

**Oakland Energy and Climate Action Plan**  
**Summary of Public Workshop #1**  
**Held December 11, 2008**

**Introduction**

On December 11, 2008 the City of Oakland conducted the first in a series of public workshops to gather community input as the City develops an Oakland Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP). The following summary is intended to capture the highlights of this first public workshop. It includes key information provided by the City, and reflects the comments, ideas, and questions of the people who participated. It is not intended to serve as an official meeting transcript. To view a copy of the presentation given by City staff at the workshop, as well as an overview of the process the City is following in developing the ECAP, visit the City of Oakland website at [www.sustainableoakland.com](http://www.sustainableoakland.com).

Approximately 90 people attended this workshop, held in Oakland's City Hall. Participants represented a variety of interests, including local nonprofit and advocacy organizations, government agencies, utilities, interest groups, private companies, and individual citizens.

The two main purposes of the workshop were:

- 1) Provide an overview of the purpose, goals and development process of the ECAP; and
- 2) Gather public input on: the benefits of reducing energy use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, issues the City should consider in prioritizing amongst energy and GHG reduction opportunities, and potential energy and GHG reducing actions that should be explored during development of the ECAP.

City staff gave a presentation to provide an overview of the ECAP development process, while a professional facilitation team guided the workshop and conducted input gathering exercises.

Below are summaries of the overview presentation given by City staff as well as responses generated during the input exercises. All responses received at the workshop are reflected in the summaries below, though individual responses are not presented verbatim. In the interest of providing a clear and cohesive summary, some responses have been reorganized under the most relevant discussion topic.

This summary document is organized as follows:

1. Presentation of Energy and Climate Action Plan Purpose & Process
2. Clarifications/Questions from Participants
3. Discussion: Purpose and Benefits
4. Discussion: Setting Priorities
5. Discussion: Potential Actions

**Presentation of Energy and Climate Action Plan Purpose & Process**

City staff began the workshop by providing an overview of the purpose and process of developing an Energy and Climate Action Plan. Below are highlights of points made in the presentation.

- Climate change is projected to affect Oakland in a variety of potentially significant ways (e.g., sea level rise, decreased Sierra snowpack).
- The cost of inaction is compelling, and may be greater than the cost of action.

- Many sources of GHG emissions exist locally in Oakland (as they do in other communities), including energy use in buildings, transportation and waste decomposition.
- The City of Oakland has control or influence over some of these GHG emissions sources, and can take action to reduce them.
- The City of Oakland is committed to becoming a model sustainable city and adopted a resolution in 2007 affirming a commitment to develop a GHG reduction target and climate action plan.
- Oakland is responsible for approximately 3 million tons of GHG emissions each year, over half of which is created in the transportation sector.
- Oakland plans to design the ECAP around identifying, evaluating, and prioritizing actions to reduce emissions, including adopting emissions goals.
- City Staff plan to propose energy and climate goals to the Oakland City Council for consideration in late spring 2009.
- The process of developing the ECAP will include gathering initial public input, performing research and analysis, establishing energy and climate targets, analyzing potential actions, developing the plan document, and providing an opportunity for the public to comment on the draft ECAP.
- Actions will be proposed for near-term implementation, mid-term implementation, and long-term consideration.

### **Clarifications/Questions from Participants**

Workshop participants were given the opportunity to ask clarifying questions about the purpose and process of developing the ECAP. Responses from City staff are summarized below.

- The City has included GHG emissions from highway travel in its baseline Oakland community GHG emissions inventory, and will consider opportunities to reduce emissions associated with highway travel through the ECAP.
- The City has not included GHG emissions from air, rail and sea travel associated with Oakland's ports in its baseline GHG inventory to date (largely due to lack of data availability and official protocols for including these emissions sources). The City intends to partner with the Port of Oakland, which is also currently working on climate issues as well, to explore opportunities to collaboratively reduce emissions from these sources.
- The City recognizes that some actions the City could take have the potential to create GHG reduction benefits outside the boundaries of the city's own GHG emissions baseline inventory, and that these benefits should be valued and considered appropriately. For example, many waste reduction and energy saving actions can create upstream benefits due to avoided need for material extraction, processing and transport.
- The City will post updates from each Public Workshop to the City's website at [www.sustainableoakland.com](http://www.sustainableoakland.com) as well as other information to facilitate community engagement throughout the process of developing the ECAP.
- The City will seek future public input on establishing energy and climate targets for the Oakland community.
- The City will consider opportunities to partner with local organizations to maximize meaningful community engagement opportunities in developing the ECAP.
- The City has not conducted a survey of available roof space and loads to provide a reasonably precise estimate of community-wide solar energy generating capacity at this time.
- Oakland's municipal government has some degree of control and influence over local energy use and sources of GHG emissions, and these opportunities will be the focus of the ECAP.
- Achieving meaningful and necessary energy and climate goals will require action by all members of the Oakland community.

