

Community Investments Office Survey

Final Results Summary

September 24, 2025

I. Survey Final Results Summary

This summary provides final results of a Bay Area-wide survey conducted by the Community Investments Office starting on March 24, 2025. An anonymous survey was designed to gather input from the Bay Area community on how funds from enforcement actions should be allocated. The Air District collects penalties from entities that violate its regulations. These funds will be managed by the newly established Community Investments Office, which will create a strategy to distribute local and regional funds. Feedback received from the survey will help shape the Air District's strategy to ensure that investments address local and regional priorities and promote environmental justice.

As of July 6, 2025, over 1072 Bay Area residents responded to the survey, providing valuable insights into community priorities. Community members identified the urgent need to tackle air pollution from industrial sources and vehicle emissions to protect communities from exposure. The top project suggestions reflect a strong interest in reducing pollution exposure in both indoor and outdoor areas, while also emphasizing air quality monitoring, green infrastructure expansion, and initiatives that advance the Bay Area toward a cleaner, more equitable, and decarbonized future.

Survey responses and public engagement reveal strong community support for directing funds to educational institutions, community-based organizations, environmental justice groups and government agencies. The support for businesses (7%) and faith-based organizations (4%) is smaller but not insignificant. Respondents expressed a clear preference for funding shovel-ready and existing projects over research, planning, and demonstration initiatives, emphasizing the need for ongoing support to sustain these efforts. This indicates a community desire for tangible, immediate impacts, reflecting an urgency for visible, actionable outcomes in air quality, public health, and climate resilience initiatives.

II. Background and Purpose

The purpose of this survey was to gather community input on air quality improvement priorities to guide programming for the allocation of funds from air pollution violations back to the most impacted communities. Feedback received from the survey will help shape the Air District's strategy and ensure investments address local and regional priorities and promote environmental justice. Participants were asked to share their thoughts on the most pressing air quality challenges they are facing, what types of

projects they would like to see funded, and how funds could best be allocated to meet community needs. The survey was open to residents, business owners, students, retirees, and other stakeholders, across the San Francisco Bay Area with a focus on gathering diverse perspectives.

III. Survey Methodology

- Survey Reporting Period (Preliminary Results): March 24, 2025 to July 6, 2025
- Outreach Methods: A survey was distributed via email in six languages — English, Spanish, Korean, Mandarin, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. The survey was also distributed through a webinar, solicited in-person at five Earth Day events throughout the Bay, shared at stakeholder meetings with community groups, and spotlighted in targeted social media campaigns.
- Geographic Focus: The nine counties of the San Francisco Bay Area — Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma.
- Total Responses: 1072 received between March 24, 2025 and July 6, 2025

IV. Summary of Project Categories and Types

A notable finding from the survey responses is a strong preference for funding shovel-ready and existing projects over research, planning, and demonstration initiatives. This indicates a community desire for tangible, immediate impacts, reflecting urgency for visible, actionable outcomes in air quality, public health, and climate resilience projects. Respondents may feel that sufficient studies and plans already exist, and the priority now is to implement and deliver results, particularly in areas with established community needs. The following list captures the main themes on the types of projects that respondents would like to see funded (question 3 of the survey).

1. Industrial Accountability and Air Pollution Monitoring

- **Refinery oversight:** audits, safety committees, catastrophic event shelters
- **Pollution tracking:** air monitoring systems, air quality evaluations for small businesses
- **Permitting and enforcement:** fund Air District to clear backlog, protocols for refineries, funds for scrubbers
- **Community science:** stipends to inspect polluters, localized monitoring

2. Indoor Air Quality and Public Health

- **Air filters:** for schools, homes, and vulnerable populations
- **Medical and health support:** asthma programs, lead testing, health savings accounts
- **Public education:** on indoor air quality, mitigation, and emission impacts
- **Cooling centers and fire season preparedness:** shelters, air quality alerts

3. Green Building, Appliances, and Home Retrofits

- **Heat pumps:** subsidies, zero-interest loans; especially for low-income households
- **Gas appliance replacement:** rebates, clean air appliance programs
- **Weatherization:** homes, schools, and public spaces
- **Solar installations:** for homes, parking lots, water treatment, city buildings
- **Building upgrades:** new roofs, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) replacement; improve air quality to standards established by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE); programs for renters, wood fireplace replacement programs

4. Land Use, Infrastructure, and Urban Greening

- **Bike and pedestrian infrastructure:** bike lanes, safe street programs, secure bike parking, pedestrian bridges
- **Vegetative and green barriers:** trees, native and sustainable plants, tree planting along corridors, street tree improvement projects
- **Buffer zones:** between polluting industries and homes/schools
- **Parks, maintenance, and renovations:** construction of parks and related community amenities, maintenance and upgrades, small farms and community gardens
- **Conversion of retired refineries:** green spaces, clean energy infrastructure, green manufacturing

5. Clean Transportation and Electric Vehicle (EV) Transition

- **Public EV infrastructure:** chargers, school buses, shuttles, firetrucks, home chargers, chargers at schools/sports facilities
- **Equity-focused EV programs:** EV car registration for low-income residents, e-bikes for all incomes
- **Heavy-duty transport:** EV infrastructure for trucks/buses, port decarbonization, train/ship decarbonization, truck re-routing
- **Support infrastructure:** technical assistance for EV projects, maintenance for EV equipment

6. Community Resilience and Engagement

- **Community resilience hubs**
- **Coalition building:** local networks for air quality education and engagement
- **Support for local businesses:** technical help, outreach, upgrades
- **Capacity building:** green jobs training, bridge funds for legal defense

7. Arts, Culture, and Public Awareness

- **Creative education:** air quality art exhibitions, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) curriculum and summer camps
- **Public education campaigns:** on odor complaints, fire season preparedness, air quality impacts, policy initiatives

8. Waste, Water, and Climate Resilience

- **Composting:** support for companies and nonprofits, reducing landfill waste through food rescue
- **Greywater and water programs**
- **Wildfire mitigation:** including goats for wildfire mitigation
- **Climate planning:** resilience planning, shoreline cleanups

