



C A L I F O R N I A

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

**BEST PRACTICES FOR IMPLEMENTING
SB 1000**



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I. INTRODUCTION

Senate Bill (SB) 1000, adopted in 2016, promotes environmental justice through local land use planning. The law requires local governments with disadvantaged communities in their planning areas to develop environmental justice policies as part of their general plans. Since the law went into effect in 2018, the California Attorney General’s Bureau of Environmental Justice (Bureau) has monitored local governments’ implementation of SB 1000. As of August 2023, the Bureau has submitted 13 comment letters to local governments about their draft general plan updates’ compliance with SB 1000.¹ In 2021, the Attorney General entered into a settlement agreement with the City of Huntington Park, which failed to meet any SB 1000 requirements in adopting its 2030 general plan, and monitored the City’s return to compliance, which was completed in the fall of 2022.²

In this guidance, the Bureau compiles and shares recommendations gathered through this SB 1000 work to support local governments in efficiently and effectively complying with SB 1000. While each general plan is jurisdiction-specific, this document collects approaches taken by localities across the state that vary in terms of geography, size, demographics, resources, and pollution burdens. The policies identified are not a “one-size-fits-all” for every community, but real-world policies that have been implemented by a range of local governments. This resource is intended to give communities and local governments ideas of approaches taken elsewhere that can be tailored to their own planning and SB 1000 compliance.

The document outlines methodologies and tools for community engagement, ways to identify disadvantaged communities, and best practices in creating good environmental justice policies.³ In **Appendix A**, the Bureau has compiled a chart summarizing various policies adopted by local governments across the state that can serve as real-world examples for other jurisdictions as they undergo the development of their own environmental justice element. In **Appendix B**, the Bureau has compiled resources like guidelines and tools that local governments can use to comply with SB 1000, including the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research’s (OPR) general plan guidelines.⁴ (This document does not directly address agencies’ additional obligation under AB 686 to ensure that their laws, programs, and activities affirmatively further fair housing.⁵) It is meant to be a living document that will be updated with additional examples over time.

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- 1 The Bureau’s comment letters and other resources can be viewed on its website at <https://oag.ca.gov/environment/sb1000>.
 - 2 See <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-bonta-announces-settlement-huntington-park-address>.
 - 3 Anyone reviewing this document to determine SB 1000 compliance responsibilities should consult their own attorney for legal advice.
 - 4 Office of Planning and Research, General Plan Guidelines (June 2020) Ch. 4.8: Environmental Justice Element (hereafter OPR Guidelines), p. 4, *available at* https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20200706-GPG_Chapter_4_EJ.pdf. This document is intended to be a companion to the OPR guidelines.
 - 5 For information about affirmatively furthering fair housing in the housing element of the general plan, see guidance promulgated by the Department of Housing and Community Development, *available at* https://www.hcd.ca.gov/community-development/affh/docs/AFFH_Document_Final_4-27-2021.pdf.
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II. BACKGROUND

The purpose of SB 1000 is to “address unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities by decreasing pollution exposure, increasing community assets, and improving overall health.”⁶ The legislature adopted the law in recognition of a finding by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) that 9.4 million Californians lived in communities with high pollution burdens from multiple sources and were also vulnerable for socioeconomic reasons or other factors.⁷ Accordingly, the law requires local governments to take into account disproportionate pollution burdens and the unique health risks that accompany exposures experienced by low-income communities.

The law intends to make environmental justice a real and vital part of the planning process by requiring local governments to identify environmental justice issues in their communities and address those issues through tailored policies. Incorporating environmental justice into land use planning is especially important because many of the disproportionate pollution burdens that exist today are due to a legacy of discriminatory land use planning across the state, including redlining⁸ and racially restrictive covenants, exclusionary zoning, and decisions to site polluting industries in politically disenfranchised low-income communities and communities of color.

Even though redlining has been illegal for more than 50 years, the impacts persist. For instance, studies have found that residents living in neighborhoods that were redlined have worse air pollution and face disproportionate heat impacts from climate change.⁹ The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights documented in a 2003 report numerous studies that found that race and ethnicity were the most significant factors in government decisions to site waste facilities, landfills, and other environmental hazards.¹⁰ More recent studies confirm that toxic waste sites are more likely to be located near communities of color, that the decisions to site these facilities were generally made after a community was already

6 Office of Planning and Research, General Plan Guidelines (June 2020) Ch. 4.8: Environmental Justice Element (hereafter OPR Guidelines), p. 4, *available at* https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20200706-GPG_Chapter_4_EJ.pdf.

7 Senate Committee on Environmental Quality, SB 1000 Analysis (April 18, 2016), p. 2, *available at* https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billAnalysisClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB1000#. Currently, there are no federal statutes directly addressing environmental justice, but some other states and local governments have passed environmental justice laws and both President Clinton and President Biden have issued Executive Orders on environmental justice. See, e.g., New Jersey Public Law 2020, Ch. 92, <https://www.nj.gov/dep/ej/docs/ej-law.pdf>; The New School Tishman Environment and Design Center, “Local Policies for Environmental Justice: A National Scan” (2019), *available at* <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/local-policies-environmental-justice-national-scan-tishman-201902.pdf>. See also, Executive Order 12898, <https://www.archives.gov/files/federal-register/executive-orders/pdf/12898.pdf> and Executive Order 14096; Executive Order 14096, <https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/eo-14096-revitalizing-commitment-to-environmental-justice.pdf>.

8 Redlining is a term that originated from government homeownership programs created as part of the New Deal in the 1930s. The programs offered government-insured mortgages for homeowners, but in determining the creditworthiness of potential buyers, the government-sponsored Home Owners’ Loan Corporation created maps ranking neighborhoods from least to most risky on an A through D scale. Race was a key factor in determining whether a neighborhood was considered risky. See, e.g., Candace Jackson, “What is Redlining,” NY Times, August 17, 2021, *available at* <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/17/realestate/what-is-redlining.html>.

9 See Darryl Fears, “Redlining Means 45 Million Americans are Breathing Dirtier Air, 50 Years After it Ended,” Washington Post, March 9, 2022, *available at* <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/03/09/redlining-pollution-environmental-justice/>; Brad Plumer & Nadja Popovich, “How Decades of Racist Housing Policy Left Neighborhoods Sweltering,” NY Times, August 24, 2020, *available at* <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/08/24/climate/racism-redlining-cities-global-warming.html>.

