



## "Energy and People" Nonprofit Workshop Summary

July 13, 2018

### Workshop Overview

The "Our County" Stakeholder Engagement Team invited nonprofit organizations throughout Los Angeles County to provide input on the topic of Energy for the County's first Sustainability Plan. The "Energy and People" workshop, held on July 13, 2018 at the Los Angeles Trade Technical College, attracted over 60 attendees from nonprofit organizations, as well as several public agencies. The 5-hour workshop engaged 48 individuals representing 37 nonprofit organizations who participated in several key sessions to provide input on Energy goals and strategies the "Our County" plan should emphasize. Almost 30% of the groups stated that their primary or secondary organizational focus was "energy" or "climate", and another 16% represented "environmental justice" as their primary concern. The remaining participants cited water, parks/open space, public health and jobs as their primary organizational interests.

The workshop provided an explanation of how the "Our County" plan will be developed and an overview of energy issues the County faces. After the team introduced the Energy Goals from the Energy Briefing document, attendees provided general feedback in a plenary discussion format. In the second session, attendees were broken up into three different groups according to their topic of interest (Housing and Land Use, Economy and Workforce Development, and Public Health and Safety), with each section led by a discussion facilitator, along with a butcher paper scribe and computer notetaker. Participants in each morning section were asked to provide comments on the proposed Energy Goals related to the topic, and then rotated into the next two topics areas to provide comments. All of the butcher paper notes were consolidated by staff during the lunch break into one written document that was then distributed to help inform the afternoon sessions.

In the afternoon, participants were divided into seven focus groups (Public Health and Safety, Air Quality and Land Use, Jobs and Business Development, Housing and Land Use, Resilience and Displacement, Climate, and Environmental Stewardship) as part of an interactive exercise that allowed participants to propose alternative or additional priority recommendations. Throughout the exercise, facilitators were present to help spur discussion while computer note takers transcribed comments. After recording their proposals on butcher papers, participants then gathered in the main room for a plenary session where they had the opportunity to vote for their priority recommendations via dot stickers on all the focus groups' priorities.



The following compilation represents a succinct synthesis of more than 300 comments that the Stakeholder Engagement team was able to capture through butcher paper notetaking, computer laptop transcription, as well as written comment cards received throughout the workshop. While each nonprofit organization brought their own unique set of recommendations and input for the “Our County” plan, there was general support for the proposed Energy Goals as presented in the Briefing document. Additionally, several common themes emerged throughout the workshop that either seek to address missing issues or enhance the Energy Goals. The following are the top energy-related themes identified:

## Key Themes

- Strengthening **community engagement, representation, and accountability** in energy policy decision-making and governance

Many attendees were in support of stronger partnerships between nonprofit organizations and local businesses to more equitably facilitate environmental regulatory enforcement and implementation of incentive programs. Many advocated for a decentralized, distributed and locally-owned energy system, particularly in low-income neighborhoods with multi-family housing.
- Adoption of a **Green Jobs Action Plan** that establishes comprehensive standards to generate good-paying, local jobs in the shift to a renewable energy sector and green economy

From design to construction to ongoing maintenance, the policy would set workforce education, training and development strategies across all environmental sustainability areas. Targeted local hire programs that focus on vulnerable populations (veterans, formerly incarcerated, etc.) with a pathway towards family-supporting income levels was of key importance, along with developing a “just transition” program that would assist workers displaced from fossil fuel industries with income stability and job retraining.
- Striving for the **elimination (not just reduction) of negative health impacts and safety risks** from energy generation, storage, and transport and the recognition of cumulative impacts, with a prioritization on frontline communities

Attendees emphasized the need for stronger enforcement measures, better resident education on disaster preparedness, and specified targets for phasing out polluting facilities, particularly neighborhood oil drilling.
- Increasing **access to and community ownership of renewable energy** that meets the needs of diverse populations of different abilities, incomes, housing status, and cultures

Dozens of comments advocated for more flexible qualification criteria for energy efficiency and clean energy programs, particularly for renters; comments also called for targeted investments for disadvantaged communities that meet community needs. Further, there was significant concern on how to avoid gentrification and displacement from energy investments that increase the value of individual properties and neighborhoods.
- Promoting culturally meaningful public education to **increase energy literacy** on energy production and consumption, helping residents to understand the cumulative impacts of energy choices and behaviors, and “life cycle” costs

Comments ranged from better outreach on available renewable energy programs to making documents and application processes more language-accessible.



