

From: [D. Muirhead](#)
To: [Angie Gonzalez](#); [Michelle Wilson](#)
Subject: Council Meeting September 21, 2016 Item #9: Sustainable Agricultural Lands Policy
Date: Monday, September 19, 2016 9:30:01 PM

Comments for the Public Record submitted by
Doug Muirhead, a resident of Morgan Hill, for:
Morgan Hill City Council
Meeting September 21, 2016
Item #9: Sustainable Agricultural Lands Policy

Dear Morgan Hill City Council,

The "Santa Clara Valley Climate & Agriculture Protection Program (CAPP)," formerly known as the "Sustainable Agricultural Lands Policy Framework for Southern Santa Clara County," is intended to create a new regional approach for preserving agricultural lands and sustaining a strong farming industry in southern Santa Clara County.

At the January 21, 2016 meeting of the Housing, Land Use, Environment, and Transportation Committee (HLUET), Kirk Girard, Director of County Planning and Development, said that the preparation of the Framework, which will occur over the next two calendar years (through 2017), is anticipated to be a high profile, multi-jurisdictional project that is a leadership opportunity for the County. He also said that the Administration is seeking comment and concurrence on this statement:

Maintain an extensive public outreach program during the Framework preparation process.

After the January 21, 2016 HLUET meeting, the next information session that I am aware of was when the City Council, on April 6, 2016, received a report on Agricultural Lands Preservations-Next Steps from Mr. Gerard.

On August 3, 2016, LAFCO staff provided an informational update to their Commission. Of particular concern to me were these statements:

* Mapping and Prioritizing of Agricultural Lands for Conservation is Underway

It is unclear what process or criteria is being used to map these lands and what role the maps will play in the development of the Framework.

* Establishment of Working Groups and Advisory Groups

The County has formed two working groups and three advisory groups.

We [LAFCO] expect that further information will soon be provided on the anticipated roles and responsibilities of these groups.

LAFCO staff included an Attachment which lists the names and members of the Advisors' Groups:

Agricultural Easement Implementation; Moderator: Andrea Mackenzie

Farming Economics and Vitality; Moderator: Joe Deviney

Land Use Planning and Policy; Moderator: Rob Eastwood

This has not been high profile for the general public, who will live with and hopefully benefit from this regional approach for preserving agricultural lands and sustaining a strong farming industry in southern Santa Clara County. May I recommend the section Challenges of Engagement in the "Gene Drives on the Horizon" report issued by the National Academies of Science in 2016.

* The first challenge is determining who should be engaged among the many possible experts, stakeholders, community members, and publics.

What groups have sufficient "stake" to be considered stakeholders?

What knowledge or capacity is required to participate?

If representativeness is sought, what characteristics will be prioritized

Do some kinds of expertise justify excluding some would-be participants?

How can procedural justice be established?

Should engagement lead to consensus?

* A second primary question is what are the goals of engagement?

Desired flows of information: public communication, from experts to publics (e.g., outreach or educational initiatives); public consultation, from publics to experts (e.g., surveys or opinion polls); or public participation, which denotes information flowing in both directions (e.g., consensus conferences, task forces)

* A third area of challenge emerges from the complexity of organizing people.

Pitfalls of engaging public audiences late in the innovation process:

make the engagement irrelevant or force opinions into binary "pro" or "anti" positions.

Who gets to know what and when?

Thank you for your consideration.