

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, RICHMOND CITY HALL
1401 Marina Way South, Richmond, CA
April 21, 2011
6:30 p.m.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Charles Duncan, Chair	Sheryl Lane, Vice Chair
Jeff Lee, Secretary	Carol Teltschick-Fall
Ben Choi	Andrés Soto
Roberto Reyes	

The meeting was called to order by Chair Duncan at 6:30 p.m.

Vice Chair Lane led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Duncan, Vice Chair Lane; Secretary Lee; Commissioners Choi, Reyes, Soto

Absent: Commissioner Teltschick-Fall

INTRODUCTIONS

Staff Present: Lamont Thompson, Hector Rojas, and Carlos Privat

Secretary Lee cited the significant size of the document the Commission received, and asked for an opinion from Mr. Privat as to its disposition. Mr. Privat said the 54-page letter and materials are being analyzed and facts are being independently confirmed and studied. The City Attorney's Office is working to complete the analysis for the next meeting, which should be in June.

Commissioner Soto thanked Mr. Privat and said in that process, this is clearly an advocacy submittal from one interest group relating to a specific issue on a much larger process. It was presented in a legal and potentially threatening manner.

Chair Duncan confirmed with Mr. Privat that the Commission will have an answer sometime in June and possibly staff's analysis for the staff report.

Secretary Lee confirmed the revised forecasting plan for review of the General Plan.

MINUTES

March 3, 2011:

ACTION: It was M/S (Soto/Lee) to approve the minutes of March 3, 2011; carried unanimously with one abstention (Lane).

March 17, 2011

ACTION: It was M/S (Soto/Reyes) to approve the minutes of March 17, 2011; carried unanimously with two abstentions (Lane and Lee).

Chair Duncan provided an overview of meeting procedures for speaker registration, public comment and public hearing functions. He said items approved by the Commission may be appealed in writing to the City Clerk by Monday, May 2, 2011, by 5:00 p.m. and as needed, announced the appeal process after each affected item.

Brown Act – Public Forum – No speakers

CONSENT CALENDAR

Chair Duncan indicated there were no Consent Calendar items.

STUDY SESSION

1. **PLN09-137: Richmond General Plan 2030 - STUDY SESSION** to receive public comments on the Education & Human Services, Community Facilities & Infrastructure, Energy & Climate Change, Parks & Recreation, Arts & Culture, Historic Resources, and National Historical Park Elements of the revised Draft General Plan released on February 14, 2011. No formal action will be taken by the Commission at this meeting. Planner: Hector Rojas.

Chair Duncan said on April 7, 2011 the Commission received a staff presentation and took public comment on Element 1-Economic Development; Element 3-Land Use and Urban Design; Element 4-Circulation; Element 7-Conservation, Natural Resources and Open Space; Element 9-Growth Management; Element 11-Community Health and Wellness; and Element 12-Public Safety and Noise.

The Commission will receive comment from the public and will provide its own comments on remaining elements to include: Element 2-Education and Human Services; Element 6-Community, Facilities and Infrastructure; Element 8-Energy and Climate Change; Element 10-Parks and Recreation; Element 13-Arts and Culture; Element 14-Historic Resources; and Element 15-The National Historical Park. He noted Element 5-Housing will not be heard tonight and asked for a brief staff explanation.

Mr. Rojas stated the staff report forwarded to the Planning Commission included some information which led the Commission to believe comments were heard from the public on the Housing Element which is incorrect. The Housing Element has been separated from this General Plan track and will proceed independently. Staff anticipates hiring a third party consultant to assist the City in responding to HCD.

Chair Duncan continued discussing meeting protocols, stating that after the public comment session, the Commission will add its own comments. Thereafter, staff will make edits to the General Plan prior to its consideration by the City Council.

Hector Rojas, Associate Planner, gave the staff presentation stating the Commission and public will provide comment on the remaining General Plan elements which he read into the record. He reviewed the Planning Commission's role in the adoption process for the benefit of those unable to attend the April 7, 2011 meeting and said he would provide an overview of goals and policies of the General Plan elements and an updated adoption timeline for the General Plan.