## **Discussion: Purpose and Benefits**

Meeting participants were asked to comment on what they believe the main purposes and benefits of addressing climate change would be on a local level. Many of the comments indicated a desire for the Oakland Energy Climate and Action Plan to serve as a catalyst for improving quality-of-life in Oakland, creating local green jobs, improving the economy and enhancing a sense of civic pride. Below is a summary of participant responses.

- Reduce energy consumption
- Reduce oil dependence
- Increase local food production
- Create good jobs with eco-literacy and life skills
- Improve quality of life in the community
- Enable homeowners and companies to choose their energy providers
- Strengthen community connections
- Create a replicable model so Oakland can lead, not follow
- Promote Oakland as a green city
- Create green jobs and train youth to get those jobs
- Take advantage of the economic and environmental crises to ensure Oakland survives and comes out ahead
- Develop economic resilience in Oakland
- Give Oakland influence in state and national decisions
- Green the city, including through green roofing
- Promote spiritual unity, bringing consciousness to people
- Bring pride back to being Oaklanders
- Resolve economic disparity
- Decrease violence
- Create economic growth and tax revenue to fund the Oakland Unified School District
- Restore our relationship to the natural world
- Reflect well on the city, locally, nationally, and internationally
- Create more beauty in Oakland
- Enhance conservation
- Spur collaboration between city and agencies, prevent duplication of effort, and support local organizations
- Address climate change so we can focus energy on creating more art
- Ease air pollution and light pollution to bring back a view of the stars
- Create economic opportunity for Oakland residents

## **Discussion: Setting Priorities**

Participants were asked for their input on what issues the City should consider in the process of prioritizing amongst opportunities to reduce energy use and GHG emissions in Oakland. Below is a summary of participant responses.

- Reduction potential
  - *Potential to address priority source-specific opportunities:*
    - *Electricity*
    - *Natural gas*
    - *Food waste*
    - *Solid waste*
    - *Energy efficiency*

- *Renewable energy*
  - *Vehicle travel*
- *Magnitude of verifiable local GHG reduction potential*
- *Full lifecycle emissions reduction potential*
- *Potential to be implemented quickly*
- *Potential to be leveraged to lead to more significant progress in the future*
- *Value toward achieving specific aspects of AB 32 compliance*
- *Potential to reduce automobile dependency*
- *Potential to reduce vulnerability to oil price variation and oil shortages*
- *Potential to develop local energy self-reliance*
- **Cost and level of effort**
  - *Potential to reduce energy costs for all members of the community*
  - *Affordability to implementing stakeholders*
  - *Anticipated full costs and benefits, including lifecycle savings potential*
  - *Opportunity to leverage private and government funding*
  - *Potential for financial self-sufficiency of implemented actions*
  - *Potential for polluters to bear the financial burden of change*
- **Feasibility and acceptability**
  - *Potential for action to be taken within the City government's control (e.g., zoning codes)*
  - *Potential for widespread uptake by individuals*
  - *Opportunity to effectively collaborate with other agencies and groups*
  - *Potential to create multiple benefits simultaneously*
  - *Demonstration of long-term vision for development of the community*
  - *Opportunity to foster community awareness of energy and climate issues*
  - *Opportunity to leverage actors within the community for implementation*
- **Other Benefits**
  - *Equity in access to benefits*
  - *Equity in protection from perils and costs*
  - *Potential to reduce pollution in most heavily polluted communities*
  - *Potential to provide needed assistance to most vulnerable communities*
  - *Potential to grow local businesses and create local jobs, especially green jobs*
  - *Creation of benefits in communities most affected by poverty and violence*
  - *Opportunity to address issues of social or environmental justice*
  - *Opportunity to educate youth, especially in the form of green job training*
  - *Potential to implement low-tech solutions supporting community youth involvement*
  - *Potential to empower citizens, especially to engage youth, in working toward solutions*
  - *Potential to reduce truck traffic in the community*
  - *Timeframe for achieving potential reductions*
  - *Relative value of potential near-term actions vs. longer term alternatives*

### **Discussion: Potential Actions**

City staff presented examples of initiatives that Oakland already engages in to reduce energy use and GHG emissions, including: green building projects; renewable energy use; encouragement of low-carbon transportation such as cycling or riding BART or AC Transit; an extensive reuse and recycling program; and the creation of green jobs. Participants were then asked what potential energy and GHG reducing actions the City should consider including in the ECAP. Below is a summary of participant responses.

