Group 1 - Alameda County EJ Element - Community Workshop #2

1.) Pollution and Air Quality

What we heard from the community

- Many children have asthma, get sick easily, and have difficulty breathing
- There is trash, needles, human waste on the street
- Truck pollution
- A concern about trucks being allowed on 580
- Loud noise from the train

Comments:

- Asthma --COVID and Asthma can interact to make health outcomes worse-- how is this linked?
- Noise -- would love to see noise barriers on 580 on west side of town (Fairmont ridge)

Policy Ideas from Partner Organizations

- Collect and monitor data.
- Raise awareness on the sources, impacts, testing and remediation of air, water and soil pollutions.
- Collect and monitor data.
- Provide a buffer and screening between freeways/ industrial uses and sensitive land uses (e.g., homes, school, parks),
- Provide home testing kits for lead.
- Plant trees in the most burdened areas.
- Work together with agencies to provide education on Asthma.
- Add air filtration to buildings.
- Establish pollution warning zones (e.g., signage).
- Prioritize bike lanes.
- Phase out polluting industry (e.g., body shops) near residences.
- Provide tax incentives to clean up pollution
- Provide gardening education
- Provide safe drinking water in parks.
- Tax polluting businesses
- Improve bus routes to enable commuting without cars.
- Provide safe drinking water in parks.

Your Policy Ideas

2.) Safety and Sanitary Homes

What we heard from the community

- Rent, mortgage, and housing costs are too high
- Living conditions need improvements
- Growing population of unhoused neighbors
- Gentrification and displacement
- Neighborhood safety

Comments:

- These concerns resonate with our group, particularly high rents
- bothered by this topic, not government's job to build or control housing

Policy Ideas from Partner Organizations

- Increase awareness of resources for improving the health of homes.
- Create a system to report mold and lead.
- Build new sidewalks where needed most.
- Streamline application process for residential improvements.
- Adopt an ordinance to address tenant protection.
- Establish a community land trust.
- Enforce prohibition of short-term rentals.
- Enforce smoke free housing ordinance.
- Create a tenant resource line.
- Provide pre-approved Accessory Dwelling Units.
- Fund air purifiers and indoor air monitors.
- Create a loan fund for lead abatement / rebates / repairs.
- Care for street trees.
- Control for disease vectors.
- Set up a permit concierge to assist with permitting process.
- Streamline application process for residential improvements.
- Provide pre-approved Accessory Dwelling Units.

Your Policy Ideas

- Emphasis on tenant protections
- If county works on Sidewalks a little at a time, we'll eventually have the resources we need. Appropriate use of government resources
- Graffiti abatement in public spaces
- Sidewalks are very important for people who don't/ can't drive
- Supportive of anything that helps with mold or lead abatement
- Disagree on mold abatement-- this is a private matter, not government's responsibility to provide for this

3.) Public Facilities

What we heard from the community

- Public transit is too expensive and too hard to access
- Sidewalks need repairs
- More streetlights are needed for safety
- Schools are being closed in black and brown neighborhoods*
- Unincorporated areas need greenspaces and parks*
- Community programs: exercise class, sports, after school programs etc.

Comments:

- Problem is specifically closure of schools in low-income areas
- Little kids should be able to walk to school

Policy Ideas from Partner Organizations

- Increase public transportation routes or add shuttles that connect to other public transportation.
- Activate spaces more for pedestrians rather than vehicles (e.g., wide sidewalks, lighting and speed bumps).
- Green Space/Public Gathering. Make quantitative goals for annual tree planting, create placemaking and build more outdoor gathering spaces.
- Strengthen existing facilities into resilience hubs (e.g., cooling centers), including school-based hubs.
- Work with school districts to provide community needs on school sites.
- Provide education to decision-makers about mental health and substance addiction issues.
- Create one-stop welcome hubs similar to REACH for adult populations.
- Prioritize public facilities and open space in areas with a significant need, especially where new housing is planned or proposed.
- Provide mental health and other support services with affordable housing projects.
- Improve bike/ pedestrian connectivity.
- Address community concerns around school closures.
- Reduce vehicle idling.

Your Policy Ideas

- affordable housing projects need to have tenant organizations in each one
- Emphasize partnerships with AC Transit and BART, as well as schools to increase access to public facilities
- gathering places need to have connection to nature for mental health and children experience
- Emphasize ADA access-- how to get to a park and around inside a part for people with disabilities
- more seating for disabled and old
- camping sites in former 238 lands--accessible
- residents shouldnt have to transfer bus to get to their commercial center
- Emphasis on access to nature, wildlife corridors etc for mental health
- support access for open camping, trails and urban central areas for kids
- Support San Lorenzo Creekway trail project (HARD)
- restoring San Lorenzo creek

4.) Food Access

What we heard from the community

- Grocery stores with healthy options are too far away
- Fresh and healthy food is too expensive
- School lunches need to be improved so that students can get healthy food
- Community members need access to food resources like food banks

Comments:

- No shortage of food pantries locally, but no centralized way to access information
- Fruits and veggies are too expensive

Policy Ideas from Partner Organizations

- Offer incentives to businesses to provide and advertise healthier food options.
- Increase food delivery to seniors/disabled.
- Organize bi-monthly farmers markets, and offer free or affordable produce for the lower income.
- Create incentives to design rooftop gardens.
- Train community members and youth on how food is grown and how to care for community gardens.
- Invest in food coupons at local stores
- Limit non-healthy food businesses (e.g., fast food, liquor stores)
- Work with local farmers and produce markets to bring food to neighborhoods.
- Create edible landscaping and parklets.
- Incorporate community gardens in housing projects.
- Educate the community about ordinances that allow for livestock for food.