Education and Human Services Element

Mr. Rojas said the three goals are to 1) achieving a comprehensive and successful educational system; 2) an educated and skilled workforce; and 3) equitable and high quality services.

Policies designed to support goals include supporting educational institutions and providing quality learning environments for youth and adults and persons with special needs; collaborating with educational providers to create high quality and affordable pre-school and child care centers; supporting inclusion of the arts, local history, physical exercise and educational curriculum; encouraging the school district to retain open and closed school properties to meet current and future needs; working with the school district on locating new schools to maximize walk ability; and, supporting job skills training, mentorship and apprentice programs.

Community Facilities and Infrastructure Element:

Mr. Rojas said the four goals which include 1) having facilities that service a diverse range of community needs; 2) having efficient use and maintenance of facilities and infrastructure; 3) using green and sustainable standards and practices in facility design; and 4) using facilities to create neighborhood revitalization.

Policies for these goals include equitably upgrading, maintaining and expanding the City's infrastructure to meet current and future service and utility needs in all neighborhoods; requiring new developments to upgrade existing or provide new facilities and infrastructure improvements; encouraging the joint use and co-location of public and private facilities; promoting flexible design and programming of facilities to accommodate changing needs; promoting green and sustainable practices in planning, design, construction, and renovation and maintenance of facilities.

Energy and Climate Change Element:

Mr. Rojas said goals include 1) being a leader in managing climate change locally; 2) creating clean and efficient transportation options; 3) having sustainable and efficient energy systems; 4) creating sustainable developments; 5) having community revitalization and economic development; and 6) creating climate resilient communities.

Policies for this element include taking leadership in advocating for local, regional and national solutions to climate change; raising awareness of climate change's potential impacts and building support for climate change initiatives; encouraging use of climate friendly vehicles and equipment; supporting production and distribution of climate friendliest fuels and identifying appropriate locations; supporting expanded public transit for residents, workers and visitors; promoting walking and bicycling as a safe and convenient mode of transportation; supporting regional and long distance passenger rail service; reducing automobile reliance by planning transit-oriented, mixed use and higher density communities; promoting energy efficiency resource conservation and waste reduction in the design, construction, maintenance and operation of facilities, infrastructure and equipment; supporting sustainable food systems including farmers markets, urban agriculture and healthy food retailers; encouraging environmentally progressive businesses and industries; supporting regional policies and efforts to improve air quality; protecting natural habitats and sensitive biological resources; and, protecting and managing low lying areas susceptible to sea level rise.

Parks and Recreation Element:

Mr. Rojas stated goals include 1) creating an integrated system of parks and green streets and trails; 2) having safe and high quality parks and recreational facilities; 3) using sustainable design and maintenance practices; 4) creating stewardship of the natural environment; and 5) providing a range of quality recreational programs and services.

Policies for this element include expanding park and recreational opportunities in all neighborhoods and ensuring they are offered within walking distance of homes, schools and businesses; providing equitable funding for park maintenance, renovation and upgrading; seeking joint use opportunities with non-City park and recreational operators; providing safe, high quality and distinctive communities and gathering places; promoting park and facility design that discourages vandalism, deters crime, provides natural surveillance and creates a safe and natural environment; improving access to large scale natural areas; enhancing public access to and encouraging development of sports and recreation activities along the shoreline; promoting the restoration of indigenous and native habitat and open space preserves, national and regional parks, local parks and landscaping; using parks, recreational facilities, programs and services to build awareness of Richmond's unique, natural, historical and cultural resources; and, expanding and tailoring recreational programs and services to meet evolving community needs.

Arts and Culture Element:

Two main goals include 1) creating a community strengthened by the arts; and 2) enhancing economic development opportunities through the use of arts and culture.

Policies for this element include promoting the arts by incorporating art in widely utilized public places and creating effective outreach for community programs and celebrations; offering rich, well-balanced and equitably distributed arts and culture educational programs and services; supporting and partnering with community-based art institutions promoting arts and culture as a key component of revitalization; and building on Richmond's art and cultural assets to establish a positive image and business environment.