9. Equity and Direct Support

- **Direct benefits:** stipends, rebates, including fund dispersion to families
- **Farmers market vouchers**
- **Subsidized programs:** for EVs, solar, air purifiers
- **Technical Support:** applying for or managing grants

10. Economic Development and Clean Technologies

- **Manufacturing:** clean technologies and distributed energy resources
- **Workforce development:** Just transition, job training
- **Business Education:** assistance for green businesses and building practices

11. Research

- **Health:** Lead blood testing near airports, carbon dioxide buildup in cars, freeway effects on adjacent schools and daycares, actionable air quality limits for sensitive populations
- **Climate:** Storm drainage system and sea-level rise
- **Economic:** Just transition in refinery towns

10. Financial Models

- **Grants:** Community foundation endowment
- **Investment:** a portion of funds invested for future growth and use

- **Tax Credits:** Credits for clean energy manufacturers
- **Loans:** Zero to low-interest loans for retrofits, loan guarantees for local small businesses

V. Community Voices

Community input was gathered through surveys, community meetings, tabling events, and a webinar. Below are selected quotes organized by key themes prioritized by the community, representing the range of feedback provided by residents, business owners, and stakeholders across the region.

- **Industrial Accountability and Pollution Monitoring**
 - "Latest emissions monitoring equipment at refineries — we need to know what we're breathing."
 - "Modernize safety and control systems at local refineries to prevent leaks and emissions."
 - "Community air monitoring programs in the most impacted areas."
 - "Projects that improve air quality data collection and public access to the data."
 - "A safety committee to monitor Martinez refining company, do audits, file claims, etc."
 - "citizen science...that is capable of monitoring pollutants of concern generated by local refineries."
- **Public Health and Indoor Air Quality**
 - "Help local businesses and restaurants improve indoor air quality. Would love to see more indoor dining utilizing HEPA filters and reducing indoor air pollution."
 - "Schools, dormitories, and military barracks are in desperate need of air filtration systems."
 - "High quality air filtration systems in public schools and public facilities with HEPA filters."
 - "Air filtration systems for children with asthma who live in high pollution areas."
- **Green Building, Appliances, and Home Retrofits**
 - "Heat pump and heat pump water heater incentives to support implementation of Rules 9-4 and 9-6."
 - "Solar funding for old roofs and electric panel upgrades."
 - "Promote and fund smaller scale air quality improvement projects for small businesses. Basic stuff like upgrading HVAC, adding air filters, improving ventilation and installing air quality sensors inside small businesses."

- “For the indoor pollution retrofits, it would be great if there were more programs specifically benefiting renters (as opposed to homeowners). Most Bay Area landlords are resistant to doing anything they aren't forced to do, and as a result renters have no choice but to deal with higher pollution levels and energy costs.”
- “A grant fund to offset electric upgrade to enable home charging.”
- **Land Use, Infrastructure, and Urban Greening**
 - “Significant investment in urban tree canopy along our major urban transportation corridors - every bike lane, sidewalk, public transit stop should come with significant plantings of native or near native canopy coverage.”
 - “Solar panels in parking lots”
 - “Electric vehicle charging infrastructure for heavy-duty trucks and buses.”
 - “Better bike/trail infrastructure to get people out of cars.”
 - “Conversion of fossil fuel production facilities into sustainable energy engines, e.g., refineries into wind and solar plantations.”
 - “I'd rather see the Martinez oil refinery shut down for good. Turn it to a solar field to provide energy for the community. Hell, even a giant dog park would pollute our town less than that thing.”
 - “fund rebates for purchase of battery powered leaf blowers.”
 - “food waste solutions”
 - “educate neighbors the importance of proper care for trees”
 - “community gardens for food production for low-income families.”
- **Clean Transportation and EV Transition**
 - “Biking and e-biking for children... not linked to income.”
 - “Replacement of diesel trucks with lower emissions vehicles.”
 - “Greater public availability of electric charging stations.”
 - “Electric school buses and charging centers.”
 - “Electric Fire department vehicles and the infrastructure to support these vehicles.”
 - “Electrification of port activities and heavy-duty vehicles, along with programs or incentives for freight electrification.”
 - “Free public transit”
 - “high speed clean energy ferry service around the bay.”

All survey data will be available on the Air District website after the survey closes.

Prepared By: Samuel Garcia

Reviewed By: Jessica DePrimo

Responses Overview

Closed

Responses

1061



Average Time

46:41



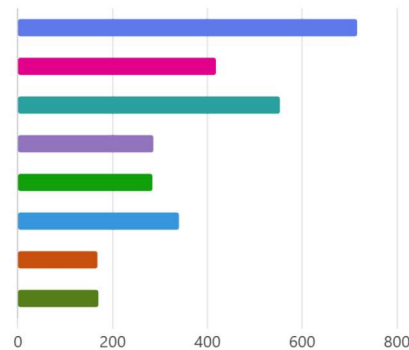
Duration

108 Days



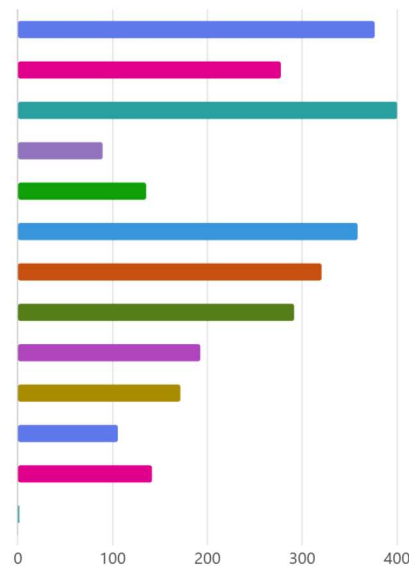
1. What are the most pressing air quality challenges in your community? (Select all that apply)

Air Pollution from industrial facilities	715
Vehicle emissions from local roads	417
Vehicle emissions from freeways	552
Poor indoor air quality	285
Lack of green spaces	283
Hazardous waste or contamination	339
Other economic activity (gas stations, train or bus stations, autobody shops)	167
Other	169