10 U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, “Not in My Backyard: Executive Order 12,898 and Title VI as Tools for Achieving Environmental Justice, Ch. 2: What is Environmental Justice?,” October 2003, p. 14-15.

established,¹¹ and that programs that seek to address pollution burdens without considering race may in fact exacerbate existing disparities.¹² And in California, large air polluting facilities (such as petroleum refineries, natural gas utilities, and cement production facilities) are more likely to be located in neighborhoods with a higher proportion of residents of color and a higher proportion of residents living in poverty.¹³

SB 1000 applies to local governments that have one or more disadvantaged communities in their planning area. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subds. (h)(1), (h)(4).) In order to address the disproportionate impacts created by discriminatory land use practices, SB 1000 requires local governments to identify disadvantaged communities, engage with communities during the planning process, and develop environmental justice policies that address the unique and compounded health risks of those communities within eight broad topic areas. These eight topic areas include: pollution exposure, public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, physical activity, any other unique or compounded health risk of the community, civic engagement, and prioritized improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1).)

What is “environmental justice”?

Environmental justice is defined in California law as the “fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” (Gov. Code, § 65040.12, subd. (e)(1).) It includes “deterrence, reduction, and elimination of pollution burdens for populations and communities experiencing the adverse effects of that pollution, so that the effects of the pollution are not disproportionately borne by those populations and communities” and “at a minimum, the meaningful consideration of recommendations from communities most impacted by pollution into environmental and land use decisions.” (Gov. Code, § 65040.12, subd. (e)(2).)

SB 1000 is triggered when local governments adopt or revise two or more general plan elements concurrently. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(2).) Local governments should comply with SB 1000 when they are working on updates to multiple elements of their general plans. Jurisdictions can comply with SB 1000 by developing a stand-alone Environmental Justice Element (EJ Element) as part of their general plan, by adopting environmental justice policies incorporated in other elements throughout the general plan, or through a hybrid approach that does both.¹⁴ Regardless of which method a local government chooses, clarity is key. If policies are spread throughout a general plan, the policies should be clearly labeled as environmental justice policies and must address each of the required categories. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1).)

11 Paul Mohai & Robin Saha, “Which Came First, People or Pollution? Assessing the Disparate Siting of Demographic Change Hypotheses of Environmental Injustice,” *Environmental Research Letters*, November 18, 2015, *available at* <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/10/11/115008/meta>.

12 Yuzhou Wang, et al., “Air Quality Policy Should Quantify Effects on Disparities,” *Science*, July 20, 2023, *available at* <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.adg9931>. See also Delger Erdenesanaa, “Signature Biden Program Won’t Fix Racial Gap in Air Quality, Study Suggests,” *New York Times*, July 20, 2023, *available at* <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/20/climate/justice40-pollution-environmental-justice.html>.

13 Lara J. Cushing et al., “Carbon Trading, Co-Pollutants, and Environmental Equity: Evidence from California’s Cap-and-Trade Program,” *PLOS Medicine*, July 18, 2018, *available at* <https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1002604>. See also, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, *Analysis of Race/Ethnicity and CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Scores (October 2021)*, *available at* <https://oehha.ca.gov/media/downloads/calenviroscreen/document/calenviroscreen40raceanalysisf2021.pdf>.

14 For more details on how environmental justice relates to the General Plan and the elements within the General Plan, see OPR Guidelines, at p. 7.

III. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Environmental injustices often result from excluding communities from land use planning processes.¹⁵ Local governments are required to engage with communities when developing or amending their general plans, and community engagement is especially important for developing environmental justice policies because local governments will not be able to develop compliant policies without involving the community. (Gov. Code, § 65351.) Local governments should involve the community at the very earliest of the planning stages and the community should be involved in the identification of disadvantaged communities as well as the development of environmental justice policies. Critically, community engagement is not a one-time effort but continuous throughout the entire planning and implementation process of SB 1000.

A. Community Engagement is Necessary to Develop Compliant Policies

The first instance in which community engagement is necessary is in identifying disadvantaged communities¹⁶ in the planning area and in understanding and documenting the existing conditions of those communities.

Community engagement can help local governments identify disadvantaged communities, an SB 1000 requirement that is discussed further in Section IV. While CalEnviroScreen¹⁷ is a useful tool for identifying disadvantaged communities, it may be less accurate at identifying very small disadvantaged communities in rural areas, since it analyzes at the census tract level, which can encompass geographic areas much larger than a community. It can also be inaccurate in urban settings, since neighborhoods do not conform to census tract boundaries. Census tract boundaries can divide communities so that community burdens are not accurately captured. For instance, a census tract may span a large dividing road or highway where the neighborhood on one side contains well maintained sidewalks with mature shade trees, but the neighborhood on the other side has little tree canopy and includes clusters of auto body shops, gas stations, and liquor stores mixed in with residences. These differences will be missed by only looking at the census tract level. Research has found that government data can sometimes have margins of error as high as a quarter mile,¹⁸ and so engaging with communities can help ensure governments identify all disadvantaged communities within their planning areas.

Community engagement is also necessary in order to understand the “unique or compounded health risks” of disadvantaged communities. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1)(A).) CalEnviroScreen does not capture all sources of pollution exposure or factors that may contribute to unique and compounded health risks of a community. For instance, CalEnviroScreen does not directly consider climate impacts and so may not capture unique health risks that communities face due to climate change, such as increased urban heat island effects. It also does not consider residents’ proximity to oil and gas facilities or the availability of public parks and open space in a community. In addition, community engagement can help local governments better understand the causes of pollution burdens. For instance, while

15 See, e.g., California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA), Rethinking Local Control in California (March 2020), *available at* <https://caleja.org/2020/05/report-rethinking-local-control-placing-environmental-justice-and-civil-rights-at-the-heart-of-land-use-decision-making/>.

16 A disadvantaged community is an area that has disproportionate environmental pollution and also social and economic factors that make the community vulnerable to environmental hazards. See Section IV for the SB 1000 statutory definition of disadvantaged communities.

17 CalEnviroScreen is a mapping tool developed by CalEPA’s Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment that helps identify California communities impacted by pollution. The map relies on environmental, health, and socioeconomic data for each census tract in the state. See <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/about-calenviroscreen>.