Historic Resource Element:

Three goals include 1) historic resource preservation; 2) expanded economic opportunities based on historic resources; and 3) increase public awareness of Richmond's history.

Policies for this element include protecting, preserving and enhancing Richmond's diverse range of historic, cultural and archaeological resources; promoting adaptive re-use, rehabilitation and retrofitting of historic buildings and integrating preservation with economic revitalization objectives; building Richmond's unique and nationally recognized historic resources to draw visitors to the City; elevating community awareness about the value of historic preservation; and, improving access to information on programs and resources for historic preservation of historic properties.

The National Historical Park Element:

Mr. Rojas stated the one goal of this element is the full development of the National Historical Park.

The policies for this element include supporting the National Parks Service in delineating and protecting existing and potential resources in the City's significance to Richmond's role in the World War II Home Front effort; supporting expansion of transportation options to National Historical Park resources and sites in the City; increasing awareness of the City's history as it relates to the National Historical Park; supporting the National Parks Service in its efforts to provide facilities and service that welcome visitors to the National Historical Park sites; and, encouraging projects that recognize the contributions of immigrants, women, people of color, and other under-represented communities including the families of veterans in the WWII Home Front effort.

General Plan Timeline:

Mr. Rojas discussed the updated timeline for the General Plan, stating that based upon comments received at the first meeting on April 7, 2011 and those from this meeting staff will start making final edits to the text of the General Plan. As of this week staff and the environmental consultant have started preparing the FEIR which will include the Response to Comments received prior to the public comment period on March 31st. Approximately 30 comment letters were received on the DEIR and at this time and staff anticipates that the final DEIR and the FEIR could be brought before the Planning Commission as early as June. The Commission's recommendation would then be taken to the City Council the following month, in July.

Mr. Rojas reminded everybody how they can provide comments on the Draft General Plan, stating comments are being accepted and recorded this evening. He asked members of the public to complete a speaker card, stating their full name, city of residence and limit their remarks to 2 minutes. Comments are limited to the General Plan only and not the DEIR and should focus on the elements covered tonight. Written comments can be mailed or emailed to staff. Written comments must be received by Planning staff no later than April 29, 2011. Copies of the DEIR and proposed General Plan are currently available at the Richmond Planning Division, public libraries and the City of Richmond's General Plan website.

Mr. Rojas added that in responding to the North Shore question of Secretary Lee, staff originally planned on taking the item to the Council this next month; however, staff met with legal staff who has read the letter and staff anticipates providing a set of options to the City Council. With those options, staff will also provide the Council with legal liabilities associate with all three options. One option would to leave the designation as proposed. The second would be to go back to designations for those areas in the current General Plan, and the third option would be a hybrid of these options.

Secretary Lee questioned and briefly discussed staff's strategy as to why the item was going to the City Council prior to it being re-reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Chair Duncan opened the public comment period.

Public Comments:

Katrinka Ruk, COI, Richmond, said many of the action items are directives to implement, update and to require and should be re-worded as recommendations. Regarding Element 2, EH1.F and 3.4, she recommended adding in some language that shows that the City dialogue with transit agencies to ensure transportation resources are available for kids to go to school and for the community to access health services. They also recommended adding that the City work with

the school district regarding the school closure specifically and closure of adult schools. EH2.A—they recommend support and expansion of the Summer Youth Works Program. Element 6, CF3.B; green building ordinance goes beyond what the current ordinance is which cannot be done without City Council approval. The ordinance currently states to meet the levels of LEED building standards. She recommended complying with the current ordinance. Regarding Element 8, EC1.A, 6.2 and 6.3 of the Climate Action Plan, they would like to include participation with stakeholders with the Council of Industries, PG&E and EBMUD. She said they held conversations with the City one year ago and provided a support letter for the City to obtain grant funding to put towards putting this plan together. She recommended the air quality emissions report and the Bay Planning Coalition's report on sea level rise be included in review of that plan. She also recommended that the Port Clean Air Action Plan be included in action items. She concluded stating that her detailed comments are included in the written submittal.