## Draft Goals

While there was general support for all the Draft Goals from the Energy Briefing document, goals related to public health and equity received the most attention. Participants suggested more aspirational and specified language across all the Goals with significant feedback on Goals A, B, and C in particular. For instance, rather than *reduction of*, many advocated for the *elimination of* energy related health and safety impacts. Participants also identified energy governance, education & outreach, and access as key issues the goals were not addressing. Overall, there was strong support for the inclusion of language that prioritized the needs of disadvantaged communities, including low-income renters and people with disabilities. Appendix B includes a detailed summary of comments on Goals.

## Detailed Strategies

The following are the top themes with detailed strategies from input received:

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**STRENGTHEN ENERGY  
POLICY DECISION-  
MAKING AND  
GOVERNANCE FOR  
BETTER  
ACCOUNTABILITY,  
TRANSPARENCY, AND  
COMMUNITY  
INVOLVEMENT**

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- Ensure meaningful community engagement in energy decision-making, including public-private partnerships and Joint-Powers Authority negotiations
  - Appoint individuals that are more representative of communities on oversight and accountability boards
  - Improve coordination with local, regional, and State agencies for better enforcement and implementation of programs
  - Collect and make energy data publicly available
  - Support and provide technical assistance to smaller cities and unincorporated areas
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**ADOPT A GREEN JOBS  
ACTION PLAN THAT  
ENSURES A ‘JUST  
TRANSITION’ FOR  
WORKERS INTO THE  
GREEN ECONOMY**

- Evaluate industry and worker needs to support transition into emerging clean, renewable energy occupations
  - Invest in broad, “opportunity” workforce recruitment and training initiatives that reach underemployed populations (formerly incarcerated, veterans, residents in polluted communities, etc.) by partnering with local businesses, unions, school districts, community colleges and community-based organizations
  - Adopt local hire and local procurement policies
  - Provide tax incentives for private industries that hire residents from opportunity training programs with living wages and benefits
  - Support small scale entrepreneurship in the clean energy sector
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**ELIMINATE ENERGY  
RELATED HEALTH  
IMPACTS AND SAFETY  
RISKS IN  
DISADVANTAGED  
COMMUNITIES**

- Expand regulations and enforcement on refineries and other polluting energy industries, particularly those in disadvantaged communities, to better address cumulative health impacts
  - Define “clean energy” to exclude all carbon-emitting energy sources
  - Ban neighborhood oil drilling with adequate buffers (i.e., 2,500 feet) to protect residential and sensitive land uses, including a rapid phase-out timeline for existing facilities
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## EXPAND ACCESS TO AND COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP OF RENEWABLE ENERGY

- Prioritize environmental remediation, such as conversion of industrial land into green space, in environmental justice communities
  - Strengthen and support community networks and social infrastructure for better emergency preparedness for natural and unnatural disaster response
  - Support the adoption of an indirect source rule
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- Promote local collective ownership of energy through initiatives such as community solar, particularly in multifamily-occupied renter units
  - Identify barriers and better design renewable energy programs to include participation of renters, individuals with disabilities, undocumented people, and other communities traditionally left out
  - Match programs to better reflect community behaviors and needs (e.g. clean and affordable transit investments instead of zero emission vehicle ownership)
  - Prioritize energy investments in disadvantaged communities with adequate renter protections in place to safeguard residents from increased housing costs and/or displacement pressures
  - Diversify outreach strategies for renewable energy incentive programs, including adequate language translation

## INCREASE LITERACY ON ENERGY PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

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- Partner with schools and community based organizations to create curriculum on sustainability and lifestyle choice impacts on the environment
  - Disseminate information through a variety of multi-media channels, including social media and television
  - Distill technical information, plans, and other documents into elementary level language for better understanding
  - Standardize an energy efficiency rating system (A-F) for electronic appliances
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Other themes, although not as prominent, also emerged, including:

- Improving and decentralizing the County's **local energy production and storage** system to advance resiliency
- Supporting **local business development** strategies that promote the shift to renewable energy while protecting community-serving businesses from displacement
- Retrofitting the **built environment**, such as electrification of buildings, cool roofs, and increasing the tree canopy, to increase energy efficiency and conservation as well as safeguard against both climate and non-climate related shocks
- Modernizing **transportation technologies** including the electrification of transit and trucks in the goods movement corridor
- Advancing **energy related research** to deepen our understanding of the relationship between energy, climate, and public health.