18 CEJA, SB 1000 Implementation Toolkit: Planning for Healthy Communities (2018) (hereafter SB 1000 Toolkit), p. 25, *available at* <https://caleja.org/2017/09/sb-1000-toolkit-release/>. The Toolkit was prepared collaboratively by CEJA and PlaceWorks and funded in part by the California Department of Public Health.

CalEnviroScreen can identify that a community suffers from particulate matter pollution, community engagement can help clarify that diesel truck traffic in residential neighborhoods is a particularly problematic source of that pollution. Community engagement can help local governments identify and prioritize the health risks that are most pressing to the community.

Community fact-finding, or “ground truthing,” is one way local governments can ensure they have accurately identified all disadvantaged communities in their jurisdiction and all environmental hazards.¹⁹ For instance, a study found that many community members identified small facilities (such as auto paint and body shops) that were clustered together in one location as hazardous to the community.²⁰ These small facilities were not included in a regulator’s identification of hazardous facilities even though collectively, they could constitute a major source of local pollution.²¹

SB 1000 requires policies that prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1)(C).) Community engagement is essential for understanding the needs of disadvantaged communities and what programs or improvements can address those needs.

Finally, community engagement can help build trust in the community, give legitimacy to local governments’ planning efforts, and result in communities being more engaged with local governments and becoming partners with local governments in planning for the communities’ future.

B. Best Practices of Community Engagement

Community engagement takes many forms and we recommend planners use a variety of engagement formats throughout the SB 1000 process. The Governor’s Office of Planning and Research has comprehensive guidelines on community engagement,²² and other resources are available that describe community engagement tools, such as fact sheets, surveys, workshops, and advisory committees.²³ Below is a compilation of community engagement best practices for compliance with SB 1000.

1. Environmental Justice Advisory Committee

Many local governments have formed environmental justice advisory committees as part of their SB 1000 process, although not specifically required by law.²⁴ There are a number of benefits to forming an advisory committee. Advisory committees can help coordinate interactions and meetings with communities, can help identify communities’ priorities, provide feedback to the local government as the planning process proceeds, and can track progress in implementation of the plan once finalized. To be effective, an advisory committee should be representative of the communities themselves. Local governments often include both staff members of local agencies, who can provide technical expertise, as well as members of the community and representatives from community organizations, who can provide community expertise.

19 *Ibid.*

20 James Sadd, et al., The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing but the Ground-Truth: Methods to Advance Environmental Justice and Research-Community Partnerships, 41 Health Educ. Behavior 281, 287-88 (June 2014), available at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24347142/>.

21 *Ibid.*

22 OPR, General Plan Guidelines, Ch. 3: Community Engagement and Outreach (2017).

23 SB 1000 Toolkit, at p. 39.

24 See, e.g., Huntington Park, Environmental Justice Element (2022), p. 3, available at <https://huntingtonparkgpupdates.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Environmental-Justice-Element-Adopted-Nov-15-2022-English.pdf>.

2. Partnering with Local Community Organizations

Regardless of whether a local government forms an advisory committee, partnering with community-based organizations is a good strategy. Community-based organizations often have expertise in community engagement and can help cultivate trust between the local government and the community.²⁵ Local community organizations can help facilitate access to convenient meeting locations and can help ensure that information is conveyed in a way that is accessible to the community.²⁶ Community-based organizations often have an understanding of the issues a community faces, a community's priorities, and can connect local governments with residents and community leaders.

Local governments may also want to partner with community organizations that have expertise in relevant areas outside the realm of traditional planning, such as food access or social determinants of health.²⁷ This expertise can help the local government in devising effective policies in each of the required topic areas.

When partnering with community organizations, the local government should be mindful of the organization's time and resources. The local government cannot expect the community group to be responsible for organizing, planning, and running outreach. It should strive to strike a balance by consulting with and involving community groups without overburdening groups' limited staff and resources.

3. Tribal Consultation

When adopting or amending a general plan, local governments must consult with Native American tribes that are on the contact list of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). (Gov. Code, § 65352.3.) Tribal consultation is an ongoing process, not a single event, and local governments should consider pre-consultation in order to develop relationships with tribes that have traditional lands within their jurisdiction, which can help establish a cooperative relationship.²⁸ The Office of Planning and Research has published guidelines specific to tribal consultation.²⁹

In developing environmental justice policies, local governments should engage with tribal governments that have been identified by NAHC and should consider health risks that are unique to the tribes. For instance, indigenous populations face unique climate change risks. Colonization and dispossession has resulted in Native nations losing nearly 99 percent of their historical land base and being displaced to lands that are more vulnerable to climate induced risks like extreme heat.³⁰

4. Meeting Times, Locations, and Childcare

When scheduling community meetings, we recommend local governments ensure that the locations and times are convenient for residents of the community. This may involve planning meetings at various times in the day and evening to accommodate different work schedules, having virtual meetings or options to connect to in-person meetings remotely, or setting up more informal meetings. Meeting

25 *Id.*, at p. 38.

26 *Ibid.*

27 OPR Guidelines, at p. 14.

28 OPR, Tribal Consultation Guidelines (2005), *available at* https://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/011414_Updated_Guidelines_922.pdf.

29 *Ibid.*

30 Rachel Treisman, "How Loss of Historical Lands Makes Native Americans More Vulnerable to Climate Change," NPR, November 2, 2021, *available at* <https://www.npr.org/2021/11/02/1051146572/forced-relocation-native-american-tribes-vulnerable-climate-change-risks>; Justin Farrell et al., "Effects of Land Dispossession and Forced Migration on Indigenous Peoples in North America," *Science*, October 29, 2021, *available at* <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abe4943>.

locations should be accessible to residents by taking place within the community or near it in an easily accessible location, such as at a location on or near a transit line. Local governments should consider childcare needs. Local governments should communicate notice of these meetings and any documents available for public review and input through various methods, including by hosting and maintaining a website with information about the planning process and how residents can engage in that process. Notice and documents should be provided in appropriate local languages.