Maria Alegria, REDI, Faith Works, Pinole, said they recognize the importance of the planning process and wants to be sure that the General Plan and the Climate Change Element embodies values of social equity and social justice. She asked the Commission to support access to living wage jobs, affordable housing, healthy food choices, affordable and reliable transportation, and prioritize clean air and a healthy environment for everybody who lives and works in Richmond. She asked the Commission to encourage forward economic development that supports a green economy and does not displace current residents, ensure including public input mechanisms that allow for transparency, accountability, especially those policies that have a direct impact on somebody's livelihood and health. She is encouraged by changes seen in the Climate Change Element and looks forward to the comments from the DEIR.

Commissioner Soto stated given all of Richmond's shoreline, he asked if REDI has developed any specific positions on change areas recommended near the shoreline, including the north shoreline, Pt. Richmond and the south shoreline, given climate change realities and the fact that these are low lying areas.

Ms. Alegria said personally, she has been concerned with low lying areas that encompass communities of color and low income. What she has seen is that the plan looks to protect those neighborhoods and existing infrastructure. Their coalition discussed the North Shore and Pt. Molate and has identified their priorities for those areas. However, in terms of the climate change effort, they would like to ensure those living in those areas are protected and that in any takings, people be made whole.

Antonio Medrano, REDI, FaithWorks, San Pablo, supports climate change recommendations and embodies social equity and social justice values which include accountability and responsible development without displacing residents. They support EC4.1, mixed use and infill development and housing that is planned along transit corridors that will enable students and individuals to take transit to reduce GHG emissions. He voiced concern with current transportation available for students and recommend including the following language: "Promote mixed use and infill development on vacant and underutilized parcels in residential, commercial and industrial areas, encourage efficient use of land and existing circulation infrastructure by promoting higher density, transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly development all along key commercial corridors in the downtown area and in the planned ferry terminal and in the Hilltop area while protecting existing affordable housing and preventing displacement of renters in low income communities."

Commissioner Soto asked to speak as a school board member and his thoughts about Richmond annexing **Montalvan**??? (sp). Mr. Medrano said he thinks there should be a vote of the community, but he would be in favor of this.

Commissioner Soto stated there are many things the Educational Element asks the City to do to support access, healthy activities, quality education, much of which is not officially the City's responsibility but rather the school district's responsibility. He asked if Mr. Medrano could provide further insight. Mr. Medrano said Richmond has gone far beyond anyone else in its organizational promotion and collaboration of school districts and city governments, as evidenced by the City's maintenance of Kennedy High School re-dedicated MLK park, building of community centers, relabeling of schools as community schools so that multi-purpose rooms will always be available to the community, and three schools remaining open.

Commissioner Soto questioned any expansion of joint use activities for facilities and parks near schools. Mr. Medrano stated there is extensive use of all play fields at all schools. When the new Coronado gets built, there will be access to the new multi-purpose room and play area which they encourage.

Commissioner Reyes said as demographics have been changing, Richmond has been very involved in schools because parents care about their children's education as well as recreation. In moving forward, he believes there needs to be a much stronger relationship with joint relationships with regular and adult schools, and he is hopeful this will continue to grow.

Del Price, Program Coordinator, REDI, Albany, said if everybody takes the global crisis seriously, they must make the Energy and Climate Element central to the City's planning. A healthy and thriving future cannot be reached for Richmond without addressing the climate crisis and it will affect every other element, change the way the City plans for land use, jobs, housing, transportation, health and wellness. The element lays the groundwork for an energy climate action plan and Richmond has a chance to show its leadership on green issues and become one of the regional and national leaders, said their theme focuses on strengthening accountability which occur in EC1.A, EC5.3, ECC.1.B and the General Plan should include incentives for conservation as in EC31, 3.4, 3J and 3K. The General Plan should encourage local hiring, developing sources for locally distributed renewable energy and developing sustainable urban agriculture in line with sustainable communities, encouraging local development to decrease vehicle miles traveled and providing maximum benefit to local residents which is part of EC3.5, 5.2 and 4.5. The General Plan should promote development without displacement and REDI supports the forward-looking green business strategic plan found at EC by the Bay.

