



2008-04-03

Tim Snellings, Director of Development Services attended the Attorney General and Local Government Commission's meeting on "CEQA and Climate Change: Partnering with Local Agencies to Combat Global Warming". The following is a summary of Tim's notes as well as some attachments of the agenda and some additional information received:

1) Attorney General Jerry Brown introduced the topic. He reminded us of the law in California known as the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006.

SIDE NOTE from WIKIPEDIA: The **Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006**, a law in California, was signed by Governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger on September 27, 2006. It sets up the first enforceable state-wide program in the U.S. to cap all greenhouse gas emissions from major industries that includes penalties for non-compliance. In signing the bill into law, Schwarzenegger declared, "We simply must do everything we can in our power to slow down global warming before it is too late... The science is clear. The global warming debate is over."

The Bill (AB 32), authored by Assembly Speaker Fabian Nuñez (D-Los Angeles) and Assembly Member Fran Pavley (D-Agoura Hills), was agreed between Schwarzenegger and Democratic legislators on August 30, 2006. It requires that by 2020 the state's greenhouse gas emissions be reduced to 1990 levels, a roughly 25% reduction under business as usual estimates. The California Air Resources Board, under the California Environmental Protection Agency, is to prepare plans to achieve the objectives stated in the Act.

As defined in the bill, "greenhouse gases" include all of the following gases: carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride

(SF6). These are the same gases listed as Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) in the [Kyoto Protocol](#).

The Attorney General asked the question, 'Where does local government fit in? Stated another way, from the CEQA perspective, what is threshold of significance of a project on climate change?' He answered, 'When you're in a non attainment zone for area quality issues, any additional impact is significant. The project must mitigate its impacts. The same is true for climate change.'

Cities and Counties will need their plan for CO2 and Methane reduction.

A key strategy will be fewer miles traveled (VMT) for automobiles. This has a connection with land use planning for our future.

There is a way to design the future of CA in a way that promotes density in a quality manner, termed by the AG as Elegant Density.

He also highlighted the importance of LEED for future buildings.

SIDE NOTE from WIKIPEDIA: The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System, developed by the [U.S. Green Building Council \(USGBC\)](#), provides a suite of standards for environmentally sustainable construction. Since its inception in 1998, LEED has grown to encompass over 14,000 projects in 50 US States and 30 countries covering 1.062 billion square feet (99 km²) of development area.^[2] The hallmark of LEED is that it is an open and transparent process where the technical criteria proposed by the LEED committees are publicly reviewed for approval by the more than 10,000 membership organizations that currently constitute the USGBC.

2) [Chuck Shulock, CA Air Resources Board](#)

Highlighted the City of Sacramento Sustainability Master Plan.

CA is the 15th largest emitter of GHG in the world.

SIDE NOTE from WIKIPEDIA: Greenhouse gases are the gases present in the [atmosphere](#) which reduce the loss of heat into space and therefore contribute to global temperatures through the [greenhouse effect](#). Greenhouse gases are essential to maintaining the temperature of [The Earth](#); without them the planet would be so cold as to be uninhabitable.^{[1][2]} However, an excess of greenhouse gases can raise the temperature of a [planet](#) to lethal levels, as on [Venus](#) where the 96.5% [carbon dioxide \(CO₂\)](#) atmosphere results in surface

temperatures of about 467 °C (872 °F). On earth, the term greenhouse gas is applied to, in order of relative abundance: [water vapor](#), [carbon dioxide](#), [methane](#), [nitrous oxide](#), [ozone](#) and [CFCs](#). Greenhouse gases are produced by many natural and industrial processes, which currently result in CO₂ levels of 380 [ppmv](#) in the atmosphere. Based on ice-core samples and records (see graphs) current levels of CO₂ are approximately 100 ppmv higher than during immediately pre-industrial times, when direct human influence was negligible.

CA is trying to be a model for the USA and the world on responding to GHG issues.

How do we add 20 million people to CA by 2050 AND reduce our GHG emissions?

A car which gets 20 mpg produces about 1 lb of CO₂ per mile driven. He mentioned the per capita goal of 10 tons/year total.