A more detailed list of condensed comments is included in Appendix B.



## Appendix A: “Energy and People” Workshop Attendee List

- A3PCON
- Bike San Gabriel Valley
- Black Women for Wellness
- Breathe CA
- California Endowment
- Center for Biological Diversity
- City Project
- Climate Resolve
- Coalition for a Safe Environment
- Coalition for Clean Air
- Communities for a Better Environment
- Day One
- Del Amo Action Committee
- East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice
- Emerald Cities Collaborative
- Environmental Defense Fund
- Esperanza Community Housing
- Food & Water Watch
- Global Green
- Green Education, Inc.
- GRID Alternatives
- IBEW 11
- LA Alliance for a New Economy
- LA n Sync
- Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation
- Milken Institute
- Mujeres de la Tierra
- Pacoima Beautiful
- Physicians for Social Responsibility-LA
- Prevention Institute
- Redeemer Community Partnership
- SCOPE (Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education)
- Sierra Club
- Social Justice Learning Institute
- Union de Vecinos



## Appendix B: Summarized Energy Related Comments

### Summarized Comments by Goals

Goal	Comment
A. Reduce health related impacts of energy on disadvantaged communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>While there was general support for Goal A, attendees repeatedly suggested the elimination, rather than reduction, of health impacts from energy. Others supported the explicit inclusion of interrelated issues such as resilience from climate change impacts and ending neighborhood oil drilling.</li><li>Participants asked for more clarity on the strategies listed under Goal A, such as identifying actual fossil fuel production steps (e.g., extraction, transport, refining, storage) to better understand the variety of ways the industry impacts health. Relatedly, participants mentioned better land use decisions and buffers that protect sensitive populations, such as schools. There were also several suggestions on addressing heat island effects through more tree planting.</li><li>Other comments provided strategies on better facilitating the transition to the green economy in order to accelerate health benefits. This included having a “just transition” policy in place to assist workers in polluting industries enter the renewable energy sector, retrofitting buildings to be more energy efficient, and incentivizing businesses to adapt.</li></ul>
B. Support access to clean and affordable energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Many comments recommended stronger language for Goal B. There was general agreement to change “support” to “provide” and expanding to “clean, affordable, and accessible” energy, with an emphasis on “clean” meaning “non-polluting” or non-carbon.</li><li>There were several suggested strategies to promote better accessibility. Many pointed to the need for renewable energy programs to reach multifamily renter units, and diverse income levels, through expanded programs to reach working-class and middle-income residents. Comments supported the idea for the County to have specific targets and provide direct installation of retrofits and other services. Other participants noted that individuals with disabilities as well as undocumented people could not access these programs. Some suggested the County better design programs, partner with community based organizations, and provide adequate technical assistance to small cities and unincorporated areas for programs to benefit communities traditionally left out.</li><li>Additionally, dozens of comments emphasized the need to protect low-income communities from additional costs and/or displacement pressures from energy investments. Comments strongly advocated for proper protections in place in order to ensure that residents benefit from energy investments without the risk of being priced out of their homes. Strategies included supporting a land value capture mechanism to fund and preserve affordable housing and rent control ordinances.</li></ul>
C. Decarbonize our fuel sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendees did not think decarbonizing of fuel sources was a strong enough goal and, instead, suggested phasing out all carbon-emitting sources, including all energy production methods that involve the combustion of materials.</li></ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Many suggested localizing and decentralizing energy sources, while others supported the expansion of clean energy technologies, such as zero emission vehicles, that consider displacement impacts. Several also suggested improving transit as a method to reduce carbon emissions. Someone recommended the County adopt a standardized energy efficiency rating system (or label) to better inform consumers on their energy consumption.</li><li>There was also strong support for the County to pursue multi-benefit projects that both decarbonize energy and improve health outcomes. Attendees suggested doing joint use agreements in the County and using County-owned land to accomplish this goal.</li></ul>
D. Modernize the energy system and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There was significant support for embedding climate resiliency into Goal D. Others also suggested that “and localize” also be included.</li><li>Many comments provided strategies to retrofit and modernize the built environment to be more resilient to climate and non-climate related disasters (such as earthquakes). Meanwhile others recommended the electrification of buildings, particularly multifamily units, and the implementation of virtual net metering.</li><li>Others voiced strong support for strengthening and better supporting “social infrastructure” networks for better communication channels during disasters.</li></ul>
E. Reduce energy consumption and demand management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Goal E received a diverse array of comments related to energy efficiency, storage, and impacts. Some suggested the addition of “systematically address and support” into the actual goal language.</li><li>Recommendations included increasing energy storage, prioritizing demand management strategies with caps on industrial users, and putting in place phasing out targets for refineries. One comment suggested full energy impacts, beyond CEQA requirement, to be disclosed to the public, while another similarly requested for better discussion on the impacts of suburban development on energy.</li></ul>
Across all or multiple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Several comments emphasized the need for prioritizing resources in disadvantaged communities, particularly those most impacted by energy pollution.</li><li>Many pointed for more explicit language around access, particularly for people with disabilities across the goals.</li><li>Similarly, many attendees recommended the inclusion of resiliency and disaster preparedness throughout the goals.</li></ul>
New Goal suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There was strong support for a new goal on democratizing energy, transparency, engagement with an energy governance structure centered around community ownership.</li><li>Additionally, many attendees suggested for more education on energy-related issues in order for residents to be more engaged and cognizant of their energy choices.</li><li>Attendees repeatedly recommended a “just transition” that ensures an adequate transition for workers into the green, renewable energy sectors through workforce development strategies.</li><li>There were also specific goals recommended by stakeholders including restricting the use of public dollars for only zero emission projects, supporting small-scale entrepreneurship, ending neighborhood oil drilling, and banning campaign contributions from the oil industry.</li></ul>