Local governments should consider engaging with the community through a variety of formats. For instance, many community members will not attend in-person meetings but will participate in surveys and questionnaires or engage when outreach is conducted more informally by having an informational table at a church, farmers market, school, or community meeting. We recommend local governments be candid about the purpose of the engagement and how results of surveys and questionnaires will be used. Engaging in multiple formats and being transparent about the purpose will help make the process accessible to more of the community.

5. Language Access

Local governments should consider the languages spoken within their communities. Local governments should provide written materials in the appropriate local languages and ensure that interpretation is available at public meetings.³¹ Interpretation and translation time should not take away from residents' ability to provide input. In addition, local governments should provide written materials and presentations in plain language that is not overly technical.³²

6. Metrics

Local governments should include metrics to help assess the effectiveness of their engagement efforts and evaluate their progress towards implementing their environmental justice policies. Metrics, such as timelines for implementation or measures of success, should allow for the community to be able to track and assess progress.³³ For example, some jurisdictions have developed EJ Element report cards that allow for progress to be presented at a public meeting and for community members to provide feedback.³⁴

31 More than 40% of Californians speak a language other than English at home, with Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Korean being the five languages other than English that are most commonly spoken at home. (Civ. Code, § 1632, subd. (a).) Local governments should consider making materials available in these five languages and/or any language in which 10% or more of its population speaks. (See, OPR, *supra*, Community Engagement and Outreach, at p. 32; Health & Saf. Code, § 116906, subd. (a).)

32 SB 1000 Toolkit, at p. 41.

33 OPR Guidelines, at p. 35.

34 See Sacramento County Office of Planning & Environmental Review, Environmental Justice Element (2019), p. 76, available at <https://planning.saccounty.net/PlansandProjectsIn-Progress/Documents/General%20Plan%202030/Environmental%20Justice%20Element.pdf>.

IV. IDENTIFYING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Pursuant to SB 1000, local governments must identify in their General Plan the disadvantaged communities in their planning areas. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1).) In doing so, local governments should describe the disadvantaged communities with particularity, including describing the unique pollution burdens and health risks the communities face. Community engagement in the identification process is important for ensuring that the local government has identified all disadvantaged communities within its planning area and for understanding the specific needs of each community.

Disadvantaged community: Under SB 1000, a disadvantaged community is defined as (1) an area that has been identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to Health & Safety Code section 39711 as being disadvantaged based on geographic, socioeconomic, public health, and environmental hazard criteria or (2) an area that is a low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(4)(A).)

Under the first prong of the definition, CalEPA, as of May 2022, considers areas falling within any of the following categories to be disadvantaged:

1. Census tracts with overall CalEnviroScreen 4.0 scores in the 75th percentile or higher.
2. Census tracts with CalEnviroScreen 4.0 cumulative pollution burdens in the 95th percentile higher but that lack overall scores due to data gaps.
3. Census tracts identified in the 2017 designation as disadvantaged, regardless of their CalEnviroScreen 4.0 scores.
4. Lands under the control of federally recognized Tribes

Under the second prong of the definition, an area is considered low-income if the area's household incomes are at or below 80% of the statewide median income or at or below the threshold designated as low income by the Department of Housing and Community Development. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(4)(C).) Disproportionate environmental pollution is not defined by the statute.

A. Methodology

SB 1000 defines a disadvantaged community as one that has been identified by CalEPA pursuant to section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code or as an area that is a low-income area and is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(4).)

CalEPA has created a map of all census tracts it has identified as disadvantaged pursuant to section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code.³⁵ This map is a good first place to start, but local governments should consider whether this map misses any communities that fall under the second prong of SB 1000's definition of disadvantaged communities: a low income area disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards. To identify communities under this prong, the local government should consider regional considerations and community-specific data on environmental

35 CalEPA, SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities, <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/sb535>.

pollution and hazards. One tool to help with this is CalEPA's Priority Populations map, which includes low-income areas.³⁶

These steps are consistent with the Office of Planning and Research's recommendation that local governments develop an environmental justice screen that incorporates CalEnviroScreen, income data, relevant regional considerations, and community-specific environmental pollution data.³⁷ In addition, community surveys and community engagement can help local governments ensure they are capturing all communities and can help refine priorities and concerns within each community.

1. Disadvantaged Communities Identified by CalEPA

Local governments must include all communities within their planning area that have been identified by CalEPA as disadvantaged. But, as previously discussed, SB 1000 defines disadvantaged communities to include more than just these census tracts, and the census tract data in CalEnviroScreen may not adequately or accurately depict some communities, such as small, rural communities, and cannot capture all environmental justice issues, such as proximity to parks or oil and gas facilities. Thus, local governments should consider more than just the CalEPA-identified disadvantaged communities.

2. Low Income Areas

A disadvantaged community is also defined under SB 1000 as an area that is low income and that experiences disproportionate environmental pollution. An area is considered to be low income if it is within a census tract that is at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income or below the Department of Housing and Community Development's low-income threshold. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(4)(C).)³⁸ In addition, local governments should take into account regional considerations.³⁹ A community may not meet the threshold for low income according to state median income, but may be under resourced as compared to other communities in the planning area.

3. Disproportionate Environmental Pollution

SB 1000 does not define disproportionate pollution burden, nor does it include a process for determining whether a community suffers a disproportionate pollution burden or other hazards. However, a number of tools are available to assist local governments. In addition, local governments should work with communities and other agencies to identify disproportionate pollution burdens.⁴⁰

One tool for determining pollution burdens is CalEnviroScreen. Local governments should consider not only communities' overall CalEnviroScreen score, but also the CalEnviroScreen scores associated with specific pollution exposures and hazards such as particulate matter pollution, pesticides, toxic releases, and others. This data can be overlaid with income data to identify disadvantaged communities that otherwise might not be captured.

36 CalEPA, California Climate Investments Priority Populations 2023, <https://gis.carb.arb.ca.gov/portal/apps/experience-builder/experience/?id=6b4b15f8c6514733972cabdda3108348&page=Home%3A-Map>.

37 OPR Guidelines, at p. 9–11.

38 See also California Air Resources Board (CARB) map of low-income communities by statewide median income and HCD State Income Limits, *available at* <https://webmaps.arb.ca.gov/PriorityPopulations/>.