Commissioner Soto referred to shoreline issues and asked if REDI had positions on any of the change areas. Ms. Price said they have not taken positions on the shoreline issues specifically. The way they have addressed it is by talking about improving vehicle miles traveled, improving land use in general, identifying available lands that could be used for development so they would know what the City is planning to do.

Commissioner Reyes asked about Ms. Price's position on housing, and Ms. Price said they have communicated with City staff and HCD how strongly they felt about the Housing Element as it was presented and issues which were addressed by the state and sent to the City for a response. When the City addresses comments, it will return to the Planning Commission and she will speak at that time. She thinks revisions will result in a stronger Housing Element and she expects that many of REDI's recommendations will be included.

Greg Karras, CBE, Oakland, said he is speaking on the Energy and Climate Element, stating at the last study session, CBE promised to submit its ideas for language to make Richmond an environmental justice green zone. He highlighted 3 key parts of this proposal which they submitted yesterday; 1) proposed changes to policy EC1.1 would identify the City's unique role in climate protection, apply it to all sectors in Richmond including industry, protect and utilize the unique value of Richmond's land to transition from unsustainable fossil energy to sustainable green energy, cut greenhouse and toxic emissions here, and create more jobs here. Recognize that community participation in local energy decisions is necessary to maintain and build public support for this energy transition needed to avert potentially catastrophic climate change; 2) changes to action EC1A would set for the continuing planning framework needed to decide the specifics of this transition to a cleaner and more jobs-intense mix of energy resources with the community participation needed to support it, which would be the Climate Action Plan; 3) new action EC1D would protect climate, residents' environmental health and the unique environmental and economic values of our land which we would utilize to attract investment in this green energy strategy and green jobs by protecting against avoidable future commitments to dirtier energy that causes more emissions locally. Mr. Karras said this proposes City ordinances to do this, and they believe this is a good way to put into the plan the concept discussed at the last meeting. The City has the opportunity to create a healthier and more prosperous City, and he indicated he provided a disk to staff and the Commission on data collected.

Commissioner Soto referred to EC1D and contemplation of the ordinance and particularly the last point, he thinks it is a wonderful idea and his question would be whether this is legally enforceable, whether Richmond has the authority, and is CBE aware of other ordinance adopted to help protect the City. Mr. Karras said they want to keep working on this. The conditions require this are evolving rapidly. The California Air Resources Board has not yet implemented its proposed cap and trade scheme. Fairly recently, they have made a tentative decision to give away emission credits to some facilities including the refining sector and CBE is actively involved with allies in the environmental justice community to try to get them to change their mind. These conditions are changing and they do not know exactly how it will shake out. To note, they added the language to their comments which make the strong point that the plan already makes, which is we all must pitch in, and if any industry does not do their part, it makes it harder for everybody else. In the case of oil refining, they included an estimate that if everyone could still get there and this one refinery did nothing by 2050, it would be more than one-third of the total emissions statewide. So, this is part of the factual support for making sure it is bullet-proof.

Commissioner Soto said many people have worked on this, and given the environmental justice legacy in the community, this is the lens which they are looking at this. The concept of cap and trade flies in the face of that in the sense that the people in Richmond would have to bear the brunt so people can meet some artificial cap, which does not work out for him. Mr. Karras said CBE is opposed to cap and trade as a policy everywhere. Their members are very strong and clear on this point and cannot let it happen for Richmond. Right now; however, it is the state's plan.

Commissioner Reyes said it is frightening to see that if the City does not stick to its goals, they are looking at about 1.8 million more tons of emissions. There is a lot of data, and he is interested in asthma rates and the expectation of a 30% increase in these rates. He felt it was somebody's job to say things are out of hand. Mr. Karras said CBE is trying to say they are, think the existing emissions and related health problems are unacceptable now. With respect to

the quantification, he believes that CBE's estimates and comments in the draft EIR about the potential for emissions increases in the worst case do nothing scenario are fairly reliable and we hope we never see them. In terms of what this would do in terms of community health, he does not believe there is a one-to-one relationship and the real conclusion is they need to make it better and not make it worse. The childhood asthma rates in Richmond and West County are significantly higher than the already dismal averages county- and state-wide, and it is clear that more pollution will make that worse and not better. He was not sure whether they had the quantification tools as a society, however, to pinpoint whether this will be 10 or 100 times worse.

