

## Chapter 1 : Introduction

Assembly Bill (AB) 617 was signed into California law in July 2017 and focuses on addressing local air pollution in environmental justice (EJ) communities. The bill recognizes that while California has seen tremendous improvement in regional air quality, some communities are still disproportionately impacted by local sources. Major local sources of air pollution in EJ communities include mobile sources (trucks, trains, ships, etc.) and industrial facilities. These communities also experience social and economic disadvantages that make people more vulnerable to the health effects of pollution. The AB 617 program provides focused action and additional resources to address air quality in these communities.

On September 27, 2018, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) designated 10 communities across the state to implement community plans for the first year of the AB 617 program. Local air districts are tasked with developing and implementing community emissions reduction and/or community air monitoring plans in partnership with residents and community stakeholders. The Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP) includes actions to enhance our understanding of air pollution in the designated communities, and support effective implementation of the Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP). For the three first year AB 617 communities in the South Coast AQMD, both a CAMP and a CERP are being developed. Separate documents describe the CAMP development process and the draft plan. Information is available at [www.aqmd.gov/ab617](http://www.aqmd.gov/ab617). Figure 1-1 gives a general overview of the CERP timeline.

Figure 1-1: Overview of Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP) Timeline for Year 1 Communities



### Purpose of the Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP)

The CERP is a plan for achieving air pollution emission and exposure reductions within the East Los Angeles, Boyle Heights, West Commerce community, and is tailored to address this community's air quality priorities. The CERP includes actions to reduce emissions and/or exposures, an implementation schedule, an enforcement plan, a description of the process and outreach conducted to develop the CERP, as well as additional elements that are relevant to developing an effective CERP. Community partnership and engagement have been crucial throughout the process.

Because the work to implement the CERP and CAMP is dynamic, certain action items have been written with built-in flexibility to allow adjustments as new information becomes available. South Coast AQMD staff is committed to working with Community Steering Committee (CSC) members to evaluate ongoing actions and progress.

### CERP Development Process and Emphasis on Community Input

Community engagement and input to inform both the process and the actions in the CERP have been a primary element of the AB 617 program. The East Los Angeles, Boyle Heights, West Commerce CSC, working with the South Coast AQMD staff, are seeking to address the community's air quality priorities through development and implementation of this CERP. In addition to public meetings, numerous conversations and communications among committee members, South Coast AQMD staff, individuals and small groups occurred to ensure that community voices were an integral part of the plan. Chapter 2 describes the CSC process and the outreach that was conducted. Throughout the process, information exchanges between all parties, including feedback and input from committee members and members of the public ensured transparency and engagement. Numerous adjustments to consolidate and incorporate feedback were made and South Coast AQMD staff continuously aims to improve community engagement on air quality issues.

### About this Community

This community includes the Boyle Heights neighborhood of the City of Los Angeles, the unincorporated community of East Los Angeles, and the western portion of the City of Commerce, all of which are located in Los Angeles County (Figure 1-2).

More than 220,000 people live within the East Los Angeles, Boyle Heights, West Commerce community (Figure 1-3). More than 95% of the people living in this community are Latino (Figure 1-4). The population in this community is younger compared to the population in the state of California, with nearly 17% of the people in this community being children under the age of 10 years, and only 9% of the population being adults over the age of 65 years (Figure 1-5). These age categories are particularly important because young children and older adults can be more sensitive to the health effects of air pollution.<sup>1</sup>

Figure 1-2: Location of the East Los Angeles, Boyle Heights, West Commerce community in the South Coast AQMD jurisdiction