39 OPR Guidelines, at p. 11.

40 *Ibid.*

While CalEnviroScreen is an important resource for local governments, it cannot capture all the burdens and risks a specific community faces, such as climate change impacts. Local governments should consider the unique burdens its communities face and use tools that analyze those burdens. Community members can identify the sources of pollution that are most impactful, and local governments can choose appropriate tools based on that feedback. Additional tools are more fully described in **Appendix B** and include other state tools such as the California Healthy Places Index, federal tools like the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s EJ Screen, and local tools like the Cumulative Environmental Vulnerabilities Assessment for San Joaquin Valley and Coachella Valley Communities. Local governments can also consult with local, regional, or state agencies to gather additional relevant pollution burden data and information that may not be reflected in these tools. For example, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has air quality data and air monitoring and pollution reduction plans for certain communities impacted by stationary sources of air pollution⁴¹ and the State Water Resources Control Board has developed a dashboard that identifies public water systems that suffer from contamination and other problems.⁴²

B. Defining Unique or Compounded Health Risks of Disadvantaged Communities

Identifying disadvantaged communities in a local planning area is necessary for local governments to understand why a community is disadvantaged and the specific environmental hazards and health risks a community faces. SB 1000 requires local governments to develop policies that “reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities.” (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1).) In order to develop policies that reduce unique or compounded health risks, local governments must first understand what those risks are. And, as previously discussed, community input is critical to get a complete and accurate understanding of the unique burdens and needs.

Compounded health risks can be identified through cumulative impact analysis. Cumulative impacts are defined by CalEPA as “the exposures, public health or environmental effects from the combined emissions and discharges, in a geographic area, including environmental pollution from all sources, whether single or multi-media, routinely, accidentally, or otherwise released.”⁴³ Cumulative impacts “take into account sensitive populations and socio-economic factors, where applicable, and to the extent data are available.”⁴⁴

CalEnviroScreen can help identify some compounded health risks, such as whether a community has a disproportionate incidence of asthma or cardiovascular disease and also higher rates of air pollution. But local governments should also look beyond CalEnviroScreen, which will not capture all the unique risks a community faces.

For example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and the United States Department of Health and Human Services released a tool in 2022 to assess cumulative health impacts. The tool, called Environmental Justice Index (EJI), is similar to CalEnviroScreen, but includes some indicators not found in CalEnviroScreen. For instance, EJI includes some specific housing types that can be indicative of vulnerability to environmental injustices, including correctional facilities, nursing homes, and mobile homes. This type of information can be useful in identifying the unique risks communities are exposed to. For example, residents of mobile homes may be more vulnerable to extreme heat impacts of climate change since mobile homes are

41 CARB, Community Air Protection Program, <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/capp-communities>.

42 State Water Resources Control Board, Safer Drinking Water Dashboard, https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/safer/safer_data.html.

43 California Environmental Protection Agency, *Cumulative Impacts: Building a Scientific Foundation* (December 2010), available at <https://oehha.ca.gov/media/downloads/calenviroscreen/report/cireport123110.pdf>.

44 *Ibid.*

often not well insulated and/or lack air conditioning,⁴⁵ and are also more likely to lack reliable access to safe drinking water.⁴⁶ Other tools for analyzing compounded health risks are described in **Appendix B**.

Local governments should consider demographic data like race and language isolation to ensure they are not missing unique pollution burdens, since such demographic data can correlate with pollution burdens and lack of access to decision-making processes such as the siting of polluting industries.⁴⁷

Local governments should take into account climate-related risks and how climate change may exacerbate existing conditions such as air pollution, a lack of tree canopy, or flood risk. The tool Cal-Adapt, described in **Appendix B**, is one tool that can help identify local climate change impacts and risks. In addition, the California Healthy Places Index includes data on tree canopy and park access, which can inform whether communities have a heightened risk for urban heat islands in the face of climate change.⁴⁸ Local governments should also look to whether a public health department or other local agency has studied how climate change may impact communities within the planning area. Here, again, community engagement will be particularly important for understanding communities' unique vulnerabilities and how climate change is already impacting communities.

Local governments should consider how climate change will affect the specific populations in the planning area. For instance, higher temperatures will have disproportionate impacts on certain populations—those who lack air conditioning, outdoor workers, and communities with little natural shade, for instance. Local governments should also consider wildfire impacts, including how wildfire impacts indoor and outdoor air pollution and whether particular residents, such as farmworkers and other outdoor workers or residents living in facilities with poor air filtration will be disproportionately impacted.⁴⁹

Defining unique and compounded health risks of a community will require local governments to go beyond CalEnviroScreen. A robust community engagement strategy will help ensure that these unique and compounded health risks are understood and accounted for in the environmental justice policies.

45 See, e.g., Cory Bernard & Anthony Proano, "Too Hot to Handle: Curbing Mobile Home Heat Deaths in a Warming Climate," *Washington Journal of Social & Environmental Justice*, January 2022, *available at* <https://digitalcommons.law.uw.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1001&context=wjsej>.

46 Gregory Pierce & Silvia Gonzalez, "Public Drinking Water System Coverage and its Discontents: The Prevalence and Severity of Water Access Problems in California's Mobile Home Parks," *Environmental Justice*, October 1, 2017, *available at* <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/abs/10.1089/env.2017.0006?journalCode=env>.

47 Mohai, *supra*, fn. 11; Wang, *supra*, fn. 12.

48 See Tim Arango, "Turn Off the Sunshine: Why Shade is a Mark of Privilege in Los Angeles," *NY Times*, December 1, 2019, *available at* <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/01/us/los-angeles-shade-climate-change.html>; Michael Finch, "How Sacramento's Urban Forest Divides the City, in Health and in Wealth," *Sacramento Bee*, October 21, 2019, *available at* <https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/sacramento-tipping-point/article235884122.html>; "The Power of Urban Trees," *Climate Central*, May 2023, *available at* https://assets.ctfassets.net/cxgxp8r5d/32ijJSeRXMnSkG-2OhjavzF/0e4e0fd63f67f00328e60f13280d55a6/FINAL_Power_of_Urban_Trees_2023__EN_.pdf.

49 Local government can consult guidelines developed by the Office of the Attorney General for analyzing and mitigating wildfire impacts: *Best Practices for Analyzing and Mitigating Wildfire Impacts of Development Projects Under the California Environmental Quality Act (Oct. 2022)*, *available at* <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/Wildfire%20guidance%20final%20%283%29.pdf>.

V. CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE EJ ELEMENTS AND POLICIES

While an effective environmental justice policy in one jurisdiction may not be relevant or effective in another, the best policies share several characteristics—they are complete, specific, concrete, and targeted, and they are binding, use mandatory language, and contain implementation measures.

A. Complete

In order to comply with SB 1000, local government’s environmental justice policies must be complete, meaning policies must address each and every one of the required components of SB 1000. At a minimum, this means local governments must develop policies that address unique or compounded health risks of communities; policies that reduce pollution exposure, including air pollution; policies that promote public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, physical activity, and civil engagement; and policies that prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1).)

B. Specific, Concrete, and Targeted

SB 1000 requires that jurisdictions develop policies that “reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities.” (Gov. Code, § 65302 subd. (h)(1)(A).) Policies should be as concrete as possible and target the specific needs, health risks, and pollution exposures of the community to address this requirement.

For instance, a local government may identify particulate matter pollution as being especially high in a disadvantaged community and learn that heavy duty trucks are a major cause of that pollution burden. A policy could then specifically target that community’s exposure by redirecting truck routes or implementing stricter idling rules.⁵⁰ As another example, a local government may identify that disadvantaged communities have less tree canopy compared with other parts of the planning area. To address this issue, a policy could require that proposed development projects in under-canopied areas include extra tree placement within the community.⁵¹

Robust community engagement is crucial to developing targeted policies, since communities will be able to identify priorities and the specific barriers to achieving those priorities.

C. Binding Policies with Mandatory Language and Implementation Measures

The goal of using mandatory language such as “shall” and including implementation measures is to ensure that the policy results in action. Policies cannot be vague. Policies should include clear, defined terms. To be binding, policies should include a timeline, identify the entity responsible for implementing the policy, and when necessary or applicable identify a funding source.⁵²

50 South San Francisco, 2040 General Plan, Community Health and Environmental Justice (CHEJ)-3.2.2, *available at* <https://shapessf.com/>.

51 Sacramento County, General Plan, Environmental Justice Element (EJ)-23, *available at* <https://planning.saccounty.gov/PlansandProjectsIn-Progress/Pages/GeneralPlan.aspx>.

52 Binding policies fulfill the overall purpose of general plans for serving as the entity’s “constitution” or “charter for future development.” (*Leshar Communications, Inc. v. City of Walnut Creek* (1990) 52 Cal. 3d 531, 540; *DeVita v. County of Napa* (1995) 9 Cal.4th 763, 773.) In addition, environmental justice policies should be internally consistent with the general plan and any future development should be consistent with the environmental justice policies. (Gov. Code, § 65300.5, subd. (a) [general plans should “comprise an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of policies”; *Napa Citizens for Honest Government v. Napa County Board of Supervisors* (2001) 91 Cal.App.4th 342, 355 [local land use and development decisions must be consistent with the general plan].)

One approach to ensuring the policies meet these standards is to establish a tracking system.⁵³ For example, an implementation matrix that identifies each policy, the priority level for each policy and action, a timeframe for implementation, and performance metrics to measure progress toward achieving the goals.⁵⁴ Local governments should ensure that community members are also able to track performance and provide input on implementation.⁵⁵

The language used can also indicate whether a policy is clear and binding. Whenever possible, local governments should use action-oriented language such as “implement,” “develop,” and “shall” and avoid ambiguous language such as “promote,” “encourage,” “work towards,” or “explore opportunities.” In some situations more ambiguous language cannot be avoided. For instance, a local government may not have the authority to mandate a specific action or a policy may require cooperation with other entities. In such instances, the policy should indicate what steps the local government will take to work towards the stated goal, including by specifying what steps it does have the authority to take; identify the specific agencies or organizations the local government will coordinate with; and indicate a timeline for its actions.

Finally, one way to ensure policies are implemented is by tying them to other ordinary and regular government activities. For example, if a policy calls for investments in sidewalks and public street trees in disadvantaged communities, an agency can pass an ordinance requiring that sidewalks be repaired and new trees be planted according to the policy for any street that is resurfaced.

VI. BEST PRACTICES FOR EACH MANDATORY TOPIC AREA

SB 1000 requires local governments to develop environmental justice policies that encompass eight broad topics. At a minimum, local governments must develop policies that further the following goals: (1) reduce exposure to pollution, including both indoor and outdoor air pollution; (2) increase access to public facilities; (3) increase healthy food access; (4) promote safe and sanitary homes; (5) enable physical activity; (6) promote civil engagement in the public decision making process; (7) identify objectives and policies that prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities; and (8) address other unique or compounded health risks of disadvantaged communities. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1)(A).) One policy can fall under more than one category. The topics are described generally below and example policies can be found in the chart in **Appendix A**. OPR includes examples of data to consider when formulating policies for each category.⁵⁶ For instance, when developing policies to reduce air pollution exposure, local governments could consider air quality monitoring data and any toxic hot spot analyses in its area.

A. Reduce Pollution Exposure

Local governments must develop environmental justice policies that address unique or compounded health risks through policies that reduce pollution exposure, including air pollution. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1)(A).) Policies should address each identified pollution source the communities are exposed to, including those related to water contamination, pesticides, hazardous waste, oil and gas facilities, and more. In addition, policies must be designed to reduce the communities’ pollution exposure. In this category, local governments have developed policies that prohibit the siting of new

53 South San Francisco, Implementation Actions, <https://shapessf.com/implementation-actions/>.

54 South San Francisco, Measuring Progress, https://shapessf.com/measuring_progress/.

55 El Cajon, General Plan, Environmental Justice (“EJ”) Element (2021) Action 7.4a & b, *available at* <https://www.elcajon.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/25193/637619612462070000>.

56 OPR Guidelines, at p. 22-36.

sources of air pollution in disadvantaged communities,⁵⁷ amend the zoning code to allow for greater residential density in neighborhoods with less pollution,⁵⁸ prohibit new truck routes through residential communities,⁵⁹ and prohibit new hazardous waste facilities in environmental justice communities.⁶⁰ These policy examples also help avoid placing incompatible land uses (such as industrial and residential) next to each other, which can create health and safety concerns in a community.