2. What types of projects would be most beneficial to improve air quality and public health in your community? (Select up to three)

Installing air filtration systems in schools and community centers	376
Expanding electric vehicle infrastructure (e.g., charging stations, electric buses/service...	277
Expanding access to green spaces (e.g., planting trees, creating community gardens,...	400
Providing access to electric bikes to low-income residents	89
Increasing bike lanes in your community	135
Provide retrofits for homes and buildings to reduce indoor pollution exposure (e.g.,...	358
Establishing community air quality monitoring programs	320
Supporting local clean energy projects (e.g., solar, wind, geothermal)	291
Funding clean technology innovations (e.g., energy storage, green hydrogen production,...	192
Workforce development for a green economy	171
Public health interventions related to air quality (e.g., nurses to support asthma prevention,...	105
Public health services related to air quality (e.g., access to asthma medication for low-income...	141
Other	1



3. Are there other types of projects you would like to see funded? Please describe below:

530

Responses

Latest Responses

"Lowering emissions impacts for those most in need such as in the Iron Triangle."

"Wildfire reduction projects such as fire fuel reduction and projects such as biochar."

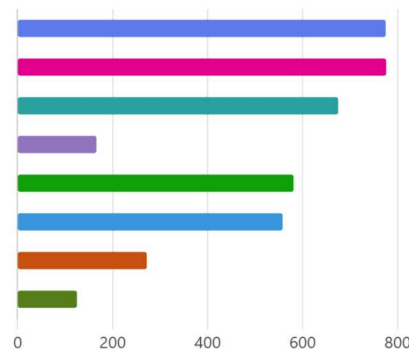
...

100 respondents (19%) answered community for this question.

Community air
Community Benefits
air filtered
air district
air monitoring
air pollution
funded
green spaces
air filtration
community
clean air
city of Benicia
public health
schools
air quality
community members
indoor air
Outdoor air
air purifiers
air monitors

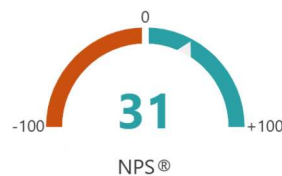
4. What types of organizations or entities should be eligible to receive funding from the Community Benefits Penalty Funds? (Select all that apply)

Community-based organizations (CBOs)	774
Local schools and school districts	775
Nonprofit organizations	674
Faith based organizations	165
Local government agencies	580
Environmental justice groups	557
Businesses	271
Other	124



5. Shovel-Ready

Promoters	560
Passives	266
Detractors	235



6. Planning

Promoters	296
Passives	324
Detractors	441



7. Research

Promoters	353
Passives	224
Detractors	484



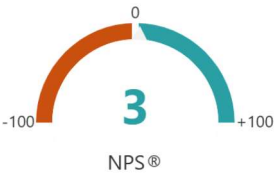
8. Education

Promoters	420
Passives	247
Detractors	394



9. Job Training/Apprenticeship

Promoters	413
Passives	267
Detractors	381



10. Core Services

Promoters	405
Passives	296
Detractors	360



11. Existing Projects

Promoters	522
Passives	292
Detractors	247



12. Demonstrations

Promoters	230
Passives	225
Detractors	606

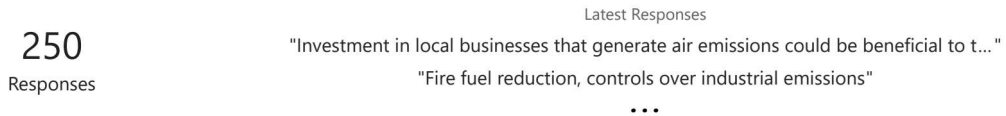


13. Youth-Focused

Promoters	387
Passives	269
Detractors	405



14. Are there any existing projects in your community that have effectively improved air quality or enhanced access to health resources for those affected by air pollution? If yes, please share the name and/or a link where we can learn more about them.

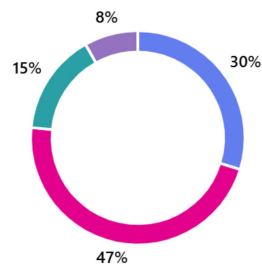


40 respondents (16%) answered program for this question.



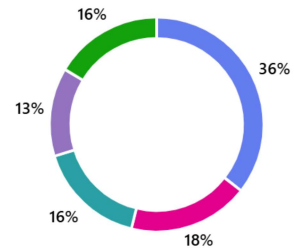
15. How frequently would you like updates on how the funds are being used?

Monthly	316
Quarterly	496
Twice a year	163
Yearly	86



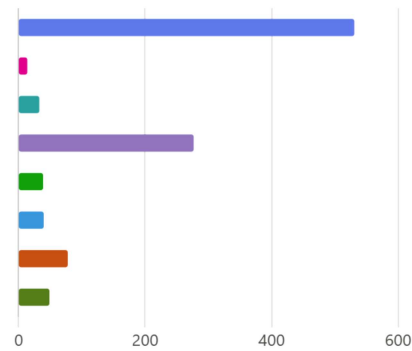
16. What are the best ways for the Community Investments Office to keep you informed about program updates and project outcomes? (Select all that apply)

Email newsletters	924
Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)	473
Public meetings	427
Community-based organizations sharing information	347
Local news outlets	426



17. What is your current occupation? (Please select one)

Employed	530
Student	13
Stay-at-home parent	32
Retired	276
Volunteer	38
Independent contract worker	39
Business Owner	77
Other	48