Your Policy Ideas

- need emphasis on urban ag connected to food pantries, and cookign classes, to help with healthy food access
- improve beekeeping and chicken ordinances to allow them

5.) Health and Physical Activity

What we heard from the community

- Need access to mental health resources
- Heart health issues in the community
- Need more recreation facilities
- Community spaces are not safe for exercise because of crime, needles, and litter
- Need community programs that promote healthy lifestyles

Comments:

- Agree that community spaces are not safe, unappealing, because no one maintains them
- Parks with public restrooms not clean or safe
- make mental health help easily accessible
- what about pain control help to reduce drug dependence

Policy Ideas from Partner Organizations

- Raise awareness of programs on an ongoing basis and how to sign up; include language access.
- Work with local agencies to offer preventative mental health support
- Provide support to re-entry and unhoused populations to promote health and wellness for them and their families.
- Work with local churches to organize health and wellness events (e.g., health education combined with walking or yoga).
- Increase outdoor spaces for diverse recreation (e.g., outdoor roller hockey rink in Pleasanton).
- Organize annual events, such as walks, runs, bike rides, block parties, including events for people with disabilities.
- Provide year-long affordable programs.
- Offer youth jobs in leading activities.
- Expand health education programs (nutrition, physical activity) for families with children.
- Organize trips for youth to regional parks
- Train/pay re-entry individuals to care for parks, gardens and open space areas.

Your Policy Ideas

- supportive of more parks
- community programs must be non-denominational
- healthcare recommendations seem redundant-- aren't these already provided?
- health programs for residents who have asthma
- ADA access very important-- people with disabilities can't get to parks or navigate the interior of parks
- need more seating for people who need it--universal access and use
- foothill trail must preserve bay and sky view for public
- more benches along trails, bus stops, in public spaces in general

6.) Civic Engagement

What we heard from the community

- Community voices are not prioritized in decision making
- Unincorporated areas are left out of conversations
- Meetings need to be better advertised and made more accessible
- Information needs to be given in multiple languages
- Accommodations need to be made for seniors so that they can participate

Comments:

- it is confusing to participate with county meeting
- need public meetings for animal control
- need simple websites
- meeting transcripts are garbled

Policy Ideas from Partner Organizations

- Establish an "Office of Unincorporated" (like a City Manager's office for Unincorporated) in CAO's office
- Designate MAC seat(s) for EJ census tract resident(s)
- Establish an Unincorporated Youth Commission advisory body (like City of Hayward)
- Fund and institutionalize the Ashland Cherryland Health Communities Collaborative (collaborative group of County and CBO service providers in unincorporated)
- Develop Block Associations & Business Improvement Districts
- Establish a permanent cadre of community outreach workers/ CBOs on contract to support outreach to diverse communities
- Establish a centralized contact list for County and service providers to use for community outreach
- Create a County-run mini-grant program to fund CBO and individual EJ projects
- Invest in a centralized digital engagement tool/website (see "Have Your Say Monterey")
- Establish a County-supported volunteer program for community greening and beautification
- Make translation standard at all public meetings
- Mail a monthly or quarterly outreach newsletter community-wide
- Invest in an iPad fleet for use by community outreach workers
- Develop a transparent County privacy policy for participation in public surveys
- Create program to bridge Tech Divide, i.e. free internet, classes, equipment, hotspots

Your Policy Ideas

- provide neighborhood free wifi
- Emphasize the MACs-- this relationship is very important for community
- MAC (and other meeting) policy that residents are encouraged to participate, not discouraged
- MAC members should be elected
- provide spaces for children and elders to mix
- Civic engagement should enable people to communicate, exchange informatin, and learn from each other-- that should be the them of civic engagement
- center diversity
- must have searchable archive of county meetings
- All one community regardless of language, disability, etc-- language justice enables everyone to participate in the process
- County agencies have too much input-- should be about the people of the county
- transcripts are jumbled and difficult to read and search
- have policy that mac members and commissioners cannot degrade or mock residents
- Agency work is poorly publicized so it's hard to participate, even CV MAC feels secretive-- much better publicity around meetings
- dont abbreviate meeting minutes
- simultaneous translation
- Support language justice at all public meetings-- all county processes geared toward equal access despite language spoken. Start with common languages
- Over 250 languages spoken in county-- how to provide all of those?
- concerns that translation doubles time of meeting