

Summary of Shafter Steering Committee Derived CERP

We are told AB617 emphasizes a community-driven program to reduce local criteria and toxic air emissions. We are also told that reducing emissions with zero-emission technology, meaning zero criteria air pollutants and zero greenhouse gases, is a priority.

With those two goals in mind, most of the Steering Committee (at least 12 voting members who have attended meetings regularly) has made a lot of changes to the 52 items in the CERP proposed by the air district on 08/05/2019. The details are in our formal response of 08/09/2019. It should also be noted that most of the Committee proposals submitted on 08/09/2019 are also found in our submittal of 06/04/2019, a full two months before the release of the Air District CERP on 08/05/2019.

A summary of our basic proposals is below.

In the City of Shafter, including the unincorporated communities just outside the city boundaries such as Maple School, the Migrant Labor Camp, the Mexican Colony, Cherokee Strip, Smith Corner, Poplar Ave, and Myrick's Corner, the number one source of air pollution is from mobile sources. Older cars and personal SUV's are a disproportionate part of this pollution. Basic infrastructure needs such as paved, sidewalks, and other needs are also elements that community members have been advocating for since the beginning and need to see assigned dollar amounts to those projects.

One group of major proposals from the committee is to jump-start the use of electric vehicles in Shafter, especially where older vehicles can be traded in and scrapped. But, extra money for even a small down payment on a new electric vehicle is difficult in a population dominated by low and low-middle income residents. Also, without charging capability where the vehicle is parked overnight there is a big problem. Finally, although simply charging from the grid is cheaper than buying gasoline, savings from an electric vehicle are greatly enhanced when solar power is part or all the home's electrical supply from where the majority of the vehicle charging takes place at night.

So, any program that retires older vehicles and replaces them with zero-emission vehicles is good but it has to be a comprehensive and very affordable program to maximize participation and get at least 150 new electric vehicles in daily use around Shafter.

The rental program proposed for electric vehicles is also good but must also be affordable. Charging stations for these cars should be from solar produced within the community. The cost of renting these vehicles must be subsidized for the first few years to maximize their use.

No one can deny that electric vehicles powered by locally installed solar panels will improve the air quality in Shafter and move the community into the requirements of the near future where zero-emission technology will be demanded everywhere to combat global warming. This must be initiated in Shafter with close to zero costs to residents apart from them turning in their older vehicle. No doubt, the participating residents will realize over time economic savings which will help inspire other people to participate in perhaps a less subsidized program in the future.

Some are arguing that putting solar panels in Shafter will not improve local air quality. But that is incorrect for several reasons. One, there are many large and polluting natural gas power plants in Kern County. Every installed solar panel in Shafter will ultimately decrease the need slightly for those power plants to operate improving air quality at the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley. Second, locally

owned solar-generated electricity makes operating an electric car more attractive from an economic standpoint so that economic stimulus indirectly but significantly improves our air quality as more electric vehicles come into use. Where someone wishes to own an electric car but cannot own solar on their rooftop there should be a heavily subsidized community solar option for residents to participate in with the benefits of cheaper electricity like owning solar panels directly.

One other significant pollution source in Shafter that is concentrated during the worst months of the year for PM2.5 is home heating from burning natural gas during the winter months. Electric heat pumps represent an affordable zero technology home heating option. Residents in Shafter should have a zero-cost opportunity to have electric heat pumps installed in their homes (perhaps the mini-split heat pumps are ideal). Added to this should be electric hot water heaters and electric induction stoves or cooktops. The natural gas can then be turned off to the home. Together with resident-owned solar-powered electricity, these electric heating devices become very affordable to operate. A program in Shafter that eventually leads to every home and building being electric needs to begin now because that is the unavoidable future.

In summary, a majority of the Steering Committee in Shafter is recommending that a major part of the AB617 derived funding for Shafter be spent on electric vehicles, electric homes and locally owned solar power providing the electricity, followed by basic infrastructure needs such as sidewalks, paved streets, and walking paths. There will be significant reductions in local air pollution and greenhouse gases. A program like this also represents a just transition to the future for residents who do not have the ability to pay for their own personal transition to a zero-emission economy.

Sighed: AB 617 -Community Steering Committee members:

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