

Alameda County Government Services & Operations Climate Action Plan

Second Public Workshop Summary | May 11, 2022

Workshop Overview

This document summarizes participation, questions, and poll results from the second Alameda County Government Services & Operations Climate Action Plan (GOCAP) public workshop, held on Zoom on May 11, 2022, 6:00 - 7:30 pm Pacific time.

- 48 people registered and 26 people attended (in addition to County and consultant staff).
- The workshop agenda included several interactive activities:

Time	Item
10 min	Welcome and introductions
20 min	GOCAP overview presentation and brief Q&A
15 min	Online feedback tool walk-through and intro to breakout rooms
35 min	Breakout groups review draft proposals for a section of the online feedback tool
10 min	Conclusion, optional demographic poll, and next steps
10 min	Optional Q&A with County staff (after formal close of meeting)

Workshop Objectives

- Introduce participants to the GOCAP, update them on plan progress, and orient them to GOCAP goals and scope so they can effectively give input.
- Share with participants ways to engage in the GOCAP development process, including the online feedback forum via the Consider.It platform (<https://acgocap.consider.it/>).
- Hear input from participants on draft actions verbally and through the online feedback forum.
- Help participants have an easy and effective experience accessing the online feedback forum so that participants provide additional input after the meeting and encourage others to participate.

Promotion

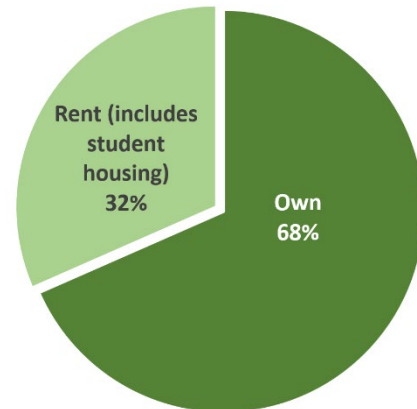
The workshop was promoted in conjunction with the online feedback forum. Flyers and social media squares were created in English, Spanish, and Traditional Chinese. (As with the November 2021 workshop, registrants could request interpretation in Mandarin or Spanish.) The County shared workshop invitations with community organizations and relevant experts by direct email and through County websites, newsletters, and social media accounts. Community members who had previously signed up for updates on plan development received email invitations directly. Registrants were also encouraged to share with their friends and family.

Demographic Summary

Nineteen (19) participants completed the demographic survey at the end of the workshop. The results are summarized below.

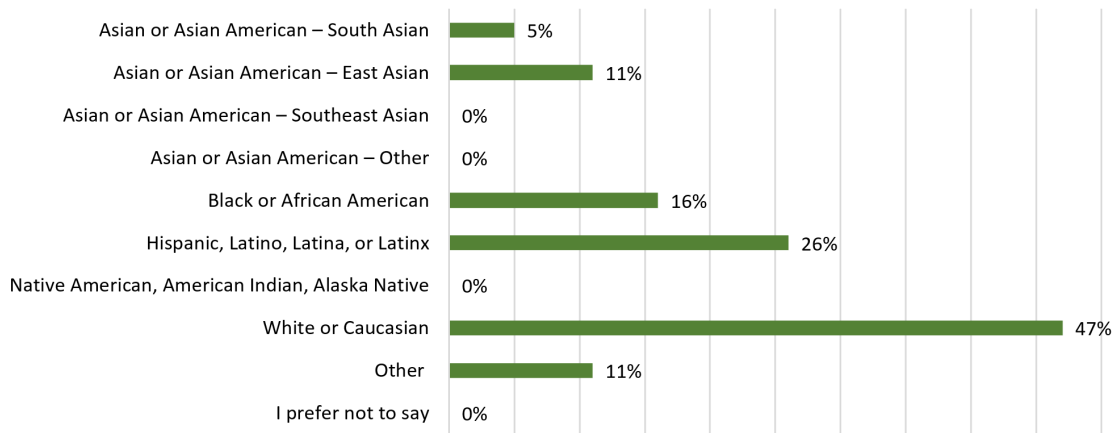
1. Do you, or the people you live with, own or rent your home?

