

August 16, 2010



BAY AREA SETS AGGRESSIVE GOALS IN GLOBAL WARMING BATTLE

The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006—commonly referred to as AB 32—requires that our state reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by roughly 25% of current levels by 2020. The Legislature passed SB 375 as a guide to local and regional governments toward achieving those goals. Last month, I joined my fellow commissioners at the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) in a historic vote that set an aggressive goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the Bay Area.

Roughly 55% of Bay Area emissions come from transportation-related sources. That figure is exacerbated by long commutes, idling traffic, and poor infrastructure planning. SB 375 at its core is an anti-sprawl bill. It charges local governments to find ways to reduce the total number of vehicle miles driven in and through their jurisdictions.

Under the law, regional planning organizations such as MTC are assigned a range for setting a target for greenhouse gas reductions. As one of the four largest planning organizations in the state, MTC was required to set a target of at least 3-12%.

Wanting to create real change, I worked with other commissioners to set a target of 15% instead. This is the most aggressive goal set by a regional planning organization to date.

There are a variety of ways to meet that target. They can range from increasing public transit options to congestion management programs on freeways to more infill and transit oriented development in cities. As we implement these changes, the Bay Area will truly be leader and role model in our battle against global warming.

MTC's 15% greenhouse gas reduction goal will become part of the fabric of a statewide plan for meeting the objectives of AB 32. That plan will be assembled by the California Air Resources Board (ARB) where my fellow board members and I will vote on it later this year.

As always, I encourage you to contact my office if you have any concerns or are interested in additional information. You can reach me at 299-5040 or via e-mail at Supervisor.Yeager@bos.sccgov.org.

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STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS COME TO THE ALAMEDA AND DOWNTOWN

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the regional transportation planning and funding agency for the Bay Area. As a commissioner, I am proud of the many important projects we fund. One of the programs I am most excited about is Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC), which recently provided \$6.5 million for infrastructure projects in San José.

The TLC Program supports community-based transportation projects that bring new vibrancy to downtown areas, commercial cores, neighborhoods, and transit corridors. The program works to enhance their amenities and ambiance—making them places where people want to live, work and visit. Projects are designed with community input. They better connect neighborhoods with transit, improve pedestrian safety, and make the area aesthetically appealing.

Three separate projects have been funded in San José. Along The Alameda, \$3.1 million has been provided for extensive streetscape improvements such as new lighting, landscaping, pedestrian crosswalks, and neighborhood identification signs. Downtown, \$2 million will be used for extensive work to upgrade access, lighting, landscaping, street furniture and public art along San Carlos Street. A portion of San Fernando Street will get \$1.4 million to improve bike lanes, pedestrian access and lighting.

Funding for these projects confirms regional recognition of these areas as up and coming neighborhoods in the Bay Area. The improvements will make those corridors more livable for residents and welcoming for business. The projects will also provide much needed construction jobs as the work is completed.

ALERTSCC LAUNCHES NEW CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE USERS



Create your own personalized ad to send to your friends and family by uploading a photo at www.AlertSCC.com.

When the 2007 wildfires raced across Southern California, San Diego County had a new tool in place to help keep its residents safe—a Reverse 911 system. Such a system allows public safety officials to send out mass phone messages to residents alerting them to danger and providing them with safety instructions. It helped save lives there, so I worked to bring that technology to Santa Clara County.

Known as AlertSCC, our county system is now up and running. Everyone with a land line is automatically enrolled through the 911 and 411 databases.

But AlertSCC also lets residents voluntarily sign up to receive

alerts by text, cell, and email. Because greater coverage will help keep us all safer, the County is encouraging residents to sign up.

A fun way to do this is through the “I Love You. Please Sign Up.” campaign. When residents go to www.AlertSCC.com to register their information, they can also upload a picture to create a personalized ad urging their friends and family to sign up as well. It is a novel way to make our community safer.

COUNTY BUILDING ADDS FREE, SHORT-TERM PARKING FOR VISITORS

An effective government is easily accessible to its residents. A long time complaint about the County Government Center at 70 W. Hedding was the lack of convenient parking for those looking to do quick business in the building. I often heard stories from constituents frustrated by circling for a parking meter or walking a long way from distant available public parking options just to drop off a payment or pick up paperwork.

This year, I pushed for a parking restructuring at the County building to ease this problem. Last month it became a reality. The facility now has 60 free, one-hour parking spaces right off the building’s west wing so residents can conveniently take care of business. It is a no brainer solution that will make the County more accessible. The new parking is located off San Pedro Street near the District Attorney’s Office.

Across the street, the Santa Clara County Superior Court is also increasing convenient access for our residents. Instead of mailing back forms and waiting days or weeks for a response, potential jurors can now request a postponement or disqualification from jury duty through a new on-line feature on the Court's website. By going to www.sccsuperiorcourt.org, residents can get instant feedback on their requests.



COUNTY EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

In my State of the County address in January, I called for a renewed vigor in promoting employee wellness. Employee wellness initiatives increase productivity and can ultimately lower healthcare-related costs. A program I championed at the time was Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).

Last month, Santa Clara County became the first government agency locally to offer a CSA program to its employees. CSA delivers produce from local farms directly to consumers. It benefits the farmer by providing regular, reliable customers who receive convenient access to high-quality fruits and vegetables. The environment also benefits by keeping local agricultural land intact and reducing the need for transporting food over long distances. It’s a win-win-win situation.

