shared vision: advancing clean air strategies, protecting public health, and creating a sustainable path forward for the portside communities—one that balances environmental responsibility, community well-being, and economic vitality.

City of San Diego

Barrio Logan Community Plan Update

The Barrio Logan Community Plan Update (BLCP), adopted in 2023, marks a major milestone for environmental health and community protection. For the first time, the plan establishes buffer zones that separate heavy industrial activities from homes — an important step in protecting residents from pollution and improving neighborhood air quality. The update supports commercial land uses and zoning that act as a transition between Port-related industrial areas and nearby residential neighborhoods[19]. This change is especially meaningful for Barrio Logan, a neighborhood that has faced decades of placing industrial uses next to residential zoning since 1978 and has been divided by major highways. These conditions have contributed to the community becoming one of the most polluted areas in California, with some of the state's highest asthma rates.[20]

The BLCP also aligns air quality goals in the Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP) with the new community plan to strengthen public health protections. Beyond air quality improvements, the new plan also includes strong housing and anti-displacement protections to help residents stay in their community. Together, these changes create a healthier, more stable future for Barrio Logan — one that protects public health, preserves affordability, and strengthens the community's right to remain and thrive.

SANDAG

Regional Plan

The San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) are working closely to ensure that transportation priorities identified in the Portside Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP) are reflected in SANDAG's updated 2025 Regional Plan. This collaboration helps align regional transportation planning with community goals for cleaner air, healthier neighborhoods, and improved quality of life. The selection and prioritization of transportation projects and policies in the proposed 2025 Regional Plan present an important opportunity to reduce air pollution and advance environmental justice in the Portside communities—areas that have long experienced the greatest air quality challenges. SDAPCD is encouraged to see that several community-supported CERP priorities are already included in the Draft 2025 Regional Plan for completion by 2035. These include:

- Support for modernization of Harbor Drive; and
- Prioritization of Blue line trolley grade separation at 28th St and 32nd St.

Through this partnership, SDAPCD and SANDAG are ensuring that community voices and clean air goals remain central to San Diego's long-term transportation and environmental planning.

SHARED DECISION-MAKING AND MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Based on focus group conversations held in the summer of 2025 with members of the Portside Community Steering Committee (CSC), participants consistently emphasized that the CSC has become a model of equal space and collaborative dialogue. Residents, agencies, advocates, and industry representatives all recognized the CSC as a unique and productive forum where diverse voices are not only heard but valued. Having a seat at the same table as industry and government has been transformative for community members, shifting the balance of dialogue toward shared problem-solving. This collaborative structure has strengthened trust and mutual understanding, demonstrating the power of co-created solutions.

"Having a forum each month that we can count on where there's going to be a rep. from NASSCO or from the Port of San Diego present to elevate things that we're hearing like, "Hey, we heard that there's this project happening or this application that was sent to the air district. NASSCO, can you tell us a little bit about that?" Having that forum has been invaluable, as far as relationship building."[21]

Portside CSC, Community Resident

"The community only has our voice, and if representatives from the port come, they have a voice, but they also have money. So we only have the power of our voice to demand changes. This is a place where we can speak and express our opinions to these people who have not just their voice and vote, but also a lot of money behind them. So I feel that this is a place where our community voice is heard, and we can say things without fear, without feeling like we can't speak because we lack support or are silenced. It wouldn't be the first or the last time in meetings where we're silenced or where they don't want us to speak. But here, we do have that important voice, and they know that we also have the vote, so that is our power."[23]
- Portside CSC, Community Resident

When discussing community influence on decisions and practices, participants noted visible change. Residents pointed out that businesses now approach the community with a pre-understanding of local concerns, reflecting a growing respect for lived experience. Agencies and industry partners acknowledged that community input has directly shaped key practices, such as the Port Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Marine Cargo Agreement provisions, and requirements for cleaner equipment. Advocates underscored how community leadership has informed letters, public conversations, and committee actions — tangible evidence of the CSC's impact.

Language access and inclusiveness emerged as a central theme of success. Interpretation services have allowed Spanish-speaking residents to fully participate in discussions, ensuring that all voices contribute to decision-making. This inclusive practice was widely recognized by residents, industry, and agencies alike as essential for building trust and fostering genuine collaboration.

Through the CSC, education and shared learning have become integral to environmental and community progress. Residents benefit from the ability to learn about the pros and cons of proposed projects and to ask informed questions. Industry representatives value the opportunity to share data and science transparently, helping to explain why certain changes occur. For agencies and advocates, the CSC serves as an ongoing space to better understand one another's perspectives and to build alignment around solutions.

Participants described the Community Steering Committee (CSC) as a valuable and rare space for open dialogue—one that bridges sectors, builds understanding, and inspires action. For community members, it remains one of the few places where voices are genuinely heard and respected. For agencies, industry, and advocates, it serves as a trusted platform for collaboration, learning, and responding to emerging challenges. Focus group discussions held in the summer of 2025 affirmed that the CSC continues to stand as a living example of what equitable, inclusive, and results-driven environmental governance can look like.

These findings were also reflected in the 2025 UC Davis report, Assessing the Successes, Challenges, and Lessons Learned from AB 617 to Map a Collaborative Way Forward. Among seven case studies across California, the Portside Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities CSC ranked in the "high inclusion / high authority" category—alongside Arvin/Lamont and Richmond–North Richmond–San Pablo. The Portside CSC achieved the highest score overall, showing the most significant improvement since the 2020 study. This progress reflects both the strength of community participation and the meaningful decision-making power now afforded to residents and local organizations.[22]

Opportunities for Growth

Based on focus group conversations held in the summer of 2025 with members of the Portside Community Steering Committee (CSC), participants identified several opportunities for growth that can strengthen the committee's reach, inclusivity, and long-term impact. There was shared recognition across residents, agencies, industry, and advocates of the need to bring more community members into the process. Participants expressed a desire to expand engagement beyond those who already participate, ensuring that more voices, especially from underrepresented neighborhoods, are heard and valued in decision-making.