There are 44 early actions identified in a recent study. If these are implemented, they would get us 1/3 of the way to our goal. Big changes are going to be needed by all of us.

What policies does Butte County have regarding green purchases? Counties (and cities) need to lead the way to solving this problem.

To help with auto emissions, he pointed out that three things must happen: continuing to improve vehicle efficiency, lower carbon fuels and fewer miles traveled (VMT).

There is the Cool Cities/Counties program (<http://coolcities.us/> and <http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/coolcounties>).

We need to work with our local air district on this issue.

“This is nothing less than re-fashioning the world.”

3) Panel Discussion: Barbara Lee, CAPCOA, Gordon Garry, SACOG, Sydney Coatsworth, EDAW

CAPCOA - The cumulative impact of GHG is significant and must be addressed.

<http://www.capcoa.org> new report released to address this issue.

CEQA level of significance issue: 3 options - don't set a standard, set to 0, set to non-0.

Tiered approach - < significant; mitigated; EIR

SACOG uses the PECAS model for economic modeling.

EDAW

Currently, there is no formal guidance from the state on Mitigation of GHG.

SB 97 GHG CEQA Guidelines Legislation requires the CA Office of Planning and Research to draft guidelines by January 01, 2009.

Other helpful websites: www.ceqamap.com / www.iclei.com / www.uli.org

Avoidance seems to be a very good strategy in dealing with this issue.
<http://www.capcoa.org/ceqa> .

Strategy of using the General Plan to address existing development:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding> .

Several Vulnerability Issues are Identified for CA: snow pack losses, increases rain events (warmer storms), sea level rise, wildfire risk.

SB 375 is a new bill in the legislature to address traffic modeling to include an evaluation of alternative forms of transportation than an automobile.

ICLEI is a membership of local governments – <http://www.icleiusa.org> . They help local governments with GHG emissions analysis. They assist with developing a baseline model.

The city of Berkeley is using Mello Roos to tie solar into property taxes.

4) Case Studies - Heather Fargo, City of Sacramento Mayor; Roger Dickinson, Sacramento County Board of Supervisors; Christopher Cabaldon, West Sacramento Mayor

City of Sacramento:

2002, Sacramento signed on to the Climate Action Registry
2006, signed the US Mayors Climate Action Plan
2007, passed a Sustainability Master Plan
2008, developing an Implementation Plan

- Have a new 'Clean Technology Zone'
- Working with School Districts on Green Workforce Training
- Working on a Green Building Code
- City owns the CalEPA Building, which is a LEED Building
- Partnering with SMUD, their energy provider
- Going to have a contest: Which hotel is the Greenest in their city
- Urban Forestry – Sacramento, the city of trees
- Mayors 'Go Green Challenge' – replace 4 light bulbs in a home with 4 fluorescent bulbs; turn down/up thermostat by 2 degrees, lights off, unplug major appliances when on vacation (not refrigerator)
- Green workforce training academy

Roger Dickenson, Sacramento County Board of Supervisors

- Read the quote, 'if you think mitigated climate change is expensive, try unmitigated climate change'.
- Sacramento is a not attainment zone for air quality.
- General Plan Policy AQ-15 is a menu of options to meet goals. Must get 15 points for a proposed project.
- Alberta Specific Plan – Projects with > 25% efficient than Title 24 can get. Narrow streets, limited light placement
- They are developing a screening criteria to divide out projects into small/infill (<100 peak trips per day)

Christopher Cabaldon – West Sacramento Mayor

- Take advantage of CA unique climate
- Developing 'Smart Suburbs'
- Considering a Green Building Ordinance – pay less impact fees, won't need as much infrastructure
- Changing road standards
- Need to coordinate with the county to do their baseline 1990 GHG inventory. Looking to get ICLEI to help them.

5) Sonoma Mountain Village – 0 Emission Development proposed

See attachments describing their project. It's a 200 acre former Hewlett Packard site. Development plan proposes 1900 homes and 700,000 sq ft of commercial with a 1.14 megawatt solar farm. They are proposing LEED Platinum ND. They will be the first 'One Planet Community' in the USA. Noted that the 2012 Olympics in London will be 'One Planet Olympics'.