	#	%
Own	13	68%
Rent (includes student housing)	6	32%
N/A - I am currently unhoused or in temporary housing	0	0%
Other	0	0%
I prefer not to say	0	0%
TOTAL	19	100%



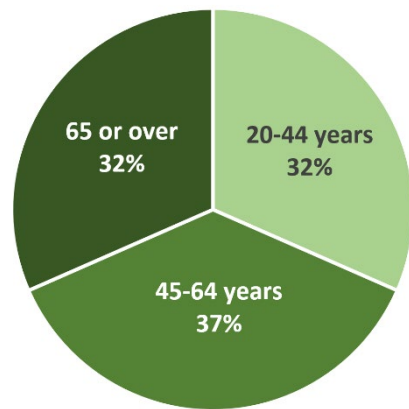
2. Which of the following best represents your race/ethnicity? Select all that apply. (Note that some participants selected multiple options, so the percentages do not add to 100%).

	#	%
Asian or Asian American - South Asian	1	5%
Asian or Asian American - East Asian	2	11%
Asian or Asian American - Southeast Asian	0	0%
Asian or Asian American - Other	0	0%
Black or African American	3	16%
Hispanic, Latino, Latina, or Latinx	5	26%
Native American, American Indian, Alaska Native	0	0%
White or Caucasian	9	47%
Other	2	11%
I prefer not to say	0	0%



3. What is your age?

	#	%
19 or younger	0	0%
20-44 years	6	32%
45-64 years	7	37%
65 or over	6	32%
I prefer not to say	0	0%
TOTAL	19	100%



Overarching Feedback and Takeaways

Key takeaways and themes from the workshop are summarized below. Feedback on the measures was entered directly on the online feedback forum by workshop participants and is not detailed in this meeting summary. This feedback can be found at <https://acgocap.consider.it/>.

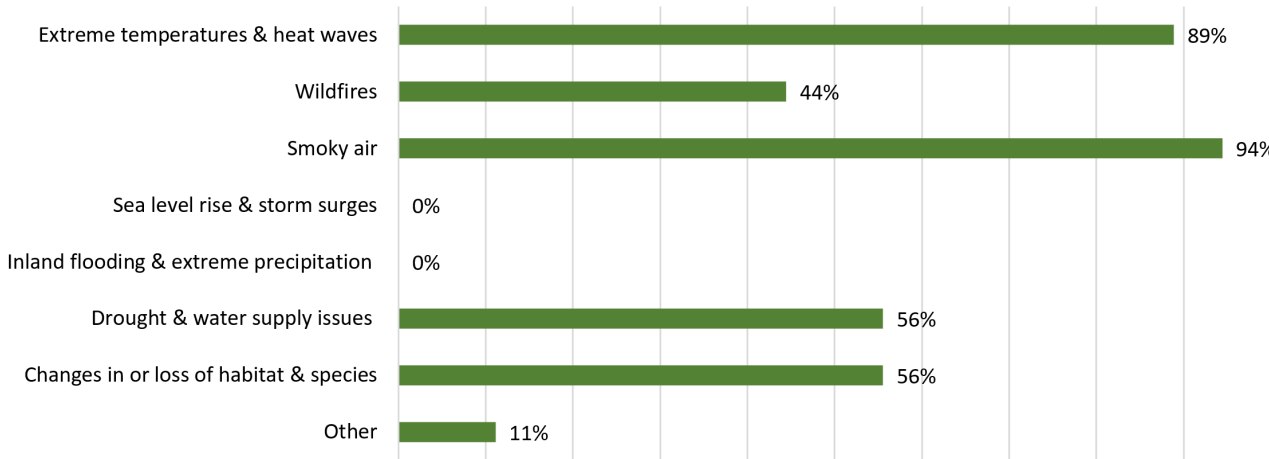
- Almost all participants have experienced **smoky air** and **extreme temperatures and heat waves** in Alameda County. Over half have also experienced drought and water supply issues and changes in or loss of habitat and species.
- Participants urged the County to **center equity** by paying local Indigenous communities to lead climate mitigation and adaptation efforts, including and reflecting BIPOC and disabled communities and organizations in the GOCAP, and providing translation for outreach and engagement promotional materials and events.
- Across breakout rooms, participants emphasized the importance of **considering the needs of vulnerable, frontline, and at-risk populations and communities**, which could involve prioritizing the shift to electric vehicles in locations that currently experience more air pollution, not requiring documentation for job training, and providing pathways to green jobs for people without college degrees.