B. Promote Public Facilities

Disadvantaged communities often lack access to amenities such as public transit, health care facilities, and community centers, which can lead to health risks like inability to access medical treatment and social services, and social isolation. SB 1000 requires local governments to develop policies that promote public facilities in order to address such health risks. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1)(A).) The statute defines public facilities as public improvements, public services, and community amenities. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(4)(B).) Community amenities can encompass: community centers, libraries, public transit, parks and recreation facilities, safe drinking water and wastewater services, active transportation infrastructure, flood control, and health care services.⁶¹

Policies can promote public facilities by, for example, establishing joint use agreements with schools to provide community access to recreation facilities;⁶² establishing a focal point such as a park, community center, or recreation center, in each neighborhood and within walking distance from all residents;⁶³ or expanding transit options to existing public facilities to make those facilities more accessible.⁶⁴ In addition, public facilities can include cooling centers or “resilience hubs” that provide space and safety for a community impacted by a heat wave, wildfire smoke, flood or other hazard, as well as workforce development centers that are sited in communities where job training and employment opportunities are needed.⁶⁵ Local governments should also work to ensure that public facilities are accessible to all residents, including people with disabilities.⁶⁶

57 Placentia, General Plan (2019) Health, Wellness, and Environmental Justice (“HW/EJ”)-10.7, *available at* <https://www.placentia.org/166/General-Plan-Update>.

58 Oakland 2045 General Plan, Environmental Justice Element (Public Review Draft, March 2023) A.1, *available at* https://cao-94612.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/EJ-Element_032123-public-review-draft_reduced.pdf.

59 East Palo Alto, 2035 General Plan, Health & Equity Element (“HE”)-10.4, *available at* <https://www.cityofepa.org/planning/page/vista-2035-general-plan>.

60 San Bernardino Countywide Plan, Hazards Element (HZ)-3.5 (2022), *available at* <https://countywideplan.com/policy-plan/hazards/>.

61 OPR Guidelines, at p. 22.

62 Jurupa Valley, General Plan (2017) Environmental Justice (“EJ”)-3.13, *available at* <https://www.jurupavalley.org/339/General-Plan>.

63 Chino, General Plan Community Character (“CC”) Objective CC-3.1, *available at* <https://www.cityofchino.org/DocumentCenter/View/416/Chino-General-Plan---05-Community-Character-PDF>; Arvin, Community Health Element (“CH”) (2012) Policy-4.1, *available at* <https://www.arvin.org/DocumentCenter/View/180/February-2019-General-Plan-Part-1-of-3-PDF?bidId=>.

64 City of Fowler, 2040 General Plan (Public Review Draft, December 2022) Community Health and Equity (“CH”)-1, *available at* https://fowlercivcity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Fowler-General-Plan_PR_Complete.pdf; Huntington Park, Environmental Justice Element (“EJ”) Policy 2.3.

65 Richmond, General Plan 2030 Environmental Justice Element (“EJ”)-5.B (2022), *available at* https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/64585/16_EJ_103122?bidId=; City of Los Angeles, Plan for a Healthy L.A. (2021) P17, *available at* https://planning.lacity.org/odocument/2442d4df-34b3-4683-8eb9-b5ea1182782b/Plan_for_a_Healthy_Los_Angeles.pdf.

66 El Cajon, EJ Action 2.1c.

C. Promote Food Access

Local governments must develop policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities by promoting food access. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1)(A).) The lack of access to affordable, healthy food can lead to health conditions such as obesity, high blood pressure, heart disease, and diabetes. Access to food may be limited because an area lacks grocery stores with fresh produce or because individuals cannot afford enough food.

Policies can address food access through zoning,⁶⁷ streamlining project approvals for grocery stores and farmers markets in disadvantaged communities with limited healthy food options, and promoting community gardens. Local governments can also limit the oversaturation of unhealthy food options,⁶⁸ work to ensure that farmers markets accept CalFresh or other benefits,⁶⁹ and incentivize existing convenience stores to include fresh produce in their offerings.⁷⁰

D. Promote Safe and Sanitary Homes

Local governments must develop policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities by promoting safe and sanitary homes. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1)(A).) The location, quality, affordability, and stability of homes are all factors that influence whether housing is safe and sanitary.⁷¹ There will likely be overlap between environmental justice policies that promote safe and sanitary housing and the policies within a local government's housing element. The goal of SB 1000's safe and sanitary homes requirement is to ensure that a local government develops policies that take a holistic view of housing and recognize that housing is intricately tied to community health.⁷² A local jurisdiction should evaluate its housing element to determine what gaps remain in meeting SB 1000's requirement to promote safe and sanitary homes.

Policies that promote safe and sanitary homes can address indoor air pollution, the proximity of community amenities like transit, and issues associated with older housing stock such as lead-based paint and mold.⁷³ Policies can also target affordability by, for instance, directly supporting affordable housing,⁷⁴ promoting and identifying funding for weatherization,⁷⁵ or reducing displacement.⁷⁶

Local governments should also consider policies that address issues specific to renters. For instance, a policy could target substandard rental housing by combining enhanced code enforcement with rehabilitation assistance programs⁷⁷ or implementing a rental home inspection program targeted towards vulnerable communities.⁷⁸

67 San Pablo, General Plan 2030, Health Element ("HEA") Implementing Policy-12, available at <https://www.sanpabloca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/669/Adopted-General-Plan-LOW-LOCKED?bidId=>.

68 Coachella, General Plan 2025, Community Health and Wellness Element ("CHW")-6.7, available at https://cityof-coachellageneralplanupdate.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/1/2/12129446/general_plan_update_for_website.pdf.

69 Envision Stockton 2040 General Plan, Community Health Element ("CH")-1.3A.

70 Alameda County, Environmental Justice Element ("EJ")-5.1B (Public Review Draft May 2023), available at https://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/generalplans/documents/AlamedaCo_EJElement_PUBLIC-DRAFT_2023-05-05_FINAL.pdf; Richmond, General Plan 2030, Health and Wellness Element ("HW") Action-2.A. See also, OPR Guidelines, at p. 23.

71 OPR Guidelines at p. 25.

72 *Id.* at p. 25-26.

73 Jurupa Valley, *supra*, EJ-4.5; Oakland, *supra*, EJ-4.3.

74 Sacramento County, *supra*, EJ-32 A-C.

75 San Diego County, Housing Element 3.6.7.C, available at <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/gpupdate/06-Housing-Element-2021.pdf>; OPR Guidelines, at p. 26.