Responses Overview

Closed

Responses

1

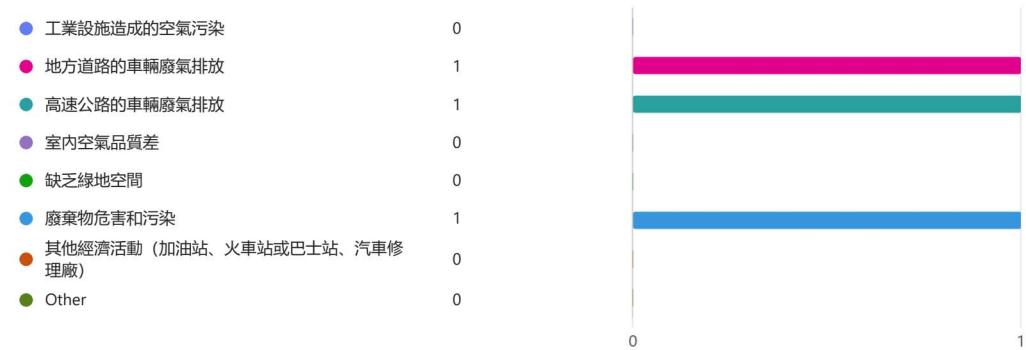
Average Time

04:39

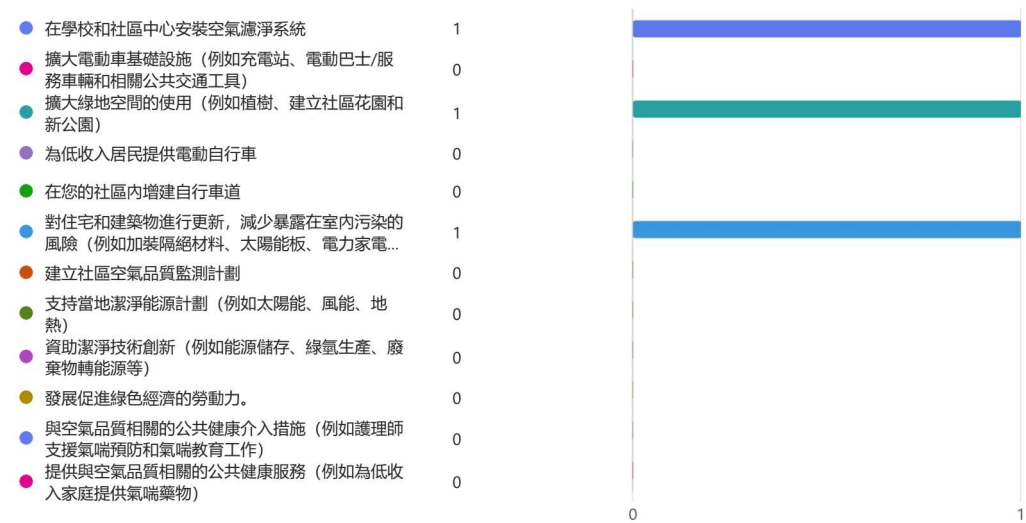
Duration

94 Days

1. 您的社區面臨最迫切的空氣品質挑戰是什麼？（選取所有適用選項，或在「其他 (Other)」中註明）



2. 在您的社區中，哪些類型的計劃最有利於改善社區的空氣品質和公共健康？（最多選擇三項）



3. 是否有其他類型的計劃是您希望能獲得資助的？請說明如下：

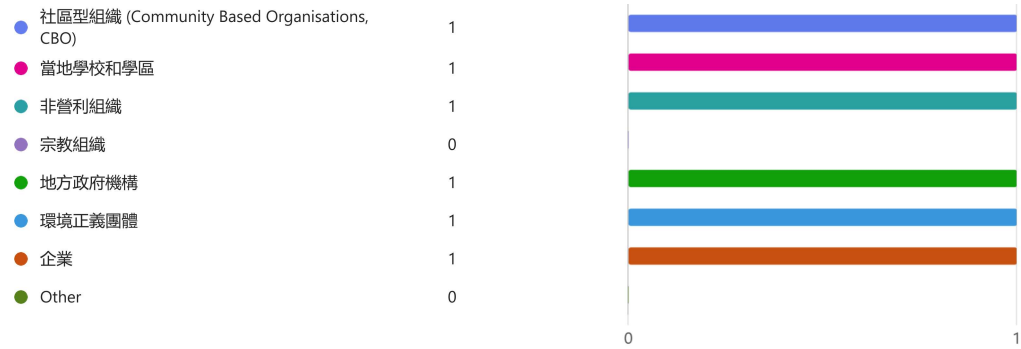
0 responses submitted

0

Responses

...

4. 哪些類型的組織或實體有資格獲得社區福利罰款資金的資助？（選取所有適用選項，或在「其他」中註明）



5. 準備動工計劃



6. 規劃階段計劃



7. 研究方案



8. 教育課程

Promoters	1
Passives	0
Detractors	0



9. 工作訓練 / 實習

Promoters	1
Passives	0
Detractors	0



10. 核心服務

Promoters	1
Passives	0
Detractors	0



11. 現有項目

Promoters	1
Passives	0
Detractors	0



12. 示範活動

Promoters	1
Passives	0
Detractors	0



13. 以青少年為中心活動

Promoters	1
Passives	0
Detractors	0



14. 您的社區是否有任何現有計劃，能有效改善空氣品質或讓受空氣污染影響的居民獲得醫療資源的機會？如果有，請分享名稱和/或連結，以便我們了解更多相關資訊。

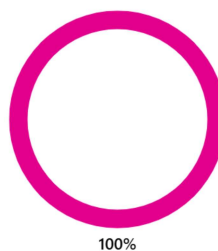
0
Responses

0 responses submitted



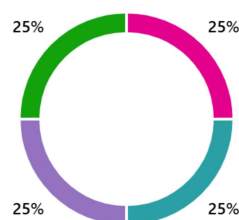
15. 您何時會想得知資金使用的最新情況？

● 每月	0
● 每季	1
● 每年兩次	0
● 每年一次	0



16. 您最想以何種方式，收到社區投資辦公室通知的計劃最新消息和專案成果？（選取所有適用選項，或在「其他」中註明）

● 電子郵件新聞稿	0
● 社群媒體 (Facebook、Instagram、Twitter)	1
● 公開會議	1
● 社區型組織分享資訊	1
● 當地新聞媒體	1