Warm-up Poll Results

Near the start of the workshop, participants were asked to complete three poll questions.

1. What climate impacts have you experienced in Alameda County?

Almost all of the eighteen (18) respondents had experienced smoky air (94%) and extreme temperatures & heat waves (89%) in Alameda County. Over half (56%) had experienced drought & water supply issues and changes in or loss of habitat & species.



2. Did you attend the last public workshop in November?

Most respondents (83%) did not attend the public workshop in November.

	#	%
Yes	1	6%
No	15	83%
Not sure	2	11%
TOTAL	18	100%

3. Have you already visited or engaged on the online feedback platform (Consider.It) for this project?

Over half of respondents (56%) had not yet visited or engaged on the Consider.It platform for this project.

	#	%
Yes	7	39%
No	10	56%
Not sure	1	5%
TOTAL	18	100%

Breakout Room Discussions

Participants divided into five breakout rooms based on section to discuss three selected draft measures for each section. After discussing each measure, participants took a few minutes to enter their feedback about that measure into the online feedback forum.

Participant questions and comments during breakout rooms are included below. Comments are not direct quotes. Most comments that involved suggestions on the measure were added to the online feedback tool.

Some responses to questions are included below in indented bullets. Not all questions were directly addressed during the session, as many were captured in the online feedback tool dialogue.

Breakout 1: Built Environment

All Electric New Construction

- Is this electric planning to be solar? Is it planning to be off-the-grid electric?
 - o We do have a submeasure aiming to add more renewable resources where feasible. In this measure we state our intention to purchase renewable energy from the local utility provider. What exactly is the definition of “new facility” construction referring to? Only County buildings or residential as well?
 - o This plan addresses government buildings, not residential. We have plans to advocate to the state, but no control over residential outside of unincorporated areas (which are covered in another plan).

Develop Climate Resilience Decision Tools

- Does this mean it is going to be like CEQA?
 - o It is more about taking projections into account and understanding impacts. Look to the future when designing facilities to ensure they can withstand the effects of a changing climate.
- My immediate thought is what if the climate situation is more dire in 2024 than when the standards are created? Will there be an opportunity to update urgent needs in this decision-making tool?
 - o Yes. This is a four-year plan, so at minimum, we would revisit then. But a re-evaluation could be undertaken any time.

Low-Carbon Accessibility of New Facilities

- Transit-oriented development is ongoing—what value is added by adding a County facility next to an underserved community?
- Are green spaces defined as facilities? Or do “facilities” only refer to building structures?
 - o Buildings. Though we do have measures relating to carbon sequestration and landscapes in the Built Environment section..

Other

- To make things work with the environment, we need to do everything. So why are we supposed to grade what is least and most important?
 - o We want to know what you feel is important as this will help us determine how to focus time, energy, and taxpayer dollars.
- Do we have the resources to fund everything if everything is important?
 - o That is a challenge. Some of these measures are meant to begin the work. Hopefully in alignment with the state’s goals. It will take time to fund it all.
- Sequestering carbon with trees is more complex than just planting a tree because it needs to be drought and salinity tolerant (because reclaimed water has more saline than potable) and last for a long time. We don’t have enough canopy in Contra Costa County or Alameda County.
- We should also be looking to use native trees/greenery, particularly ones that support pollinators.