76 Huntington Park, *supra*, EJ-4.15.

77 Huntington Park, *supra*, EJ-4.12; Stockton, *supra*, CH-2.1A.

78 Richmond, *supra*, EJ-6.A.

E. Promote Physical Activity

Local governments must develop policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities by promoting physical activity. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1)(A).) Access and proximity to parks and other safe places for physical activity is key to increasing physical activity, which can help stave off obesity and other diseases. Jurisdictions should consider policies that prioritize park developments and improvements in areas that are park-poor, for instance by setting a minimum park acreage goal per 1,000 residents and ensuring that parks are equitably distributed.⁷⁹ Policies that commit to developing infrastructure to support biking, walking, and public transit can also promote physical activity.⁸⁰ In addition, increasing shade on streets, sidewalks, and at bus shelters can inspire people to spend more time outside.⁸¹

F. Address Other Unique or Compounded Health Risks

Local governments must develop policies to reduce other unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities that are not addressed by the foregoing requirements. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1)(A).)

For instance, some jurisdictions may have high rates of asthma, lack a consistent or safe water supply, have a larger population of vulnerable residents like children or seniors, have unique vulnerabilities to climate change, or have a large number of contaminated sites. Some jurisdictions may have disproportionate traffic fatalities due to a lack of safe pedestrian and bicycle routes, including safe routes to schools. Some jurisdictions may be disproportionately impacted by industrial uses such as warehouses or oil and gas facilities and should consider policies that specifically seek to address health risks associated with those land uses.⁸² In areas with high air pollution, residents often suffer from disproportionate rates of asthma and policies can specifically target this unique health risk, for instance by developing a screening program for children in partnership with local schools.⁸³

Policies can also address socioeconomic issues that may lead to health risks. For example, local governments can consider how unemployment impacts a community's health and develop policies that encourage local hiring from high-unemployment communities.⁸⁴

G. Promote Community Engagement

Local governments must develop policies that promote civic engagement in the public decision making process. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1)(B).) These policies should be in addition to the community engagement that the local government does as it develops its environmental justice policies and should promote engagement beyond the general plan development process and the implementation of the general plan.

79 Arvin, *supra*, CH-4.1; Richmond, Parks and Recreation Element (“PR”) Action 1.C.

80 Huntington Park, *supra*, EJ Policy 5.5; San Diego County, *supra*, EJ-12.3.

81 City of Fowler, CH-4; Placentia, General Plan (2019) Health, Wellness and Environmental Justice Element (“HW/EJ”)-11.3, available at <https://www.placentia.org/DocumentCenter/View/8394/10-Health-Wellness-and-Environmental-Justice?bidId=>. See also, OPR Guidelines.

82 South San Francisco, *supra*, CHEJ-3.2.2; Ventura County, General Plan (2020), Conservation and Open Space Element (“COS”)-7.2, available at <https://egeneralplan.vcrma.org/>. In addition, communities heavily impacted by warehouse development can consult the Attorney General’s Best Practices for Warehouse Development document for example policies, available at <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/warehouse-best-practices.pdf>.

83 Huntington Park, *supra*, EJ Policy 5.8.

84 City of Los Angeles, *supra*, Plan for a Healthy LA, Action P17.

Environmental justice requires involving the people most impacted so they can have a say in decisions that impact their health.⁸⁵ Policies can address language barriers by requiring interpretation services at meetings and translation of public notices and important documents.⁸⁶ Policies can strengthen notification requirements so that residents are aware of new development in their neighborhoods and have an opportunity to provide input on those proposals. Policies can specify that residents from disadvantaged communities be recruited to participate on boards or committees.⁸⁷ Policies can establish procedures for continual community involvement, including in tracking the progress of implementing environmental justice policies.⁸⁸

H. Prioritize Improvements and Programs that Address Needs of Disadvantaged Communities

Local governments must develop policies that prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(1)(C).) Disadvantaged communities often suffer from under-investment and lack sufficient maintenance of their built environment. To address this inequity, local governments must prioritize improvements in disadvantaged communities. Jurisdictions should engage with communities to understand their needs and priorities. The policies and implementation actions in this section should reflect the priorities the disadvantaged communities in a jurisdiction’s planning area have identified.⁸⁹ Policies can include things like prioritizing new park development or tree planting in disadvantaged communities,⁹⁰ ensuring adequate maintenance for public facilities,⁹¹ local hire provisions,⁹² and the spending of general funds on infrastructure improvements in disadvantaged communities.⁹³

VII. CONCLUSION

SB 1000 seeks to tackle environmental injustices in land use planning by requiring that local governments develop policies that address and mitigate pollution burdens from specific land use problems, such as proximity to polluting industries and lack of community amenities, as well as barriers to accessing public decision making processes. The guidance in this document and Appendices A and B provide real-world examples of environmental justice policies that further SB 1000’s goals and tools to assist local governments in implementing SB 1000. In **Appendix A**, the Bureau has compiled a chart summarizing various policies adopted by local governments across the state that can serve as real-world examples for other jurisdictions as they undergo the development of their own environmental justice element. In **Appendix B**, the Bureau has compiled resources like databases and tools that local governments can use to comply with SB 1000. These documents are meant to be living and will be updated with additional examples over time.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Environmental Justice Bureau at ej@doj.ca.gov if you have any questions.

Appendix A: SB 1000 Example Policies

Appendix B: SB 1000 Tools and Resources

85 SB 1000 Toolkit, at p. 37.

86 Gilroy, *supra*, EJ-1.2; Jurupa Valley, *supra*, Policy EJ-1.6.

87 City of Los Angeles, *supra*, Plan for a Healthy LA, Action P60.

88 El Cajon, *supra*, EJ-7.4a & 7.4b; South San Francisco, *supra*, ECS-1.3.3.

89 OPR Guidelines, at p. 36.

90 Stockton, *supra*, CH-1.1A.

91 Arvin, *supra*, General Plan Implementation Action 7.4; Stockton, *supra*, CH-2.1A.

92 City of Los Angeles, *supra*, Plan for a Healthy LA Action P87.

93 Placentia, *supra*, HW/EJ-16.1; San Diego County, *supra*, EJ Element-5.2.