Ana Orozco, CBE, Oakland, said she would speak on the Energy and Climate Element and reiterated that the element sets the goal of reducing GHG emissions by 20% over the next 10 years; however the element only targets traffic and residential emissions as a means of GHG emissions reductions. As long as Richmond ignores commercial and industrial sources, not only will it not be able to accomplish its goal, but emissions will worsen unless there is explicit language in the General Plan that explains that industrial and commercial facilities will be under strict regulation and will have to cooperate with the City's goal of emissions reduction. She presented and explained a chart that illustrates how it would be impossible to reach the goal by only targeting traffic and residential emissions. Lastly, Richmond should declare itself a green zone.

Tony Sustak, Member of the Richmond Bicycle, Pedestrian and Advisory Committee, Richmond, said there is a lack of coordination between various departments in the City which makes it difficult to see that things get carried out in the most efficient and effective way, which he briefly explained. He urged Commissioners to work with and encourage staff to eliminate road blocks. Regarding climate action and sea level rise, the General Plan should be as specific as possible regarding what to expect Planning and Engineering to do, and asked to include the term "shall" and not "may" or "should".

Secretary Lee asked Mr. Sustak if sea level rise will take out much of the Bay Trail. Mr. Sustak said looking into the year 2100, it is a possibility. The EBRPD is planning on 15 inches by 2050 at a medium projected rise. However, all of the least, worst-case scenarios have been exceeded by magnitudes of order, and he would look at worst-case at 3 feet or more. Regarding the Bay Trail, what today is marsh will be bay tomorrow, but they are more worried about what uses are upland. For the City, infrastructure siting that the City is more actually dependent on or may have a responsibility to is of greater concern to him. If the City has planned for the 100 foot buffer that BCDC would require, they can move the Bay Trail there relatively inexpensive in comparison to housing and other facilities.

Tom Leatherman, Superintendent of Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historic Park, Superintendent at Eugene O'Neil National Historic Site in Danville and John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez, and Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial in Concord, resident of San Ramon, thanked the City and Commission for recognizing the importance of preserving the City's heritage. It is clear in the National Historical Park Element and in a number of other elements that historic preservation and historic resource preservation is a priority for the City. The City continues to show leadership in preserving resources and tell the stories of the Home Front during the war. It shows true vision to include a National Historic Park Element in the General Plan but also shows vision to incorporate those elements that the National Parks Service can bring to the City in terms of historic preservation into a number of the other elements he sees in the General Plan. He looks forward in continuing to work with the City and Mr. Privat was instrumental in negotiations for the lease for their visitor center which is close to

construction. They look forward to working with the City and continuing implementing all elements.

T.J. Taylor, ACE, Richmond, in addressing the Energy and Climate Action Element, EC3.1 and EC3J, they would like to see added new language. It states, "Create a new energy retrofit program to facilitate energy efficiency improvement." They would like to see it read, "Create a new energy retrofit program to facilitate energy efficiency improvement and reduction of water consumption in existing renter occupied residential property. Develop new tools and assistance to foster energy retrofits of renter occupied properties." She said as a mother and an unemployed worker and in dealing with the high costs of water, PG&E and other utilities without any energy efficient programs while also dealing with food stamps and other aid, the burden is multiplied on the tax system. Regarding ECJ.3, they would like to see added, "Encourage local utilities to offer on-bill financing for building energy and water conservation improvements."

Chair Duncan questioned and confirmed that Ms. Taylor submitted written comments to the City.

Torm Normpraseurt, Richmond, said his interest is renewable energy and asked to use the words "must look at renewables" and to look here in Richmond to create jobs, addresses climate protection, and is cost effective. He suggested people get out of their comfort zone and asked the City to continue their promotion of solar energy.