Breakout 2: Green Economy

Sustainable Operations Incentives

- Related data point: Salesforce has procurement updates here re: sustainability <https://www.salesforce.com/company/sustainability/supplier-sustainability/>.
- Supply chain is a big area of emissions for any organization.
- How difficult is this going to be? I have been pushing Oakland schools to do more sustainable procurement but they can't. Is this something that works in reality?
- Great documentary re: circular economy being needed - The Story of Plastic (from The Story of Stuff) <https://www.storyofstuff.org/movies/the-story-of-plastic-documentary-film/>

Reuse/Repair Pilot Program

- I didn't know we had a seed library.
- Is the seed library only at County libraries?
 - o Plan scope is for Alameda County Library system. Some cities like Berkeley and Oakland have their own library systems.
- I think it's an excellent idea, the more sharing provided the better. In my neighborhood they do a lot of seed sharing.
- And the assumption here is they plant the plants, and they harvest the seeds, and they return it?
- The seed lending program is great. The other thing that is crucial is supporting the repair of objects rather than throwing stuff into landfill. The planned obsolescence of products is death to the planet.
- I think reuse/repair is super important. There is not much of an incentive for businesses to prioritize reuse/repair, so it is important that the County offer options and facilitate.

Workforce Development

- Workforce development is important. We need pathways to green jobs. How do we help people without college degrees? Some people want to have hands-on jobs. I'd like to know more about how to ensure and create quality [in the workforce development program] and have employees see value in those trainees and not like a checked box.
- The County is using voting to prioritize actions. Is that how the data is being used?
- What can the government do that they are good at? There are some things that businesses are good at. Other things the County can uniquely do.
- We need pathways to new green jobs like climate-friendly construction. We need quality control on sources [vetting companies offering green jobs]. Also, we need to encourage people to have kids learn how to do work with their hands - and to see that this does not mean not using your mind. This change in educational focus will be important to real resilience in communities.

Other/Habitat

- I am disappointed that I'm not seeing anything about habitat, reforestation, and plant natives. It seems like this is something that the County can take initiative on, especially with the issues with water. How can we talk about climate resiliency if we aren't creating a livable climate?
- Is there anything that the County can do to encourage cities to care more and prioritize it? I have seen 6 huge trees come down, fewer native bees, fewer birds.
- A lot of trees that uplift sidewalks get cut down.

Breakout 3: Zero Waste

Edible Food Recovery

- How would the plan for high-quality edible food recovery work?
 - o Ideas include developing guidelines for event planners to follow and updating building design guidelines to include capacity planning for food recovery for new construction that may have an onsite cafeteria.
- What are examples of municipal operations?
 - o Examples include the food served in congregate settings such as Santa Rita Jail and the Juvenile Justice Center as well as food served as part of County meetings and events.
- How does food recovery work? Send to food banks?
 - o Food recovery broadly refers to keeping edible food out of the landfill (or even compost processing) and instead, prioritizing it for human consumption.
- The focus on the government organization presents a greater opportunity to address and impact emissions associated with wasted food.

- Potential con: expiration of recovered food, need to be efficient, challenge of creating a smooth operation from recovery to mouth.

Job Training (Litter Clean-Ups)

- Do we know how much people would be paid? Is it minimum wage? Or a stipend for the day?
 - o No firm information right now as exploration and figuring out the logistics of the program is part of the proposal.
- Support for the idea of litter clean-up but “job training” is a misleading term because training teaches skills relevant to career, not the case here unless tied to specific career/skill development.
 - o While such programs aren’t focused on teaching technical skills, they do provide experience with soft skills such as punctuality, organization, and interpersonal skills.
- Specific clean-up days (big days)? Or will it be an ongoing thing (fills the needs)?
 - o Will most likely be the latter to be more of a job and meet community needs, but would depend on what makes the most sense for the participants and program as a whole.
- Will at-risk individuals need documentation? They have a hard time maintaining documentation, which could take months. Could something be built in to have people being trained without need for documentation (huge barrier for many houseless folks). Important to consider needs for at-risk populations.