17. 您目前的職業是什麼？（選取其中一項，或在「其他」中註明）

- 受僱者 0
- 學生 0
- 全職父母 1
- 退休人士 0
- 志願者 0
- 獨立約聘人員 0
- 企業主 0
- Other 0



Responses Overview

Closed

Responses

10



Average Time

12:01



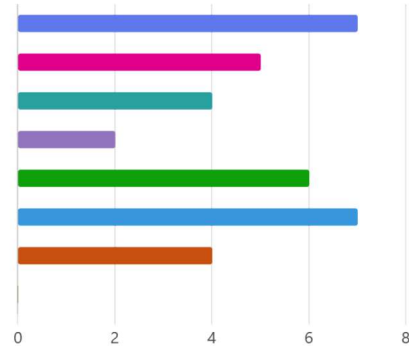
Duration

100 Days



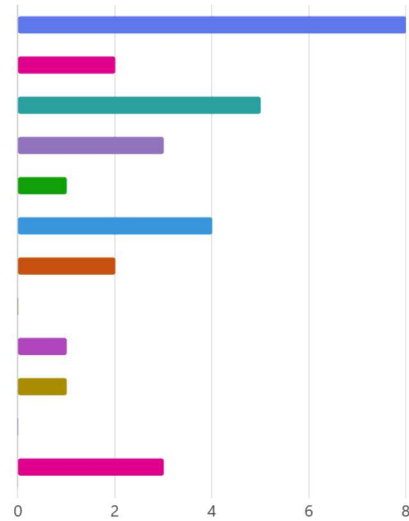
1. ¿Cuáles son los desafíos más apremiantes de la calidad del aire en su comunidad? (Seleccione todas las que correspondan o especifique otro en el espacio "other")

- Contaminación atmosférica procedente de instalaciones industriales 7
- Emisiones de vehículos de carreteras locales 5
- Emisiones de vehículos de las autopistas 4
- Mala calidad del aire interior 2
- Falta de espacios de la naturaleza 6
- Residuos peligrosos o contaminación 7
- Otra actividad económica (gasolineras, estaciones de tren o autobús, talleres de carrocería) 4
- Other 0



2. ¿Qué tipos de proyectos serían más beneficiosos en su comunidad para mejorar la calidad del aire y la salud pública en su comunidad? (Seleccione hasta tres)

- Instalación de sistemas de filtración de aire en escuelas y centros comunitarios 8
- Expansión de la infraestructura de vehículos eléctricos (por ejemplo, estaciones de carga,...) 2
- Expansión el acceso a espacios de la naturaleza (por ejemplo, plantar árboles, crear jardines... 5
- Proporcionar acceso a bicicletas eléctricas a los residentes de bajos ingresos 3
- Aumentar los carriles de bicicleta en su comunidad 1
- Proporcionar reacondicionamientos para hogares y edificios para reducir la exposición a la... 4
- Establecer programas comunitarios de monitoreo de la calidad del aire 2
- Apoyo a proyectos locales de energía limpia (por ejemplo, solar, viento, geotérmica) 0
- Financiación de innovaciones en tecnologías limpias (por ejemplo, almacenamiento de energ... 1
- Desarrollo de la fuerza laboral para una economía verde 1
- Intervenciones de salud pública relacionadas con la calidad del aire (por ejemplo, enfermeras par... 0
- Servicios de salud pública relacionados con la calidad del aire (por ejemplo, acceso a... 3



3. ¿Hay otros tipos de proyectos que te gustaría ver financiados? Por favor, describe a continuación:

5
Responses

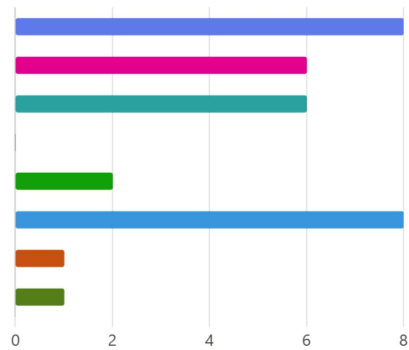
Latest Responses
"crear un sistema planificado para evitar incendios en las ciudades y en las áreas co..."
...

2 respondents (40%) answered familias for this question.



4. ¿Qué tipos de organizaciones o entidades deberían ser elegibles para recibir fondos de los Fondos de Penalización para Beneficios Comunitarios? (Seleccione todas las que correspondan o especifique otro en el espacio "other")

Organizaciones comunitarias (CBO, por en inglés)	8
Escuelas locales y distritos escolares	6
Organizaciones que no se centran en la ganancia monetaria	6
Organizaciones religiosas	0
Agencias del gobierno local	2
Grupos de justicia ambiental	8
Empresas	1
Other	1



5. Proyectos que están listos para comenzar construcción

Promoters	7
Passives	1
Detractors	2



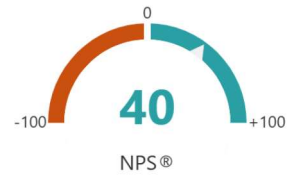
6. Planificación

Promoters	4
Passives	0
Detractors	6



7. Investigación

Promoters	6
Passives	2
Detractors	2



8. Educación

Promoters	7
Passives	1
Detractors	2



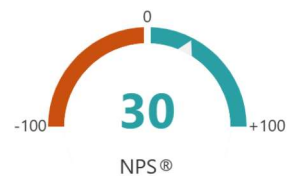
9. Entrenamiento Laboral / Aprendizaje

Promoters	7
Passives	1
Detractors	2



10. Servicios fundamentales

Promoters	6
Passives	1
Detractors	3



11. Proyectos existentes

Promoters	8
Passives	0
Detractors	2



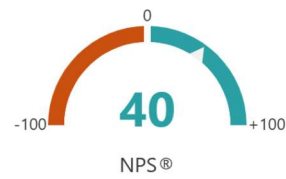
12. Demostraciones

Promoters	6
Passives	2
Detractors	2



13. Esfuerzos centrados en la juventud

Promoters	7
Passives	0
Detractors	3



14. ¿Hay algún proyecto existente en su comunidad que haya mejorado efectivamente la calidad del aire o haya mejorado el acceso a los recursos de salud para las personas afectadas por la contaminación del aire? En caso afirmativo, comparta el nombre y/o un enlace donde podamos obtener más información sobre ellos.

