

Meeting Highlights*
AB 617 Shafter Community Steering Committee Meeting #26
December 14, 2020, 5:00pm - 7:00pm
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Action items for the Shafter Community Steering Committee (CSC):

- Send recommended locations for overnight monitoring by the van

Action items for the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (District):

- Mail weekly Spanish monitoring reports to the CSC before each meeting
- Schedule meeting for more in-depth conversation with CSC and City of Shafter about proposed projects
- Provide the CSC with maps of all air monitoring locations
- Provide fully translated enforcement report to CSC by next meeting

Welcome and Introductions:

Hanna Stelmakhovych, Facilitator, Institute for Local Government (ILG)
Ryan Hayashi, Deputy Air Pollution Control Officer, the District
Lynnda Martin, Community Co-host, Shafter Community Member

Hanna welcomed the Shafter CSC participants and introduced herself and the ILG team. She gave an overview of Zoom instructions, Spanish translation services, and provided an agenda overview.

Ryan thanked the CSC for participating in the final meeting of the year and expressed hope for 2021 and continued progress with the CERP implementation. Community co-host, Lynnda Martin, introduced herself and shared photos of the Shafter community, her perspective on the AB 617 impact on the region and how parts of the community could benefit from sidewalks and urban greening.

Standing Updates

Community Air Monitoring Update:

Chay Thao, Program Manager, the District

Chay gave an update on continued community air monitoring. Presentation highlights included:

- The District is continuing to monitor various locations with the van
- Working with Richland School District to install the electrical software at Sequoia and Golden Oak Elementary Schools
- Working with Shafter Labor Camp and electrical contractors in order to proceed with deploying an air monitoring trailer in that location
- Ammonia sampling has been completed at the DMV and mobile ammonia monitoring detected .6 PPM
- In the process of exploring how to integrate community air monitors with existing regulatory monitors in the RAAN system

Question: How is the District approaching the ammonia monitoring and in what locations?

District Answer: The CSC requested that we monitor on the west side. The District is using the same canisters we use for the VOC speciation collection.

Question from Spanish-speaker: In total, how many monitors are detecting the contamination?

District Answer: We have three at the schools. We already have some units installed at Shafter DMV for PM 10 and PM 2.5.

Follow up question from Spanish-speaker: Can the District give the CSC a list of locations?

District Answer: Yes, that is available on the website and we can give you a map of specific locations.

Question: Do you conduct the mobile monitoring during business hours or after hours? For Mexican Colony, it would be nice to know what is happening in the evenings. How many times have you gone there during the week and at what times?

District Answer: The District is starting to schedule a combination of times in the afternoon and evening at that location. We already have quite a few Mexican Colony locations for the van monitoring. But if the CSC has any additional locations to suggest, please send them so we can begin to schedule overnight monitoring.

School Filtration & Bus Subcommittee:

Jaime Holt, Chief Communications Officer, the District

Jaime provided an update on the School Filtration and Bus Subcommittee. Presentation highlights included:

- We are close to opening the application period for the school filtration program
- We have been in discussions with CARB staff about what kind of equipment can remove ozone/pollutants and viruses from the air in schools
- The District is continuing to work with Richland School District; they recently ordered a number of EV school buses and are exploring the possibility of ordering more

Question: Is the filtration only for schools, not residents? Can the program include children from 0-5 years?

District Answer: At this time, the program is only for schools and it is only for K-12.

Pesticide Monitoring Update:

Nan Singhasemanon, Assistant Director, Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR)

Nan gave an update on pesticide monitoring. Presentation highlights included:

- Shafter has inspired other AB 617 communities so DPR is starting work with additional cities
- DPR kicked off the first monitoring study for the Mitigation pilot project on 1-3,D right near Shafter
- DPR will review data and evaluate the individual monitor studies
- First field study in Shafter should be made public in or around February
- DPR will return to a CSC meeting to share information from the presentation given at the recent regulation presentation
- DPR is currently conducting the air monitoring site selection review; they are focusing on 2021 and Shafter is one of the four sites DPR is considering

Question: If the state moves forward with legislation and passes some kind of notification process, would Shafter attempt a pilot so that when statewide legislation passes, they can point to us?

DPR Answer: That is the plan. If we can establish a local notification pilot in Shafter, we want to learn from that and scale it in other areas.

Question: Is the monitor at Sequoia still reading telone? There is a grower-to-grower notification process currently in place for the county. Is DPR looking at that same structure?

DPR Answer: The one constant has always been telone. DPR is trying to push back our air monitoring network to what it was before, which was 31 pesticides. On the notification front, I have heard a lot from the CSC about what you want to see. DPR is well aware of the elements of the notification and what the CSC is interested in and what has worked with the county in the past. Those conversations are going to play out a bit more before I can report back to you on a definitive direction.

Question from Spanish-speaker: We have been operating from theories and people keep dying. Do you believe that a pilot notification would be good in this case?