Reuse Policy

- How is this different from what is currently offered?
 - o Currently, County employees are not required to seek second-hand items available for use in the County inventory. It is up to each department and agency to seek alternative options before purchasing a product brand new. This policy would require employees to look at alternative options first, if available.
- As a County employee not based in Oakland, unsure how to go through the process of getting furniture from the Property and Salvage warehouse. How do you go there to select the stuff?
 - o Currently, a County employee would go to the Property & Salvage Warehouse in San Leandro to select the item for use in the workplace.
- Seems like a stretch to go to P&S considering the number of employees in the County, accessibility, etc. Distance to warehouse is also a barrier.
 - o The online reuse platform will simplify the process by allowing the employee to view and order items from an online database, saving travel time and emissions from vehicles.
- Needs to be a mixture of options rather than a strict policy.
 - o The policy would be involve following a series of steps to check options, so employees are not purchasing unnecessary brand new items when quality, second-hand items are available or renting or leasing options exist.

Breakout 4: Transportation

Parking Policies

- What proportion of County employees work from home?
- What are the current parking policies?
 - o Currently operational costs are barely covered as not all parking lots require payment.
- Are open spaces available to the public?
 - o At most lots, yes.
- Is there a way for the County to provide incentives to purchase EV cars, scooters, bikes, etc.?
 - o Best way is to expand public infrastructure to encourage sustainable transport. The County cannot give direct financial incentives to employees for purchasing EVs or bikes, but can incentivize them by making these modes of transit the most convenient options.

Alternative Commute Incentives

- Charging stations in the county lots?
 - o Already have 61 charging stations (some have multiple ports), planning to expand as we expand EV fleet.
- Do we currently offer incentives to employees?

- Clipper Card program for work-related travels during work hours. Also available to employees is the Guaranteed Ride Home Service and carpool parking.
- There are programs where the public can contribute pre-tax dollars to their commutes, viable for the County?
 - Employees can take pre-tax funding from their paychecks for parking fees and BART.

Shuttle Services for Employees & Public

- Didn't know the shuttle services are open to the public.
 - Among the five shuttle lines operated by the County, four are available to the public.
- Increase outreach and awareness of the shuttle services.
- "Transit App" should include the shuttles.

Electric Vehicles

- Do we look at where the vehicles are used (such as areas with higher pollution, more traffic, higher population density that could benefit most from clean vehicles (San Leandro BART, AC Transit)?
 - We can prioritize transitioning medium- and heavy-duty fleet, as they emit the most.
- How do we engage with AC Transit? Would like to hear more about how AC Transit addresses the problem.

Breakout 5: Community Resilience

County Channels of Communication

- Feels abstract. Need to raise information to people's level of attention, maybe at community level.
- Make it relevant to people. Emphasize what people are already experiencing.
- Go through schools.
- Resilience is a buzzword, like climate; do people really know what resilience entails? If we had done resilience work before COVID, it would've helped us be better prepared.
- What can people expect when we say the word resilience?
- Use outdoor ads that direct people to a phone number or website for information when it's smoky, for example.

Assessing Priority Populations

- COVID could have been used as a teaching tool for identifying and addressing priority populations.
- Would be nice to have a mechanism for populations to identify themselves, not wait for the researchers to find them.
- Vulnerable populations were either not asked or afraid to answer the call when pandemic hit. For example, undocumented people were more vulnerable to COVID but afraid of retribution.
- We have the numbers already. For example, Ashland has the worst health, income, poverty. Those characteristics already identify a vulnerable community, we shouldn't have to wait for people to come forward and identify themselves.

