



Workshop Notes

El Cerrito Climate Action Plan Workshop #3: Reducing Energy Use

Thursday, December 2, 2010, 7:00 p.m.
El Cerrito City Hall (City Council Chambers)
10890 San Pablo Avenue

Workshop Presenters:

- Melanie Mintz, Environmental Services Division Manager, City of El Cerrito
- Maria Sanders, Environmental Analyst, City of El Cerrito
- Ariel Ambruster, Facilitator, Center for Collaborative Policy

1. Meeting Overview and Participant Introductions

The purpose of this meeting is to gather community input on possible Climate Action Plan strategies for reducing residential and commercial energy use. Ariel Ambruster gave an overview of the meeting agenda and ground rules. Meeting participants introduced themselves and briefly discussed their interest in the Climate Action Plan.

2. Presentation on El Cerrito's Climate Action Planning Process

Maria Sanders presented information on El Cerrito's Climate Action Plan (CAP), greenhouse gas emissions inventory, and strategies to reduce energy use in the residential and commercial sectors. She challenged participants to think about strategies that would create a 15% reduction in emissions from energy use in El Cerrito. Please refer to the **CAPWorkshops** presentation for more on the contents of the presentation.

3. Reducing Energy Use Small Group Discussion

Meeting participants were given a worksheet to fill out individually, soliciting their comments on the following questions and then asked to discuss their responses in small groups:

- ❖ What energy reduction strategies do you support?
- ❖ What energy strategies do you not support?
- ❖ Public education and incentive programs are unlikely to produce enough energy savings to achieve the AB 32 goals. How can the City overcome this barrier?
- ❖ A number of possible policies, ordinances, programs, or projects that could help El Cerrito reduce its carbon footprint were discussed today. What additional ideas do you have for options the City could pursue? (Ideas that don't necessarily affect energy-related emissions are also welcome).

4. Group Reports and Large Group Discussion

Participants reported back to the larger group on their small group discussions:

i. Group 1:

- Pursue energy reduction incentives
- Provide information and feedback; Use energy consumption data so that people within one neighborhood can compare their energy use to others in their neighborhood.
- Present information in a compelling way.
- How can smart meters help?
- Encourage solar installations with a Property Assessed (PACE) Financing mechanism.
- Work with commercial building owners to harness their sites for solar energy production.

- Pool community demand for energy efficiency and solar installations to create economies of scale.
- More LED streetlights.
- Get people out enjoying their community spaces more so that they don't stay home using a lot of electronic gadgets.

ii. Group 2:

- Homeowners need capital to make energy efficiency improvements. Get grants to provide incentive funds.
- Support Property Assessed Clean Energy Financing (PACE) to provide an easy way to borrow money for energy efficiency and solar work in existing buildings.
- Investigate other lending strategies – donation program, peer-to-peer, revolving loan fund provided by the city? Energy savings would provide the return on investment.
- An Energy Conservation Ordinance at the time-of-sale for a property would be interesting. But is the sales turn-over rate high enough to yield the type of savings that we need?
- Time-of-sale energy conservation ordinance would be one of the only ways to get energy efficiency improvements in rental units.
- Are there residential models where energy conservation service companies finance improvements through the energy savings?
- Get a surcharge on energy use to finance energy efficiency improvements.
- Devise a rewards program for those who reduce energy.
- Educate at the permit counter.
- Require higher energy efficiency standards for new construction or remodels.
- Encourage more multi-family housing development. Multi-family housing is inherently more efficient.
- New homeowner welcome packet, including energy efficiency information.

iii. Large Group Discussion

- Need to find money to incentivize people to make improvements with existing buildings.
- Prioritize bang for the buck when it comes to grant funds. Concentrate on educating the people in between the "early adopters" and the folks who won't change.
- Confront people with the real outcomes of their choices.
- Ordinance for a Time-of-Sale energy audit. Realtors could use the information to sell a house. Reports should give people vivid information about their potential home.
- Have a contest challenging cities along San Pablo Avenue to see who can get the most energy savings.