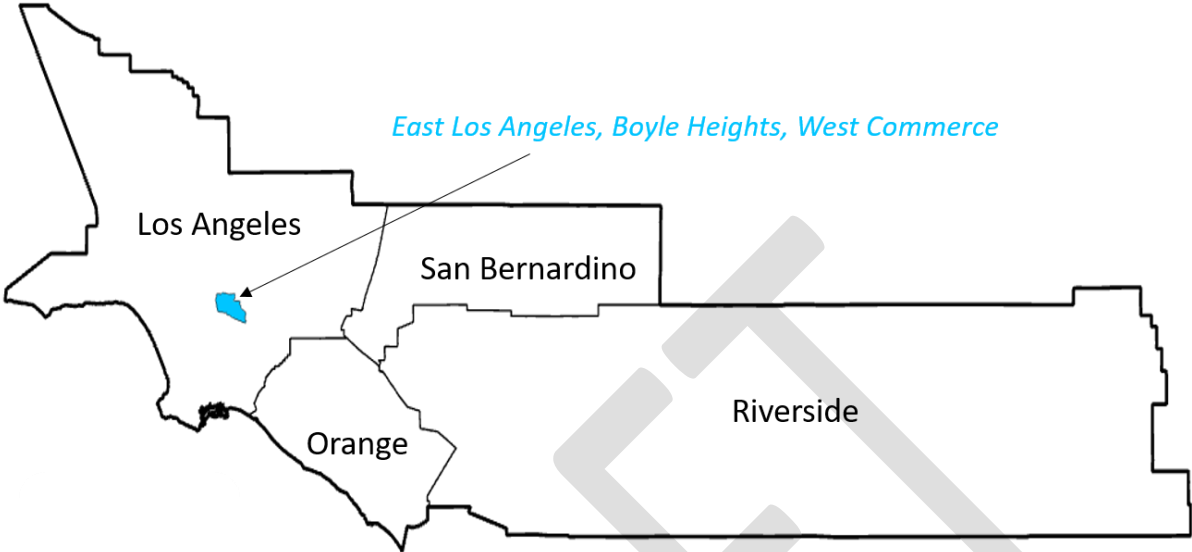


Figure 1-3: Population of East Los Angeles, Boyle Heights, West Commerce community, based on the 2010 Census

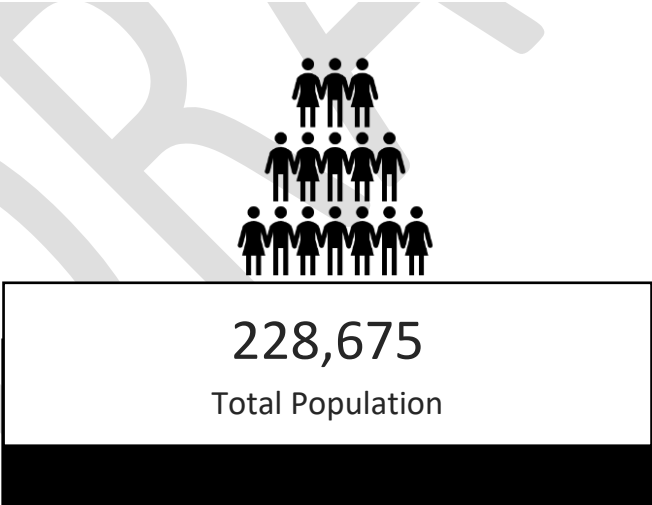


Figure 1-4: Population by Race/Ethnicity in East Los Angeles, Boyle Heights, West Commerce and the state of California, based on 2010 Census<sup>i</sup>

