



Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement

JOSEPH HORWEDEL, DIRECTOR

COMMUNITY MEETING INVITATION

Location: Room W-120 Council Chamber/Wing Building
City of San Jose City Hall, 200 East Santa Clara Street, San Jose, CA 95113

Dates: Thursday, March 24, 2011

Time: 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Dear Community Member,

The City of San Jose's Planning Division would like to invite you to attend a community meeting about a proposed Community Risk Reduction Plan. During this meeting you will have an opportunity to learn about the proposal and to provide feedback on the plan.

The City of San Jose in partnership with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) is developing a Community Risk Reduction Plan (CRRP). This plan will promote strategies to protect potentially vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly and people with chronic health problems from the harmful effects of air pollution and will identify policies to use when new or modified development occurs in areas where air toxics and air pollution could be found.

During this meeting you will have an opportunity to learn more about the proposal and more importantly provide feedback on the plan. We will consider all comments during our evaluation of the proposal. We are very interested in your input on this proposal and encourage your attendance at this meeting.

Background

The BAAQMD is the public agency entrusted with regulating stationary sources of air pollution in the nine counties that surround San Francisco Bay, including Santa Clara County. The BAAQMD is governed by a 22-member Board of Directors composed of locally elected officials from each of the nine Bay Area counties. The Board oversees policies and adopts regulations for the control of air pollution within the district.

In June 2010, the BAAQMD updated their California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines to recommend air quality significance thresholds, analytical methodologies and mitigation measures for local agencies to use when preparing air quality impact analyses under CEQA.

The updated CEQA Guidelines seek to better protect the health and well-being of Bay Area residents by recommending new protective air quality standards that include limiting exposures to Toxic Air Contaminants (TAC) and Particulate Matter (PM10 and PM2.5).

Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) may cause or contribute to an increase in deaths or serious illness, or may pose a present or potential hazard to human health. TACS tend to be localized and are found in relatively low concentrations. They can, however, result in adverse chronic health effects if there is exposure to low concentrations occurs for long periods. The most common types of TACs are: Diesel Exhaust, Benzene, Formaldehyde, Acetaldehyde, Acrolein, 1.3 Butadiene. Gasoline stations, hospitals, dry cleaners, industrial facilities and mobile sources are common sources of TACs.

Particulate Matter (PM) refers to a wide range of solid or liquid particles in the atmosphere, including smoke, dust, aerosols, and metallic oxides. Respirable particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 micrometers or less is referred to as PM10. PM2.5 includes a subgroup of finer particles that have an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 micrometers or less. Some particulate matter, such as pollen, is naturally occurring. Extended exposure to particulate matter can increase the risk of chronic respiratory disease. Most particulate matter is caused by combustion, factories, construction, grading, demolition, agricultural activities, and motor vehicles. Smoke from residential wood combustion can also be a source of particulate matter and is also a type of TAC. Wood smoke contains a significant amount of PM10 and PM2.5.

According to BAAQMD, the areas that have the highest risk to these pollutants tend to occur in urban areas along major roadways and adjacent to freeways.

The City of San Jose's Planning Division Environmental Review Team uses the BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines to complete our environmental review documents. These guidelines *are not* adopted regulations; however, we rely on the information included in the Guidelines to complete the Air Quality chapter of environmental review documents (Initial Studies and Environmental Impact Reports). BAAQMD reviews/comments on our environmental documents to verify completeness and accuracy, and we rely on their expertise to complete an accurate CEQA analysis.

Currently, there are six topics that should be discussed under the Air Quality chapter of CEQA reviews: Criteria Air pollutants; Green House Gases; **Local Risks and Hazards – Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) and Particulate Matter (PM10 & PM2.5)**; Carbon Monoxide; Odor; and Construction.

The new Guidelines offer an option under the “Local Community Risk & Hazards” section that aims to reduce ambient concentrations of TACs and PMs and to reduce the public's exposure to these pollutants. The City of San Jose is creating a Community Risk Reduction Plan that will address some of these issues and that could also provide a streamlined mechanism for CEQA compliance.

During this public outreach meeting you will have an opportunity to learn about how the CRRP will be drafted and to provide feedback on the project. Staff from the BAAQMD and the American Lung Association will attend both meetings.

If you have any questions before the meeting or during the process, please contact:

City of San Jose: Rebekah Ross, Planning Project Manager, PBCE, Planning Division, Environmental Review, Email: crrp@sanjoseca.gov, Phone: (408) 535-8448