4
Responses

Latest Responses

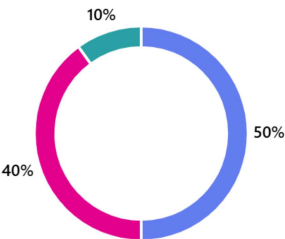
"La clínica de la raza está diseñando un proyecto sobre el plomo en las casas sobr... "

"proyecto piloto de descarbonización nivel vecindario cuadra por cuadra"

...

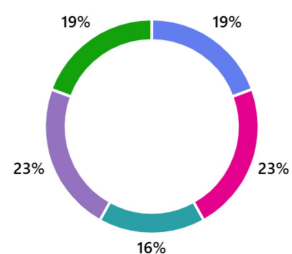
15. ¿Con qué frecuencia desea recibir actualizaciones sobre cómo se utilizan los fondos?

Mensual	5
Trimestral	4
Dos veces al año	1
Anualmente	0



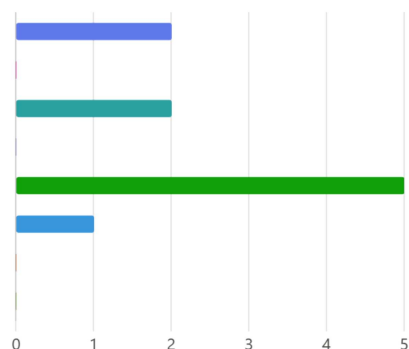
16. ¿Cuáles son las mejores maneras para que la Oficina de Inversiones Comunitarias lo mantenga informado sobre las actualizaciones del programa y los resultados del proyecto? (Seleccione todas las que correspondan)

- Boletín informativo por correo electrónico 6
- Redes sociales (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) 7
- Reuniones públicas 5
- Organizaciones comunitarias que comparten información 7
- Medios de comunicación locales 6



17. ¿Cuál es su ocupación actual? (Por favor, seleccione uno o especifique otro en el espacio "other")

- Empleado(a) 2
- Estudiante 0
- Padre o madre que se queda en casa 2
- Jubilado(a) 0
- Voluntario(a) 5
- Trabajador(a) independiente de contrato 1
- Dueño(a) de Negocio 0
- Other 0



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 8:04 AM
To: BAAQMD Community Investments Office
Subject: Valero settlement monies

[You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the BAAQMD network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hopefully our City deficit will be paid off with some of it.

[REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
BAAQMD

From: [REDACTED]
Self

RE: Comments of [REDACTED] Regarding the Emergent BAAQMD Community Investments Grant Program

4/22/2025

Filed electronically at: communityinvestments@baaqmd.gov

Dear BAAQMD Staff,

My name is [REDACTED]. I live in Richmond with my wife and two sons. I provide these comments as a homeowner and community member living within the BAAQMD jurisdiction.

I am pleased to provide these comments regarding the Emergent Community Investments Grant Program ("Emergent Program"), following the BAAQMD webinar held on April 8, 2025. Thank you for conducting the informative session. I appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments, which are intended to assist in shaping strategies for the impactful distribution of these funds. These comments will focus on policy considerations relevant to informing the funding distribution strategy, in addition to recommendations that align with local and regional priorities and promote environmental justice. With my background in transportation electrification (TE) policy, my comments are geared toward providing feedback on TE strategies.

Overview

Excitingly, BAAQMD has specified that the Emergent Program funds are to be used to air pollution or mitigate air pollution impacts. This presents a valuable opportunity to utilize the Emergent Program to decrease pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This priority is in alignment with various state policies, including Assembly Bill (AB) 32 and Senate Bill (SB) 32, in addition to SB 375, which mandates regional transportation planning with a focus on creating Sustainable Communities Strategies aimed at reducing GHG emissions. As such, there is a substantial opportunity to ensure the Emergent Program is aligned with these (and other) guiding policies, in addition to other initiatives designed to safeguard our climate while fostering sustainable and responsible community development.

I. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

To inform the funding distribution strategy and ensure these funds are distributed effectively while promoting equitable investment consistent with existing policy, I recommend that BAAQMD consider the following points:

Leverage the quantification methodology that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has created to calculate GHG emission reductions from these investments

Specifically, to promote uniformity between like-minded jurisdictions, BAAQMD can adopt the existing CARB Cap & Trade quantification methodology (QM).¹ This adoption will allow stakeholders to propose a variety of investments and projects that align with a robust pipeline of projects already recognized for reducing GHG emissions. Through this, there is an opportunity to ensure that the Emergent Program funds are indeed used for trackable and uniform GHG emissions reductions activities (while being logged in a uniform and consistent manner).

Develop a master list of prioritized program investments that are consistent with CARB's Cap & Trade expenditures, and similar clean transportation program investments

CARB's Cap & Trade Program has led to a significant series of investments across various projects managed by 24 state agencies. I suggest that BAAQMD create a "master list" of priority investments, using the Cap & Trade Program's investments as a proxy. This would encourage stakeholders to align their programs with the well-established standards upheld in the Cap & Trade Program. Cap & Trade Program investments have included and have not been limited to:

- Renewable energy projects
- Zero-emission vehicle incentives
- Energy efficiency programs
- Affordable housing and sustainable communities
- Transit investments
- Mobility and micromobility investments
- Urban greening initiatives
- Others.²

Prioritize Transportation Electrification (TE) Investments

Recognizing that transportation accounts for upwards of 40% of all GHG emissions in the state,³ there are opportunities for BAAQMD to leverage existing program frameworks from its

¹ For a link to CARB's QM, see here: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/california-climate-investments-quantification-benefits-and-reporting-materials>

² The following link indicates provides an overview of the emergent 2025/26 investment plan for Cap & Trade funds: <https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4960>

³ In California, the transportation sector is the single largest source of GHG emissions, accounting for approximately 40% of the state's total emissions. This sector primarily includes emissions from

sister agencies, to inform BAAQMD's investments. For example, through California Energy Commission's Clean Transportation program, the CEC has released funding to support a diverse array of programs including and not limited to:

- manufacturing and workforce training to translate clean technology investments into sustained employment opportunities
- fueling and charging infrastructure for zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs)
- alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles, including low- and zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles
- low-carbon renewable fuel from low-carbon pathways
- others⁴

In this regard, I would encourage BAAQMD to evaluate a set aside that prioritizes supporting TE investments.