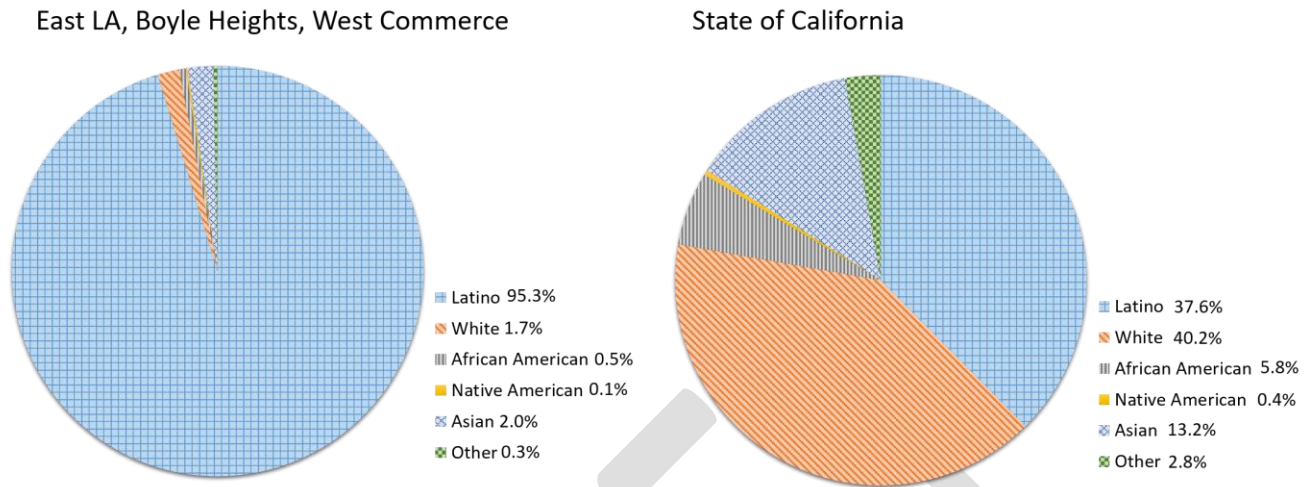
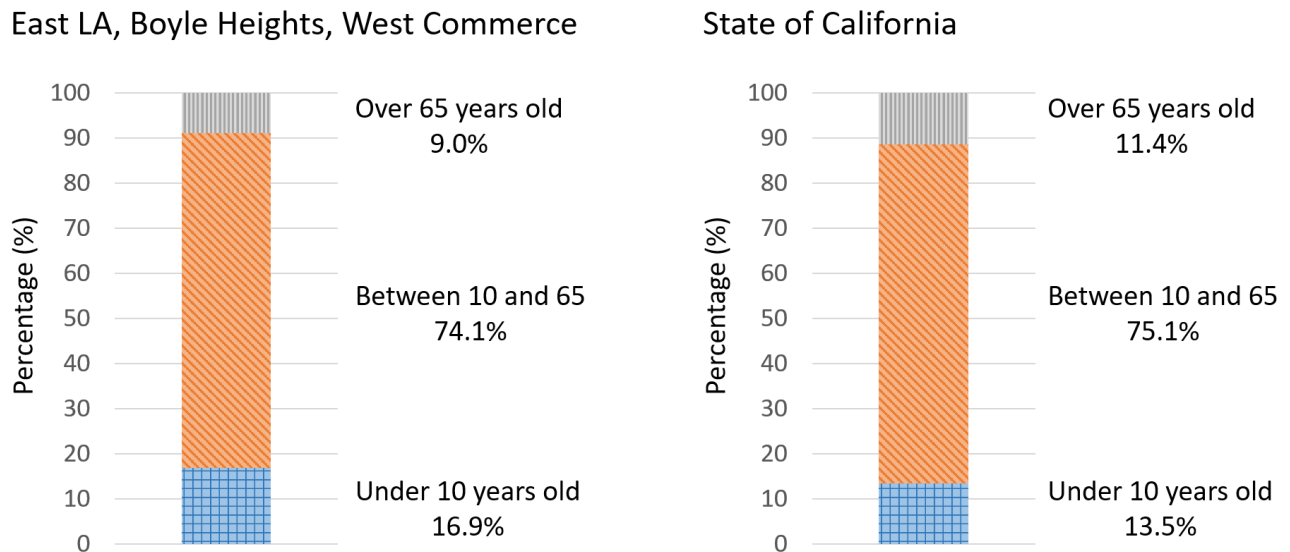


Figure 1-5: Age profile in East Los Angeles, Boyle Heights, West Commerce and the state of California, based on 2010 Census



<sup>i</sup> Definitions of races are the same as CalEnviroScreen 3.0.

While the demographics and geography provide useful information, the members of the community are what make each community unique and distinct. Community members bring intimate familiarity with their community and the air quality concerns that affect their neighborhood. Below are some community voices describing this community.

Photo Pending



“I’ve been here all my life. I was raised here, I became an employee here, I am still serving the community in my capacity as a Councilmember, and now raising my son here. I take pride in what this community represents; we are such a close knit community, we are a huge family, all of our neighbors know each other generation to generation to have been raised here. My friends I went to school with, we are all raising our kids here together. It is important to ensure that we provide cleaner air for our kids. We know that it is a long battle, but it is important for us to provide clean air for our generation that is still here, for the generation of our children, and for generations to come because having clean air should not be something that is far-fetched. It should just be something that the community should have”

*-Oralia Rebollo, Councilmember, City of Commerce*

“My community is an extended family, we look out for family, and I want to look out for my community”

*-Johncito Peraza-Romero, Active Resident, City of Commerce*

Photo Pending



“My community is a driven, passionate and powerful bastion of hope for cleaner air and environmental justice. We are connected by the stories we share. Cancer growing in our neighborhoods, our families with asthma, toxic air harming our lungs, construction site dust waves making us cough and sneeze to no end. My community is a valuable voice that will help shape a healthier future for all.”

*-Leoda Valenzuela, Field Organizer, Council of Mexican Federations (COFEM)*

## References

---

1. Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (2014), California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool, Version 2.0, <https://oehha.ca.gov/media/CES20FinalReportUpdateOct2014.pdf>, Accessed June 12, 2019.

DRAFT