Resilience Training for Public Resilience Hubs

- I participated in the 8-month NorCal Resilience Network training. At end of training, left with nothing because County did not monetarily support efforts to inform the community. Other communities, such as San Leandro, received funding to do resilience work.
- I didn't know anything about resilience hubs.
- Trying to find funding for the place, transportation. It wouldn't take that much; all of the cities already have their resilience funding and keep applying for more.
- Nothing for the unincorporated areas. There should be, as a baseline, funding set aside for the unincorporated areas.

Zoom Chat Q&A

Throughout the workshop, attendees were encouraged to submit their questions into the chat box on the Zoom platform. County staff provided verbal responses to some questions during a designated Q&A session. Some questions asked in the chat have been edited for clarity and grammar.

- Will the recording of tonight's session be available for public viewing in the future? Thank you!
- How do you measure emissions?
 - o You can see details about our GHG inventories here: <https://www.acgov.org/sustain/what/climate/footprint.htm>
- Is there a way Alameda County can influence Federal policy, e.g., carbon tax?
- Where did most of the emissions reduction come from?
- When will the datapoints for 2020, 2021 be incorporated?
- Where's the cultural competency in the process?
- Where in the plan is habitat creation by planting natives and urban reforestation? Both are critical to climate resiliency. For reference: <http://homegrownnationalpark.org>.
- Is there a way for residents to contribute to reaching your goals, or is this just for those working for the County?
- Is there a concerted outreach to include the local indigenous community perspective and as a resource is your team familiar with the book "Drawdown" edited by Paul Hawken?
- Has Oakland-based Greenlining Institute been engaged to have conversations in equity and community empowerment in the face of climate change?
- Will breakouts be recorded?
- My question about the resource Drawdown by Hawken regarding research on reducing global warming—has anyone looked into all that previous research?
- Do we put Climate Action Funding on the ballot as a measure?

Zoom Chat Comments

During the designated Q&A session during the workshop, participants also submitted comments in the Zoom chat, shown below.

- Agree heartedly with the equity component.
- The disabled community should also be included and reflected.
- Local indigenous community: see Sogorea Te' Land Trust: <https://sogoreate-landtrust.org/>. They are available for consultation (and should be paid for their time).
- To start this presentation should provide translation!
- The website said that Mandarin and Spanish interpretation services can be arranged if requested by May 1.
- +1 to folks bringing forth the necessity of not just "offering a seat at the table" (overused euphemism) to the original peoples of this land pre-colonization, but actually making sure that native peoples and nations are leading.
- In addition to Sogorea Te' there are many other BIPOC and disability orgs that should be involved ground up.
- Can you share more? I'm aware of the Ella Baker Center, Friends of Adeline, and Ed Roberts Center (disability community).
- The online feedback form won't be useful unless BIPOC and disability orgs can help spread the word.

Optional Q&A Session

At the end of the workshop, County staff offered an optional 10-minute Q&A session. Verbal and chat comments are shown below. Selected responses are indented.

- Cross agency efforts—what are the limitations if those efforts have already started? Of getting all departments to be as intentional as the Sustainability Department?
 - o We are building relationships with internal agencies and are committed to a long process to develop the plan and work across silos.
- There is a whole series of research edited by Paul Hawken, Drawdown. It has to do with biomass, temperature control, deforestation, afforestation, etc.
 - o We did review Drawdown materials early in the process. Great idea to revisit now.
- Important that these promotion materials for the online forum are available in Spanish. I'd like to distribute them to my network.
 - o (Materials were shared with this participant in Spanish to pass along.)
- Is there a benefit to looking into a freeway billboard?
- Major developments have an environmental component; protect current trees; stick with native and save what is already there. Hope unincorporated area plan includes saving existing trees.

- Funding seems to be a constraint. I vote in every election but recall no measure for County climate action. You might get more response than you'd expect by putting funding for County GOCAP on the ballot.
- AB 1000 should be considered and put on the front burner.
 - o Great suggestions. Please add these suggestions to the online feedback tool.