Santa Clara County’s CSA program is voluntary and self-supporting. It requires no funding or subsidies from the County. On a weekly basis, employees have an opportunity to order a produce box directly from a local farmer who delivers directly to the County Government Center. Deliveries are convenient for both the farmer and employees, keeping costs affordable for staff.

The CSA program makes it convenient for busy employees to purchase quality produce and plan healthier meals for their families. On the first day, over 70 employees participated. The numbers have been steady since then. The success of the program could serve as a model for other local governments striving to improve the health of their workforce.

CHANGE IN START TIME FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

This month, the Board of Supervisors moved its meeting time up half an hour from 9:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. Ceremonial items and hearings usually heard in the afternoon, will now be heard first thing in the morning. The change will ultimately reduce the amount of county staff time needed to run the board meetings, creating a cost-savings.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ROADS COMMISSION

The County is currently seeking volunteers to serve on its Roads Commission. The Roads Commission acts in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors on matters generally relating to the planning, design, construction, maintenance and operation of the County's expressways, highways and roads.

If you are interested in being appointed to the Committee, please contact Hong Cao in my office. She can be reached at 299-5040 or hong.cao@bos.sccgov.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Featured Event: Caltrain Seeks Public Comment on Proposed Service Changes

What: Caltrain will hold a community meeting to get input on proposed service changes that may be implemented to close its budget deficit. Proposals range from suspending weekend service to fare increases to suspending service to Gilroy. The changes would go into effect between October 2010 and January 2011. The Caltrain Board of Directors will consider comments and hold a public hearing regarding the changes on September 2.

When: August 19 from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Where: Diridon Station, 65 Cahill Street, San José

More Information: Visit http://www.caltrain.com/riderinfo/Input_Sought_on_Proposed_Changes.html.

County Parks Acquisition Plan Public Workshop

What: This workshop will provide an overview of current County parks, the planned Countywide Trail system, and future park expansion areas as identified in the County General Plan. All members of the public are welcome and encouraged to attend to help identify acquisition criteria and provide other ideas about parkland acquisition.

When: August 18 at 7 p.m.

Where: Joseph George Middle School, 277 Mahoney Drive, San José

More information: Visit www.parkhere.org or call 355-2200.

Women's Equality Day Reception

What: Sponsored by the Commission on the Status of Women, this event celebrates 90 years since women gained the right to vote. This year's theme is "Women Leaders in the Green Economy" and will feature keynote speaker Phaedra Ellis-Lamkins, Chief Executive Officer of Green For All. Tickets are \$25.

When: August 26 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Where: Triton Museum, 1505 Warburton Avenue, Santa Clara

More information: Visit <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/110144>.

Labor Day Walk/Run for a Healthy World

What: Presented by World Runners, this fun 5k and 10k walk/run event supports The Health Trust Meals On Wheels Program which serves over 100,000 meals every year to seniors and adults, microfinance loans to third world countries, and education of young women in Africa. The event features flat courses run mostly through the marsh lands on a mix of levee trails (with some single track portions), dirt and paved roads. Register at www.worldrunners.org.

When: September 6 at 8 a.m.

Where: Sunnyvale Baylands Park, 999 Caribbean Drive, Sunnyvale

More information: Contact Bob Lord at 978-0203 or BobLord@worldrunners.org.

National Health Reform Implications for Silicon Valley

What: The Health Trust, The California Public Health Association North and EQUAL invite you to a panel presentation about the implications of national health care reform for Silicon Valley.

Panelists including Sarah Muller from Working Partnerships, Chris Wilder from Valley Medical Center Foundation, Kathleen King from Santa Clara Family Health Plan, Ellen Schaffer from The Center for Policy Analysis/EQUAL, Linder Shugarman from SCAN and Public Health Officer Dr. Marty Fenstersheib will discuss the implications of the new law for our safety net, our kids, our seniors and our public health system.

When: September 10 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Where: Santa Clara University, Mayer Theater, 500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara

More information: Email nicolek@healthtrust.org.

5th Annual American Indian Heritage Celebration

What: Everyone is welcome to join the local American Indian Tribe and Neighboring Tribes, American Indian Community, Social and Health Organizations, and Agencies in “Honoring Our Ancestors, Respecting Our Traditions.” This one day celebration includes: BIG TIME, POWWOW, American Indian arts and crafts vendors, music, dance, food, cultural craft activities, historical displays, film and speaker series, spiritual run, and information on American Indian languages, health fair and other services.

When: September 18 from noon to 10 p.m.

Where: Evergreen Valley College, 3095 Yerba Buena Road, San José

More information: Contact Vernon Medicine Cloud at 445-3400 x208 or vmcloud@ihcsev.org.

You can also visit www.americanindianheritage.org.

This is an informative newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on issues that I am working on, local updates, events in District 4, and County resources. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please send an e-mail to jim.weston@bos.sccgov.org with the subject: Remove me from your mailing list. To receive a text-only version of the newsletter, please send an e-mail to jim.weston@bos.sccgov.org with the subject: Text-only version of the newsletter. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please send an e-mail to jim.weston@bos.sccgov.org with the subject: Add me to your mailing list.