Prioritize Clean Manufacturing Investments

With respect to funding clean technology innovations (e.g., energy storage, green hydrogen production, converting waste to energy, others.), I highly encourage BAAQMD to prioritize investments in clean manufacturing, specifically targeting companies that are developing our clean technology workforces and their associated supply chains. This approach aligns well with Governor Newsom's directive to identify collaborative opportunities with trading partners, aiming to protect California's economic interests, including its workers, manufacturers, businesses, and the broader supply chains that support the state's economy.⁵ By prioritizing clean manufacturing investments, the Emergent Program's initiatives can become aligned with broader regional and statewide efforts.

II. DISTRIBUTION RECOMMENDATIONS

This section discusses recommended methodology to maximize the "return on investment" (ROI) for the Emergent Program. Within this context, I would define ROI as three main elements. First, the ROI should be informed by the community and societal benefits that can be derived from the Emergent Program. Second, the focus of the program on making scalable and sustainable investments, and third, the ability for the Emergent Program to "trigger" additional value through the growth of public-private partnerships that are designed to exist beyond the Emergent Program's investment timeline. In this regard, I provide the following feedback.

vehicles, including passenger cars, heavy-duty trucks, and other on-road transportation. Website Access: <https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4821#:~:text=Transportation%20Is%20Largest%20Source%20of,and%20long%E2%80%91haul%20trucks>).

⁴ Link to CEC Clean Transportation Program here: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/clean-transportation-program>

⁵ <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2025/04/04/governor-newsom-directs-state-to-pursue-strategic-relationships-with-international-trading-partners-urges-exemptions-of-california-made-products-from-tariffs/>

Encourage a diverse array of stakeholders to pursue funding

Aligning with my response with comments that I provided in the BAAQMD's survey, I would support policies that encourage any of the following entities to be eligible for funding (as well as others):

- Community-based organizations (CBOs)
- Local schools and school districts
- Nonprofit organizations
- Faith based organizations
- Local government agencies
- Environmental justice (EJ) groups
- Businesses

Moreover, to encourage partnerships building, BAAQMD may want to develop a process that promotes both private-private, private-public, and private-non-profit partnership building between eligible applicants.

Develop a fast-track process for certain entities to be awarded up to \$250,000

There is an opportunity for BAAQMD to develop a comprehensive list of organizations seeking expedited fund distribution. BAAQMD could offer guidance to these organizations regarding the criteria for eligibility in a fast-track process. To encourage targeted user of the track, this process could be made available to CBOs, non-profits, EJ groups, and small businesses, offering access to multi-year funding resources. Here, I would envision that a range of direct, indirect, overhead, general, administrative, and fringe costs should be considered for eligibility for these organizations. To effectively utilize the Emergent Program's funding, the fast-track mechanism should enable recipients to obtain an initial amount of capital and the possibility of multi-year grant funding. For instance, a recipient might receive \$150,000 in the first year and an additional \$25,000 over the next four years, resulting in a total investment spanning five years. Overall, this process could be put in place to establish a method for select stakeholders to have access to a predictable cadence of funding for a set period (e.g., 5 years).

Encourage stakeholders to build supply chain-focused clean technology projects

Consistent with my survey response, I strongly support the distribution of funding into categories including and not limited to the following:

- Shovel-Ready
- Planning
- Research & Development
- Education
- Job Training/Apprenticeship
- Core Services

- Existing Projects
- Demonstrations
- Youth Focus.

Here, BAAQMD has assembled a robust and widespread approach to allow for diverse projects.

I would also suggest that BAAQMD consider the possibility of backing Governor Newsom's recently created programs designed to strengthen assistance for employees, producers, enterprises, and the larger supply networks connected to the state's economy. Here, I would like to recommend that BAAQMD include and specify "supply chain" as a qualifying program area. This supply chain category should cover, and not be limited to, the purchase of parts and inventory for businesses involved in the creation of clean technology goods. With respect to investing in ZEV manufacturing supply chains, BAAQMD could leverage existing guidance on eligible projects that has been provided by the CEC through its ZEV manufacturing grant offering.⁶

Allow stakeholders to pursue up to 3 distinct grants

BAAQMD is in an excellent position to promote project diversification by enabling organizations to seek various funding sources for their diverse needs. To this end, the establishment of a limit of three grants per entity for the Emergent Program warrants consideration. Furthermore, BAAQMD could potentially foster specific partnership models—such as those between businesses, non-profit organizations, or governmental bodies—to further promote collaborative endeavors. This approach would support a wide array of investments and encourage the formation of robust regional alliances within the BAAQMD's operational area.

Allow for businesses to access more capital when they commit “Community Resource Contributions”

With respect to ROI, BAAQMD holds a favorable position to attract further investment in the Emergent Program through Community Resource Contributions (CRCs) from the private sector. These CRCs would serve as a means for entities to exhibit a vested interest in securing these funds and contributing to programmatic sustainability. Here, essentially, the CRC is a method for entities to demonstrate “skin in the game” in pursuit of these funds. The implementation of CRCs could be based on the current policy framework that has previously utilized them successfully. For example, CARB's Clean Mobility Options Program defines the CRC as a multi-year investment designed to enhance programmatic success; within the CMO program, a "Resource Contribution" refers to assets provided to the project to augment voucher funding and promote enduring sustainability. It is important to note that these assets need not be monetary, and applicants are not expected to assess the financial value of these

⁶ CEC ZEV manufacturing, see GFO-21-605 - Zero-Emission Transportation Manufacturing: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/solicitations/2022-03/gfo-21-605-zero-emission-transportation-manufacturing>

contributions.⁷ Table 1, below, provides a rough outline of what a CRC could look like for this program, including requirements for partnership to pursue higher award amounts.

