



Oakland's Hazards and Climate Action Planning

April 25, 2016, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

West Oakland Senior Center

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introduction *Council President Lynette Gibson-McElhaney*
2. Presentation: Oakland Energy and Climate Action Plan, *Shayna Hirshfield-Gold, City of Oakland, Sustainability*
3. Priority setting exercise and report back
4. Presentation: Oakland Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 2016-2021, *Devan Reiff, City of Oakland Bureau of Planning*
5. Mapping exercise and report back
6. Group Discussion and Q&A
7. Closing Remarks

RESOURCES

- Local Hazard Mitigation Plan update: www.oaklandnet.com/lhmp
- Devan Reiff, Strategic Planning Department: dreiff@oaklandnet.com/ 510-238-3550
- Resilient Oakland:
www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/CityAdministration/d/ResilientOakland/index.htm
- CORE: www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/OFD/s/CORE/index.htm
- Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) Adapting to Rising Tides:
www.adaptingtorisingtides.org
- ABAG Regional Resilience Program: <http://resilience.abag.ca.gov>

Meeting notes:

Tsunami. How would the City notify residents that a tsunami is predicted? Are there warning sirens? Can the City partner with the Port of Oakland to install sirens? West Oakland would be the first impacted by a tsunami. The current sirens (and sirens at the Port) can not be heard everywhere.

Are private bus fleets and shuttle bus systems going to be involved with evacuating Oakland residents in case of an emergency? Are there contracts and agreements in place between the City and these private fleets?

The City needs to have a coordinated “conversation” with residents about these plans (evacuation, emergency planning, etc).

West Oakland neighborhoods are triply affected now, prior to any disaster: there are smells from industry and the EBMUD waste water treatment plant, the area is surrounded by freeways, there is the Port of Oakland and its shipping and truck traffic and noise.

Communities in West Oakland are isolated, and there needs to be evacuation plans communicated to residents – using surface streets – for when the freeways come down in an earthquake.

How does the City post publicly where to go, and what to do in an emergency? For example, shoreline areas have signs about what to do in case of a tsunami.

Alameda County alert program: the City has entered into an agreement with the County for “AC alert,” which will allow the City to send emergency messaging from cell towers, to people’s phones (in a geographic area); a person does not need to sign up with the service, but they can: www.acalert.org.

What about Lake Merritt, in the case of a tsunami? The map doesn’t show how much inundation around the Lake (and surrounding neighborhoods), however, now that the Lake is connected to the estuary, flooding could be expected.

Community centers, rec centers and senior centers need infrastructure upgrades, and emergency supplies. For example, with air conditioners at the Senior Centers, for days when extreme heat makes it dangerous, they could be used as cooling centers.

Municipal liability concerns are choking everything, which is an old conversation (dating back to the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. The City won’t take on the liability for allocating resources to private community organizations, like neighborhood churches. Can we get a waiver from liability laws, to allow volunteers to do needed work (such as planting and trimming City trees, to keep them healthy)?

At any moment, the Hayward fault could crack, an earthquake could happen, and we as a City are not prepared.

Will innovative policies for hazard reduction be integrated into new Building Codes? Permits are issued now in West Oakland that allow basements and floors at ground level to be converted to living space, but that is where future flooding could occur. West Oakland is like parts of New Orleans, before the

Katrina flooding: it is low-lying, surrounded by higher ground, which means the water will flood West Oakland first.

How does sea-level rise predictions and scenarios impact the requirements for flood insurance in West Oakland? Are there City policies to protect residents from expensive new flood insurance rates/coverage?

Private development is putting in new infrastructure, assuming sea-level rise (Prologis, at the former Oakland Army Base, is building new facilities at a higher ground level, for example). But new housing being built now on the Wood Street frontage road is not preparing (or being required to prepare) for future inundation.

The City has disconnected communication: why are we allowing 1,300 new housing units to be built in areas of sea-level rise inundation and tsunami zones (Brooklyn Basin development, for example).

FEMA, through its requirements for Cities to adopt a Hazard Mitigation Plan, is only focusing on the rare events, as if they are disconnected to climate change. Drought, wildfire, flooding from storms: they are all connected to climate change, and it is happening now, but it is happening as “slow deaths,” and not in a big dramatic event (like an earthquake). Trees are dying now. People are unhealthy now.

The City could have been investing in greywater systems, and bioswales in new development before now: could have required those water saving and water treating technologies in new developments.

In West Oakland, from Market Street to the Bay and estuary shoreline, there is unmitigated contaminated soil from industrial uses that hasn't been cleaned up. When a flood occurs, that will be a health hazard: the soil will travel around with the floodwater. 70 sites have been shown to have toxic soil in West Oakland. The City should add brownfield remediation to the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

There are unused train tracks in West Oakland, there could be toxic soil under them.

There was a major flood in Oakland, in 1961, Grand Avenue flooded. It has happened within our living memory; it could happen again.

Upgrading stormwater infrastructure. Oakland property owners pay \$74 fee on their water bill to improve these pipes, and no work has ever been done in West Oakland. Where is the money going? How will the City determine a schedule of upgrades (which neighborhoods get new pipes first?) How will any new resources be distributed (such as grant money that is awarded from having an adopted LHMP?) Who gets the funds first? West Oakland should be invested in first, because of all the impacts it already faces.

Surprised by how many proposed mitigation measures in the LHMP are funded by grants.

Oakland doesn't have the funds to address climate change.

The Hazard Mitigation survey is too long.

Who is the “policeman” that enforces these policies? A typical attitude by City employees is, “they don’t know about it, it isn’t their problem.” Oakland Public Works and tree removal –the City should never remove healthy trees, they are valuable to the environment in retaining carbon from the air and keeping the soil stable; and the City should never permit a private landowner to remove a healthy tree.

There are no community forums when the City has these types of plans (Hazard Mitigation Plan, Resiliency Strategy); the City is too “top down” and the community wants to be a partner with the City in developing policies and strategies and methods to communicate to residents. The City acts like there aren’t already people working on these issues forever; individuals with talents aren’t ending up on the workplan. We can’t do these Plans without having real, true, community engagement, otherwise, we start all over again each time there is a new Plan.

Oakland Tenant’s Union is worried about the mandatory soft-story seismic retrofit program, worried they lost communication with the City after an earlier attempt to adopt a similar requirement. They are worried the program will push the costs of the retrofits onto renters, not onto owners. Also, worried that tax payers will have to pay costs (for example, if the City issues a bond for infrastructure improvements) for luxury developments that are being built today and are not taking sea-level rise into account.