A particularly strong theme from residents was the importance of youth engagement as a way to sustain the CSC's work into the future. Many participants emphasized that involving young people in environmental and public health conversations not only builds community capacity but also helps inspire a new generation of local leaders who can carry forward the values of collaboration, transparency, and accountability.

Across all groups, there was clear consensus that engagement, transparency, and clear communication are the foundation of trust and effective action. Residents expressed the continued need for information to be presented in clear, accessible language, so families can better understand how local decisions affect their health and daily lives. Participants agreed that ongoing community education, delivered in understandable, consistent, and inclusive formats, should remain a top priority for the CSC.

Participants also emphasized the need to improve communication of technical data. Residents, agencies, and advocacy groups all expressed a desire for information, particularly data about emissions, health risks, and project impacts, to be presented in ways that are clear and understandable for non-technical audiences. Suggestions included using visual aids, simplified summaries, and contextual explanations to make complex information more approachable. Additionally, participants recommended including breaks or pacing adjustments during longer presentations to allow time for community members to process and ask questions.

Finally, focus group participants underscored the critical importance of strengthening language access and interpretation. Accurate, high-quality interpretation was identified as essential to ensuring equitable participation and meaningful engagement. Residents specifically requested higher-quality and more complete interpretation services, along with pauses for clarification during meetings and presentations. All stakeholders agreed that improving interpretation is crucial for building trust, fostering inclusivity, and ensuring that every community member, regardless of language, can fully participate in the CSC's ongoing work.

Together, these insights reflect a collective vision for continued growth: one centered on accessibility, education, and inclusion, ensuring that the CSC remains a trusted, transparent, and community-driven space for collaboration and shared progress.

ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPACT OF SDAPCD'S OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

While the Community Air Protection Program (CAPP) focuses on specific neighborhoods, its impact has extended far beyond those areas and has fundamentally changed how the San Diego County Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) operates across all divisions. One of the most important outcomes of the Portside Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP, Action 4: Establish an Office of Environmental Justice within the APCD) was the call to create an Office of Environmental Justice within SDAPCD.

In response, SDAPCD established the Office of Environmental Justice in 2020, and the District's Board adopted an environmental justice framework (which supports the actions included in CERP Action 4) that directs SDAPCD to integrate equity and environmental justice into its operations, policies, and regulations. The local implementation of CAPP also laid the groundwork for SDAPCD's Equity Statement and Public Participation Plan (CERP Action 2: Develop and Implement a Public Participation Plan), strengthening how community voices are included in decision-making. One recent example is the engagement of communities facing environmental injustices throughout the region being very involved in shaping SDAPCD's Strategic Plan, adopted in December 2025, which centers actions to support environmental justice.

These advances were made possible by major structural changes within SDAPCD in the past seven years. SDAPCD transitioned from County governance to an independent governing board, appointed new leadership, and created the Office of Environmental Justice. Together, these changes elevated community engagement and transparency, strengthened trust with residents, and reaffirmed SDAPCD's commitment to environmental justice and shared decision-making.[24]

With the establishment of the Office of Environmental Justice, the program expanded further in 2024 with the addition of a Public Outreach Specialist. This position launched OEJ's Outreach and Education Program and significantly increased SDAPCD's ability to connect with communities. With this new role, SDAPCD is now able to offer dedicated educational materials and a structured outreach program for environmental justice communities. Within a short period of time, new materials were developed considering community input, and strong relationships were built with community-based organizations in Portside and across the region in communities most impacted by air pollution.

This expanded outreach allowed SDAPCD to better share information about the complaint program, air quality monitoring, and the connection between air pollution and public health. Just as importantly, it created opportunities for direct, ongoing engagement with residents. In only two years, more than 1,440 Portside community members participated in outreach and education activities (which supports the actions included in CERP Action 2: Number of individuals reached by APCD's activities), helping to build trust and strengthen relationships between the community and the District. See Appendix E for a full list of Community Outreach and Education Activities in Portside for 2024-2025.

In 2025, the Office of Environmental Justice launched the Environmental Justice Partnership (EJP) to extend these efforts to communities outside of CAPP areas that continue to experience high air pollution burdens. EJP is a collaborative effort among SDAPCD's Office of Environmental Justice, the County of San Diego's Office of Sustainability and Environmental Justice, the California Air Resources Board, community-based organizations, and individual residents. Together, partners work to reduce air pollution and improve air quality in communities most impacted by pollution.

Through community workshops and educational activities, EJP has successfully engaged residents and created new pathways for community leadership. The program has also helped connect community members to the Community Air Protection Program and supported their participation on Community Steering Committees. In its first year, five new community leaders joined a Community Steering Committee through EJP, strengthening community representation and long-term involvement in air quality decision-making.

CONCLUSION

The Community Air Protection Program (CAPP) has brought a number of successes to the Portside Community, from reducing harmful emissions, to creating a rare and valuable space for collaboration, inclusivity, and shared learning through the CSC. The CAPP and the CSC have influenced industry practices, agency approaches, and community engagement in meaningful ways to reduce air pollution in the Portside Community. At the same time, CSC members made clear that the CSC's future success, and that of the CAPP itself, depends on strengthening accountability, prioritizing implementation, expanding monitoring, and making communication more accessible. Above all, stakeholders agreed the partnerships established through the CAPP, including the CSC, are too valuable to lose. Evolving into a more action-oriented, transparent, and community-driven body, the CSC will be essential to ensuring measurable improvements in air quality and health for the Portside communities beyond year five implementation.

Endnotes

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