Commissioner Soto said many people share the same perspective that things are getting beyond the crisis point and damage to the planet. The General Plan provides a platform for the City to state what its values are and having an enlightened public through new ideas and shifts to new energy systems. He is surprise many people do not know about the solar farm at the Contra Costa Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is a good example, and said he appreciates Mr. Normpraseurt's comments.

Garland Ellis, Vice President, RANC, Richmond, said he finds it interesting that in the infrastructure section the City mentions sewers, but there is not much mention of the sewer treatment plant, which is still a responsibility of the City of Richmond. He asked that it be made efficient which would affect the Energy and Climate Change Element. He also noted roads are not mentioned in the infrastructure section, but it is identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and somewhat in the Climate Change Plan and he felt this was very unusual. Regarding the Climate Change Plan, it is unusual there are 40 pages dealing with actions and policy and only 10 pages addressing what the City deals with. CBE indicated that 90% of emissions come from industry, yet most of what is described is all about cars which are regulated by CARB. CARB's standards are getting higher each year and because economics cause most people to beat those emission standards, the City will reduce the road structure which will make it more difficult for buses and trucks that do not have higher standards and which do not operate efficiently at lower speeds.

Chair Duncan questioned staff on Mr. Ellis' comments relative to roads and infrastructure, and transportation. He asked if there was any logic to roads being spread out over various elements. Mr. Rojas said Mr. Ellis is referring to the fact that many elements are geared towards reducing the City's reliance on automobiles, which does not relate to infrastructure. His points are well taken as far as the fact that the City is looking to do road diets. The City just completed its Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, and many recommendations lessen the City's reliance on autos which stems from the entire General Plan process—to create transit-oriented high density and mixed use neighborhoods. Regarding roads being mentioned in the Communities and

Facilities Element, staff can look at this to ensure they receive equal treatment so that the City maintains them as an infrastructure asset, but generally the City does not want to create more roads or widen streets to allow for more traffic.

Mr. Ellis noted that he has spoken with staff about this and he said it is unusual that there is only street capacity mentioned in climate change and that there is also a lot of things regarding looks. It talks about adding more capacity for sidewalks for pedestrians and bicycles, yet the City is no where near using capacity at this point before it develops more of each. He does not advocate widening of streets or adding more streets, but feels there is a lot more efficiency that can be used with the streets the City has and keeping them the same width as they are now. Eventually, public transportation will not adequately meet needs, there are no alternative fuels for the next 20-30 years and so a car will be a necessity. By reducing lanes, the City will make it more difficult for emergency traffic and public transportation.

Farm Saeyang, Richmond, spoke on EC4.4; Green Infrastructure. She asked to include language for transition to cleaner, more energy efficient operations for all industrial properties that changes use. Also, regarding EC5.2; economically progressive business and industries, the City needs more protection for the community to limit pollution, decrease harmful impacts from emissions and requirements that business and industries hire locally due to the high rate of unemployment in Richmond.

Commissioner Choi thanked everybody for their comments.

Vice Chair Lane thanked those who have continued to attend meetings to provide public comment, thanked REDI representatives for their continued input and representation of many Richmond families. She indicated she would provide specific comments in writing, but commented that her concern is that the +1,000 page General Plan should be a directive document and provide policies and action measures. Some of the direction is very lenient with words like 'encourage, explore, promote' and she suggested it be strengthened, noting that HCD has, in the past, provided the City Council with specific direction on this for cities. She thanked speakers who provided comments on the Climate and Energy Element. The City's environmental staff created a report in 2009 which showed where most emissions were coming from. Statistics provided today align with this report, and any language in the element should address those emissions, understanding that Richmond has industry, residential, commercial and automobiles. She thinks there are many opportunities in this element as well as others to connect with green job opportunities and thinks this language should be strengthened. She agrees with comments made by Ms. Taylor regarding retrofits and housing and asked to ensure that all residential development include opportunities for retrofits.

Vice Chair Lane referred to the Parks and Recreation Element, she thinks there is an opportunity for added input and inclusivity from non-profits, community organizations, churches, and youth. She also agrees with the comments regarding affordable housing and infill development. She said she assumes the document will return with a summary of various recommendations and responses to comments, and asked how the process works as far as the Commission's actions.