- **Transportation and Community Design**
  - *Engage in environment and community-friendly design planning, including zoning centered on development for sustainable living*
  - *Incorporate community involvement, particularly youth involvement, in community planning*
  - *Support bicycling (e.g., lanes, signage, safety measures)*

- Improve traffic signal timing to reduce idling cars
- Make driving illegal on some days of the week determined by license plate
- Building Energy Use
  - Strengthen building code requirements and models to improve energy and water self-reliance
  - Promote water conservation and efficient water heating
  - Maximize the procurement and production of local renewable energy sources in ways that create local business opportunities
  - Offer incentives and financing for solar action (similar to Berkeley First program)
  - Develop a community solar energy plan (similar to Los Angeles)
  - Implement community choice energy
  - Prohibit wood burning fires
- Waste Reduction
  - Promote e-waste reuse and recycling innovation
  - Use food waste for bio-gas
  - Foster solid waste reduction
  - Reduce garbage collection schedule to collect every other week
- Green Jobs
  - Revitalize the manufacturing industry in Oakland around green industry (e.g., bicycles, solar)
  - Maximize creation and retention of local, high-quality green-collar jobs that provide at least living wage pay, provide benefits, and offer opportunities for training and career advancement
  - Provide ample training and education opportunities for local residents in order to provide pathways into green-collar careers
- Community Engagement
  - Create a grassroots outreach plan that provides outreach and education to all Oakland residents
  - Leverage the roles of individuals in the Oakland community and develop an outreach plan to engage the community in reducing energy use and GHG emissions
  - Engage in coalition building to encourage collaboration within the community on energy and climate issues
  - Administer a sustained marketing campaign educating people about home efficiency
  - Ensure access for and meaningful participation from low-income residents, people of color, immigrant communities, youth and others with barriers to participation
  - Frame actions within the ECAP in ways that resonate with all members of the community
- Targeting Vulnerable Communities
  - Provide relief to the most heavily polluted communities by minimizing or eliminating local and regional sources of pollution
  - Assist vulnerable communities in adapting to the most likely impacts of climate change and energy scarcity, including rising sea level, changing weather patterns, and rising costs of living
  - Ensure revenue generated be ‘recycled’ to aid low- and moderate-income consumers in paying for rising energy and transportation costs
  - Conduct economic and health impact assessments of the Plan to determine the impacts on vulnerable communities
- Financial Incentives/Disincentives
  - Offer incentives for carbon footprint reduction by individuals, businesses

- Provide easy-to-understand incentives, such as rebates incorporated into the price of energy or water conserving appliances
- Abide by the “polluter pays” principle in pricing carbon and other pollutants
- Don’t lean on the business community to pay for everything in the ECAP
- Offer incentives for low-tech and conservation efforts that would keep money in Oakland
- Position Oakland to take advantage of the money coming from the State and Federal Governments
- Other
  - Increase local food production and promote Oakland-grown food at local farmers markets
  - Impose regulations on the food service industry to increase use of renewable resources
  - Develop an urban forestry program
  - Maximize verifiable local greenhouse gas reductions as a way of reducing overall local and regional air pollution
  - Identify and eliminate barriers to enable conservation (e.g., use of grey water)
  - Purchase carbon offsets
  - Prohibit the use of carbon offsets
  - Engage in carbon sequestration
  - Implement good ideas contained in adopted City policy documents such as the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans and other City documents such as the draft Oakland Energy Efficiency Plan, Oil Independent Oakland by 2020 report, and Oakland Partnership proposals
  - Evaluate and utilize ideas put forth in plans and model policies developed by other cities and community organizations, such as those included in the Local Clean Energy Alliance's 21st Century Greenprint for the East Bay report
  - Develop and implement the plan through inter-agency collaboration within the City