Table 1: Hypothetical Illustration of Community Resource Contributions (CRCs)

Grant Amount	Non-Profit CRCs	For Profit CRCs
Up to \$250,000 (fast track)	\$ 0	\$ 2,500
Up to \$1 million	Partner with for-profit	\$ 10,000
Up to \$2 million	Partner with for-profit	\$ 20,000
Up to \$3 million	Partner with for-profit	\$ 30,000
Up to \$4 million	Partner with for-profit	\$ 40,000
Up to \$5 million	Partner with for-profit	\$ 50,000

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding the Emergent Community Investments Grant Program (“Emergent Program”). I have enjoyed learning more about the program and am pleased to provide policy recommendations to maximize the pollution fund's potential. I recommend that BAAQMD establish a program that:

- Leverages CARB’s quantification methodology to calculate GHG emission reductions from the Program’s investments.
- Develops a master list of prioritized program investments that aligns with CARB’s Cap & Trade expenditures.
- Prioritizes Transportation Electrification (TE) investments.
- Prioritizes clean manufacturing investments.
- Encourages a diverse array of stakeholders to pursue funding.
- Develops a fast-track process for certain entities to be awarded up to \ \$250,000.
- Encourages stakeholders to build supply chain-focused clean technology projects.
- Allows stakeholders to pursue up to 3 distinct grants.
- Allows businesses to access more capital when they commit to “Community Resource Contributions.”

Please contact me with any questions or should you require any clarification regarding this correspondence or have further inquiries.

Respectfully Submitted,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

⁷ CARB Clean Mobility Options implementation manual, 2025:
<https://cleanmobilityoptions.org/implementation-manual/>

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 2:03 PM
To: BAAQMD Community Investments Office
Subject: Valero Fine

[You don't often get email from [REDACTED] Learn why this is important at
<https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the BAAQMD network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

As a Benicia resident, I take this opportunity to urge the Bay Area Air District to allow maximum flexibility to Benicia in its use of the \$56M Benicia-specific portion of the \$82M Valero fine.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 14, 2025 4:07 PM
To: BAAQMD Community Investments Office
Subject: Re: Money from Valero

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the BAAQMD network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I'm too sleepy after work to attend your meetings.

I would like to see you give every school age child living in Benicia a gift, like a Season Pass to Six Flags for one year.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Substitute Teacher in Vallejo.

Home Owner in Benicia on [REDACTED]

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

On Tue, Jul 1, 2025 at 7:35 PM [REDACTED] wrote:

To: Bay Area Area Air District Board of Directors, Community Investments Office

From: [REDACTED], Benicia resident

Re: June 2 Discussion of Community Investments Office survey's preliminary results on use of community benefits penalty funds

Because I may not be able to participate in the June 2 Zoom discussion of the CIO's survey regarding use of community benefits penalty funds, I would like to offer my input via email.

By way of background, I have headed and worked with consulting, evaluation and research initiatives for institutions that fund or otherwise engage with environmental, human rights, equity-oriented and related projects across the globe, including the Ford, Open Society and Asia Foundations; the U.S. U.K. and Danish development agencies; several UN programs and offices; the World Bank; policy institutes such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; and advocacy groups such as Amnesty International. I also have taught courses on such projects at Berkeley Law and Central European University's Public Policy School, and published widely on these matters.

With that background in mind, I hope that you will consider the following suggestions for the CIO's use of the community benefits penalty fund:

1. Establishment of Environmental Resilience Endowments (EREs) for communities to apply flexibly over multi-year periods. Specifically, an ERE will be utilized for purposes that help improve or protect community public health, air quality, related well-being or steps that advance community resilience against and community transitions away from dependence on actors and activities that have polluted the environment. Each ERE will be established for and administered by a local government and/or nonprofit whose community is the beneficiary of the penalty fund, consistent with overall Air District guidelines.

2. EREs are consistent with the Air District's commitment to "invest millions in Bay Area communities impacted by air pollution to enhance public health, environmental quality, and community well-being," its commitment to community resilience, and the survey's consideration of funding mechanisms such as grants for "community foundation endowment" and investment of "a portion of funds...for future growth and use."

3. EREs are consistent with sound grantmaking practice and Air District values, in that they a) put key funding decisions in the hands of the communities themselves, while b) saving limited resources for direct project spending rather than overhead and c) operate flexibly as circumstances evolve. For example, in view of cancer rates much higher than Solano County and California, and other public safety and health hazards presented by refinery operations, the single most positive impact on Benicia's public safety and health would be served by the closure of the Valero refinery. Yet in negotiations and interactions with that operation, the city is hamstrung by its financial and institutional dependence on the refinery. This dependence could be alleviated by applying up to 90 percent of the Valero penalty fund to appropriate Benicia government spending (recreation, fire prevention and other services anticipated by the survey, as well as other kinds of expenditures it did not cover) over a number of years, so as to permit the city to ease its transition to a post-Valero fiscal and environmental context, whenever that transition might start (which could be as soon as April 2026, according to Valero's current plans). Addressing this problem would be consistent with the survey findings that by far the "most pressing air quality challenge in Bay Area communities" is "Air pollution from industrial facilities," while the fourth highest priority is the related "Hazardous waste or contamination."

4. EREs benefit all beneficiary communities that would seek their adoption, by allowing such communities to prioritize evolving challenges, hazards and opportunities suited to their individual circumstances. On the other hand, if a given locality would prefer a regular CIO grantmaking facility, with all of the funding decisions made at the Air District level, there is nothing to preclude its going that route.

5. Preparing guidelines for use of penalty funds should not be constrained by survey results or the resulting summary, and should draw on additional community input. Of necessity, the survey did not and could not list all appropriate options, as evinced by its not including EREs and other kinds of funding facilities and needs. It accordingly should be a

starting rather than ending point for what hopefully will be well-publicized community input opportunities in coming months.

Thank you for considering these thoughts.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]