Mr. Rojas stated there are two sets of comments received to date; one relating to the EIR and letters which deal with the General Plan. The DEIR will have a Response to Comments document. Staff will do something similar for letters received on the General Plan. There will be a spreadsheet documenting each of the letters, comments, with a rationale and explanation as to why those comments were either included or not included. Staff is meeting with letter authors

to discuss those changes and wants to be sure to include everything that is doable, as some things will be up to the City Council, given resources and financial feasibility. He stated the document will return to the Commission for further review and discussion and a final recommendation to the City Council.

Secretary Lee questioned if the Commission is to expect that the Draft General Plan to be seen in June will be revised based on comments made. Mr. Rojas said staff plans on incorporating a number of comments, but he recognized there are still outstanding issues that need to be worked out.

Secretary Lee said he also agreed with establishing the Commission's role in their making a recommendation to the City Council. He reiterated the need for the General Plan to return to the Commission if anything significant changes in the document as recommended by the Council, which is State-mandated. He noted that he felt the comments made tonight were very constructive. He echoed comments made by Antonio Medrano.

Commissioner Soto said he sees the General Plan as a visionary document for the City. Given uncertain times and thinking of the climate and potential future disasters, he worries about his children and grandchildren's futures. The Commission will need to make some tough choices and he trusts they will go about it in a responsible and respectful fashion. He appreciates input from everybody and wished there were more people interested.

Commissioner Reyes thanked those who sent him emails which helped him recognize the varied positions. He thinks infill development is important, educational institutions, workforce comments and the need to provide incentives to and hire at least 50% Richmond workers. He voiced disappointment in reading that AC Transit does not provide free bus service for kids to go to school. He also was sad to see the lack of medical services and facilities in Richmond and hoped to embrace pollution in the City by addressing and fixing the problem. He thanked staff for their work on all elements and said he looks forward to reviewing the Housing Element.

Chair Duncan referred to CBE's letter, specifically EC1-D, major industrial commercial project, and he said he is interested in the excess industrial pollution in Richmond, and the last bullet point in recommended action states, "The emission credits or offsets relating to emissions reductions outside Richmond will not be used for direct emissions in Richmond." He was speaking with Commissioner Lee about this and made the analogy that the concept of trading carbon emissions is like the medieval idea of buying absolution. The problem that happened with the original sin remains in the place it happens, and it is exactly what cap and trade is; we are institutionalizing increased pollution in Richmond. There is also a corollary with affordable housing. How can one make a deal with developers to not do affordable housing when it is desperately needed, and they pay money elsewhere and the City loses? Therefore, he hopes this concept of cap and trade is eliminated altogether. He echoed thanks for speakers whose comments have been articulate and on point, asked that they be put in writing, and he thanked Mr. Rojas for his work.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

2. Reports of Officers, Commissioners and Staff

Mr. Rojas reported the first Richmond Mobile Vendor Ordinance meeting was held on Wednesday. He understands a couple of Commissioners represented the Planning Commission. He heard the meeting was constructive and well attended. The next meeting will

be held on May 4, 2011 at the Caesar Chavez Elementary School cafeteria from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Commissioner Reyes offered congratulatory remarks for naming Filbert Street Fred Jackson Way and he thinks it is a wonderful tribute.

Commissioner Soto reported that he attended the Mobile Vendor Ordinance workshop and he and Vice Chair Lane agreed to participate in the Advisory Committee which will be developed as a result of this process.

Secretary Lee reported that it was nice to see many people at the Mobile Vendors Ordinance meeting and thinks there is a genuine interest in trying to sort out what is a difficult problem.

Vice Chair Lane said she also attended the Mobile Vendor Ordinance meeting and was happy with the attendance. She is also glad the issue is being addressed and hopes the process will help the Commission address them.

Commissioner Choi said over a week ago, he and Commissioner Lee attended a volunteer luncheon for neighborhood council presidents, Commissioners and the City Council.

Chair Duncan noted that he learned from Ms. Velasco that the City of Richmond has received from the California Preservation Foundation the President's Award for its work in historic preservation.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.