Bay Area Air District

News Release

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CONTACT: communications@baaqmd.gov

East Oakland Community Emissions Reduction Plan receives final state approval

Community-driven plan lays out dozens of strategies to reduce local air pollution and advance environmental justice

SAN FRANCISCO – The *East Oakland Community Emissions Reduction Plan*, also known as the *Right to Breathe: East Oakland Community Air Quality Justice Plan*, has received final approval from the California Air Resources Board, marking a major milestone in the Bay Area Air District's work with East Oakland residents to reduce local air pollution and advance environmental justice. The Air District and Communities for a Better Environment co-led a process with a Community Steering Committee to create the plan.

Right to Breathe lays out a series of 32 strategies and 105 actions to be implemented over the next five years. The East Oakland Community Steering Committee approved the draft plan in February 2026, and the Air District's Board of Directors adopted the plan in April 2026.

"East Oakland residents have lived with disproportionate air pollution burdens for too long," said Dr. Philip Fine, executive officer of the Air District. "*Right to Breathe* gives the Air District and our partners a clear, community-driven path forward to improve public health and advance environmental justice over the next five years."

"This plan is a powerful example of how the community air protection program was envisioned – with residents in the driver's seat shaping solutions to the harmful pollution they breathe every day," said California Air Resources Board Chair Lauren Sanchez. "It demonstrates the impact of community-led action and strong local partnerships to deliver cleaner air and improve public health, where it is needed most."

"East Oakland residents experience severe environmental health outcomes due to generations of systemic disinvestment, redlining and disproportionate exposure to pollution," said Adele Watts, CBE's NorCal program co-director. "This plan gives East Oakland an opportunity to advance community solutions to improve local air quality, and we look forward to implementing it with the Air District and the East Oakland Community Steering Committee."

"Today marks an important milestone for East Oakland and for the residents who helped shape this plan," said Lynda Hopkins, chair of the Air District's Board of Directors and Board member of the California Air Resources Board. "*Right to Breathe* puts community members at the center of improving conditions in their own neighborhoods. The plan reflects years of community input and establishes a roadmap for reducing emissions and improving environmental conditions in East Oakland."

The implementation of this ambitious plan is expected to make meaningful improvements to public health and quality of life in East Oakland. Developed under the framework of Assembly Bill 617, the plan focuses on five key priorities identified by the community: mitigating emissions from commercial and industrial sources, reducing transportation and mobile source pollution near major transit corridors, tackling illegal dumping and odors, expanding urban greening, and advancing community wellness.

Community collaboration was critical to the successful development of *Right to Breathe*. The Air District collaborated with multiple government agencies, community organizations, and community members to co-design the plan, making it stronger and more responsive to East Oakland community members' direct needs.

East Oakland is heavily impacted by multiple environmental challenges. The community is home to waste facilities, crematories and industrial operations, while being surrounded by high-volume freeways, truck routes and warehouse distribution centers. These sources have contributed to higher rates of asthma, heart disease and lower average life expectancy than people in other parts of the region.

The plan was developed as a requirement of AB 617, a state law passed in 2017. AB 617 recognizes that while California has seen tremendous improvement in air quality, not all communities have benefited equally, and some neighborhoods located close to freeways, ports, industry, or other large pollution sources need additional focus and resources to reduce air pollution exposure levels.

The Right to Breathe plan can be viewed and downloaded here.

The Bay Area Air District is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality and the global climate in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via Facebook, X, Instagram and YouTube.

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Air District Communications Office
375 Beale Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94105
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