## Summarized Comments by Category

Category	Comment Summary
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Many attendees noted the importance of improving air quality in frontline communities impacted by emissions from both stationary and mobile sources of pollution.</li><li>Recommended strategies include shifting focus from promoting personal electric vehicles in low-income neighborhoods to electrifying trucks in goods movement corridors, supporting an indirect source rule, investing in mass transit, and installing air sensors on buildings. A comment card also noted consideration of community air monitoring (AB 617) program in relation to the Our County plan.</li></ul>
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Climate-related comments were the most prominent throughout the workshop, which fell under two general subcategories: reduction of greenhouse gases and climate resiliency.</li><li>There was strong support for 100% renewable energy by 2025 as well as moving towards local energy production, and aggressively phasing out carbon-emitting energy sources. Specifically there were several recommendations on eliminating oil drilling near sensitive land uses, although there was some concern on how the transition would affect workers in polluting industries. Other strategies supported the idea of electrification of the built environment and transportation to reduce the consumption of carbon-emitting sources of energy. Several attendees advocated for the explicit inclusion of community solar programs in multifamily units, specifically.</li><li>Many attendees also pushed for better climate resiliency and emergency preparedness. Strategies included increasing the tree canopy, retrofitting buildings to be resistant to climate impacts (e.g. cool roofs), and offering more cooling centers. In terms of emergency response, there were several comments that called for stronger development of social infrastructure for better communication during disasters.</li></ul>
Economy and Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The majority of comments about Economy and Workforce Development focused on workforce strategies to ensure better and more secure economic outcomes for workers involved in the energy industry. Commonly referred to as “just transition,” attendees emphasized the need for the County to facilitate a smooth transition into the renewable energy economy that ensures stable jobs for workers currently in the energy sector. Many supported the idea of the County implementing a “Sustainable Workforce Masterplan” or a “Green Jobs Action Plan.”</li><li>There were also several suggestions on the need to include communities traditionally left out of economic opportunity into green jobs with prevailing wages. Strategies included working with community-based organizations, unions, school districts, community colleges, and private industries to assess and develop workforce training programs (e.g. Resource Center) for people traditionally excluded from employment (formerly incarcerated, undocumented people, and individuals with disabilities), embedding local hire initiatives, and providing incentives for businesses that hire individuals from these programs.</li></ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Regarding household-level programs, there were dozens of comments that recommended prioritizing investments into low income and disadvantaged communities. There was a lot of concern about renewable energy programs not reaching many communities, including renters in multifamily units. Attendees advocated for the elimination of barriers to these programs by flexibly designing programs to reach a diversity of income levels (tiered incentive programs) and explicitly targeting multifamily renter units for community solar and energy efficiency programs by offering incentives to building owners. Another comment suggested providing energy efficient appliances to low income communities. At the same time, there was strong support for initiatives that protect renters to stay in place to ensure they benefit from energy efficiency programs.</li><li>Some comments offered strategies to support local businesses' transition into renewable energy. Recommendations included offering incentives, particularly to community-serving businesses that are at risk of being displaced. Other comments supported the idea of encouraging entrepreneurship in the renewable energy sector. There was some support of using a value capture mechanism to fund local economic development initiatives in renewable energy.</li></ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Displacement pressures and passing through costs to renters from energy investments was the biggest concern brought up by workshop attendees. There was strong support for ensuring renters are able to benefit from renewable energy programs and remain in their neighborhoods. Attendees suggested embedding anti-displacement policies, such as rent control, and strengthening current affordable housing funding streams.</li><li>There were also several suggestions on modernizing the built environment, particularly multifamily residential and accessory dwelling units, to be more energy efficient and resilient to natural disasters, such as earthquakes.</li><li>Others supported the idea of limiting investor/developer purchases of properties to encourage more first-time homeownership. Some also noted the lack of awareness on energy efficiency mortgage programs for homeowners.</li></ul>
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendees recommended a variety of strategies that promoted zoning practices that supported infill development and protection of vulnerable communities from polluting land uses.</li><li>There was strong support for changing neighborhood oil drilling into a nonconforming land use. Participants laid out a timeline for phasing out oil drilling (2500 foot buffer by 2021; 5000 foot buffer by 2025; complete phase out by 2030) to protect nearby communities. Comments offered strategies on re-utilizing brownfields and abandoned industrial sites. Their suggestions included making them clean energy hubs, zoning them for renewable energy use, or revitalizing them into green spaces.</li><li>Several comments also shared concerns over the effects of suburbanization and sprawl on energy efficiency. There was strong support for transit oriented development (TOD) policies that both incorporate zero emission vehicle infrastructure and safeguard against displacement.</li></ul>