DPR Answer: I am not as familiar with the specifics of that program and its options right now, but I look forward to providing more specifics on that.

CARB Update:

Skott Wall, Office of Community Air Protection, California Air Resources Board (CARB)

Skott provided a CARB agency update. Presentation highlights included:

- Big changes to the CARB Board last week
- Tania Pacheco-Werner is replacing Dr. Sherriffs and Liane Randolph is replacing Mary Nichols

City of Shafter:

Jaime Holt, Chief Communications Officer, the District

Michael James, Public Works Director, City of Shafter

Jaime presented the Shafter CERP at-a-glance document and showcased measures that align with work the City of Shafter is doing. The City of Shafter representative spoke to the CSC about projects on the horizon with the city. Presentation highlights include:

- The District put together a CERP overview and shared it with the CSC; Jaime highlighted the specific CERP elements that relate to projects the City is currently working on
- The City of Shafter is working on street improvements in North Shafter
- Public Works is studying the feasibility of curbs and sidewalks throughout Shafter communities
- The city is extending its street sweeping services
- Kern County is contributing \$50,000 to the City to develop a safe and accessible parking lot off Lerdo Highway

Question from Spanish-speaker: Where is the location of the shared parking station?

City of Shafter Answer: There will be a parking lot that the county transit station will utilize near Lerdo Highway.

Question from Spanish-speaker: Can the City consider a project for Shafter Avenue? It has little to no sidewalks from the center to Mexican Colony, but a lot of kids walk home from school along that route.

City of Shafter Answer: I am sure residents from Mexican Colony and other communities that are unincorporated are well aware that the County of Kern has secured a grant to extend the city sewer system to these communities. That project is being engineered right now. We have to be careful to make sure that whatever street improvements we have put in place won't be compromised by the future sewer project. That is definitely a consideration.

Comment: I support the city's proposition of putting a sidewalk and bike path along Highway 43 so kids can safely get to the new park at Fresno Avenue.

City of Shafter Answer: The City is actively developing a grant application to develop a new park at that parcel. We have conducted five public workshops to get community feedback. Assuming we are successful, having a park would make the Highway 43 corridor improvements that much more important.

Question: Will there be ongoing conversations between the City and the CSC? If so, would it be ok to have a deeper conversation offline?

District Answer: We are definitely open to that and will look for times to schedule more conversation.

Question: Is Public Works the department that actually goes out and shovels? Based on the CERP, the rerouting has been a major issue for residents. Including the residents in these conversations is crucial. Has the City gone out and actually mapped possible locations where rerouting can happen?

City of Shafter Answer: If it involves anything in a public right-of-way or streets, it involves Public Works. There are active conversations and planning efforts underway to provide better traffic circulation for existing and future communities.

Comment from Spanish-speaker: I am worried about the idea of doing construction in the areas of Shafter and Central because it will take away some green areas and recreation in that community.

City of Shafter Answer: If we are referring to the park site, the City Council made it very clear that they want to retain visual curb appeal.

Comment from Community co-host: Thank you to the City of Shafter for presenting tonight. The CSC doesn't always get to hear about these projects. I hope we can all work together to move some of these projects forward in our community. I am in favor of a smaller committee to keep these discussions top of mind.

Low Dust Harvesting Equipment & Alternatives to Agricultural Burning:

Todd DeYoung, Director of Strategies & Incentives, the District

Todd gave an update on two CERP measures. Presentation highlights included:

- The District presented to its board in November and requested approval of the low dust harvester incentive program measure
- Authorization was given to open a district-wide program with additional funding and enhancements included in the Shafter CERP
- There is \$2.5 million in dedicated funding for this program in the Shafter area
- The program for Shafter pays up to 75% of cost of equipment
- For outreach, the Almond Board will provide a specific list of growers who operate in the area
- The District is still waiting on final approval from CARB
- As an alternative to ag burns, this program will provide incentives to growers to chip and reincorporate the material into the soil
- This funding is only for Shafter, so we won't be waiting for other projects from the Valley

Comment: Thank you for going above and beyond and asking CARB for additional funding.

District Response: Thank you. We need your help in the outreach for these programs. Please let us know if there are specific organizations we need to be talking to make this successful.

Annual Enforcement Report:

Ryan Hayashi, Deputy Air Pollution Control Officer, the District

Ryan reviewed the annual report and the comments received to date. Presentation highlights included:

- The District will have the report to the CSC by next meeting, fully translated
- Despite COVID, the District is still responding to complaints and monitoring

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Wrap Up/Next Steps:

Hanna Stelmakhovych, Facilitator, ILG

Hanna thanked everyone for participating in the meeting and thanked Lynnda for co-hosting. Lynnda thanked the CSC for their time and participation and expressed appreciation for working together through Zoom despite the year's challenges.

Reminders:

The next CSC meeting is Jan. 11 via Zoom. All the presentations, meetings highlights, transcripts and the Zoom meeting recording will be posted online.

**Refer to meeting audio to review the full details and comments from the meeting.*