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Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The majority of comments were related to the protection the health of communities most impacted by energy-related pollution and safeguarding residents from climate-related illnesses. Overall, there was consensus that interventions of any kind (environmental remediation, industry regulations) should prioritize frontline communities, such as port residents.</li><li>Regarding environmental health, attendees recommended disclosing all energy impacts on communities beyond what is required in CEQA. Further, there was strong support for future projects to perform cumulative impacts analysis. Other comments advocated for stronger regulations and elimination of energy practices that affect the health of residents in both the past and present. This included strategies to phase out neighborhood oil drilling and converting industrial land into beneficial land uses.</li><li>Attendees expressed concern over climate-related health impacts, particularly heat impacts. Suggestions included building cooling centers and creating adequate spaces for children to play outdoors during high heat days. Someone suggested the County track all heat-related deaths.</li></ul>
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The issue of governance was brought up at nearly every workshop breakout group. There was strong support for more community-based engagement, participation, and transparency in energy decision-making processes. Participants also strongly advocated for increased opportunities for local ownership of energy. Many supported the notion of “democratizing energy.”</li><li>Many participants reiterated the need for better education on energy use and sustainability practices in general. Recommendations included doing a multi-media (radio, television, social media) education campaign that reaches diverse audiences and teaches people about the lifecycle costs associated with energy use. They stressed the importance of language access. Others also recommended embedding sustainability education into schools.</li><li>Participants also identified lack of coordination between agencies as an issue. They recommended stronger communication with community based organizations and implementation agencies to better enforce environmental regulations and deploy energy infrastructure improvements, particularly small cities and unincorporated areas.</li><li>There were also several comments that advocated for more transparency of data ranging from economic and public health impacts of renewable energy to parcel ownership information. In general, participants voiced support for better understanding on how energy transition would impact residents and workers alike.</li></ul>
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Several participants emphasized the importance of policies and personnel to be cognizant of current fear in communities with some distrust in government, particularly the undocumented community.</li><li>There was also strong support for energy investment programs to better reflect community needs and behaviors – such as investing in better transit rather than installing zero emission vehicle infrastructure.</li><li>Other comments offered a variety of funding mechanisms to help fund programs. This included using Cap and Trade funds for redevelopment, bringing back tax increment financing, and strengthening enforcement measures.</li></ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Some attendees noted the importance of acknowledging a legacy of harm and the need for compensatory investments in communities, particularly those that have historically been burdened by pollution.</li><li>Others emphasized the need to support multi-benefit projects that tackle multiple issues (i.e. public health and energy efficiency). There were suggestions to facilitate joint use agreements with underutilized public lands, but it was also pointed out that these partnerships were difficult to undertake; participants voiced some concerns regarding community engagement and transparency. Meanwhile, other participants advocated for publicly sold land to be offered to indigenous communities first.</li></ul>
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