
CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

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Regulatory Background

Assembly Bill 617 (AB 617)¹ was signed into California law on July 26, 2017 and focused on addressing disproportionate impacts of local air pollution in environmental justice (EJ) communities. “Environmental justice” is defined 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.”² The bill recognizes that while California has seen tremendous regional air quality improvement, some communities are still disproportionately impacted due to air pollution sources near residential areas. Major air pollution sources in EJ communities include mobile sources and industrial facilities. These communities also experience social and economic disadvantages that add to their cumulative burdens. The AB 617 program invests new resources and focuses on improving air quality in EJ communities.

AB 617 communities are designated by California Air Resources Board (CARB) and they specify the plan(s) for the community as either an emissions reduction program, air monitoring system, or both. To meet the emissions reduction program requirements, South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) develops and implements Community Emission Reduction Plans (CERPs). For the air monitoring system requirements, South Coast AQMD develops and deploys Community Air Monitoring Plans (CAMPs). For communities with an emissions reduction program component, the local air district must develop and adopt a CERP in consultation with CARB, community-based organizations, affected sources, and local governmental bodies, which must be implemented within five years.³ Additionally, air districts are required to provide an annual progress report to CARB⁴ and if new information becomes available, the CERP may be evaluated and revised by CARB. For communities with an air monitoring system component, a CAMP must be developed and deployed within one year of community designation.⁵

An essential element of the program is partnership and collaboration with the community to address the community’s air quality priorities in the CERP and CAMP. The Community Steering Committee (CSC) is a diverse group of people who live, work, own businesses, or attend school within the community. Additionally, local land-use agencies, public health agencies, regulatory agencies, and elected officials may have representation on the CSC. The CSC guides the development and implementation of the emissions reduction program and air monitoring system.

Currently, statewide, there are 15 AB 617 communities designated by CARB (see **Figure 1-1**) and six of the 15 communities reside with the jurisdiction of the South Coast AQMD. In 2018 (Year 1), CARB

¹ California Health and Safety Code, Section 44391.2

² California Government Code, Section 65040.12

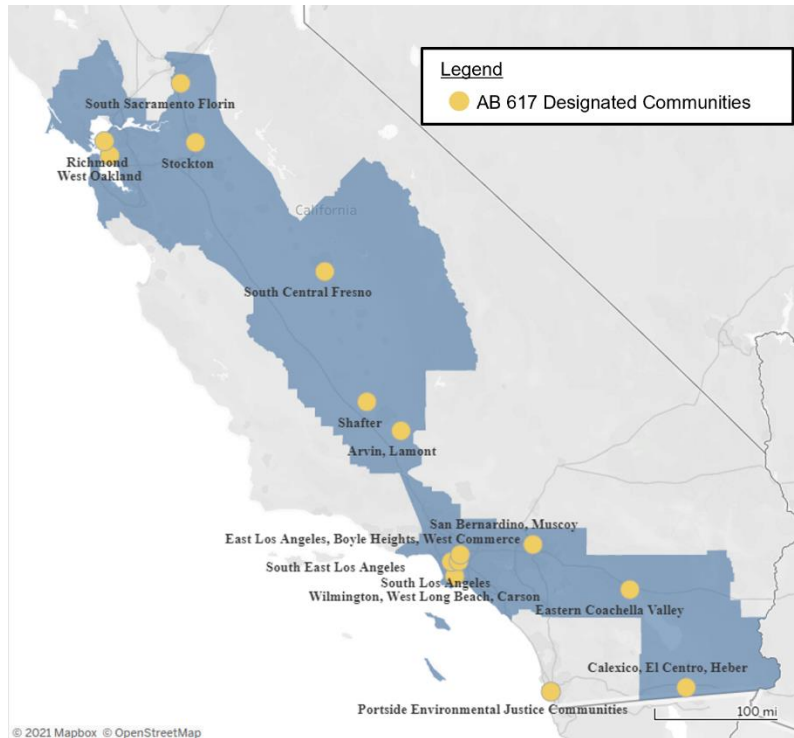
³ California Health and Safety Code, Section 44391.2 (b)(2)

⁴ California Health and Safety Code, Section 42705.5 (d)

⁵ California Health and Safety Code, Section 42705.5 (b)

designated three South Coast AQMD communities. In 2019 (Year 2), CARB designated two⁶ additional communities in South Coast AQMD. On February 25, 2021 (Year 3⁷), South Los Angeles (SLA) was designated by CARB as an AB 617 community in South Coast AQMD to develop a community emissions program and an air monitoring system.^{8,9}

Figure 1-1: AB 617 Designated Communities



AB 617 Program Challenges

Over the past four years of implementing the AB 617 program, South Coast AQMD has experienced challenges and gained insight on working with the designated communities and addressing their concerns. One of the common challenges for all AB 617 communities continues to be the emissions reduction program development timeline; one year to develop and adopt an emissions reduction program limits the ability to build community trust, inform the community, and build consensus. Another challenge is the limited authority of air districts to sufficiently address all air quality related issues raised by the CSCs. Limited funding has also been challenging to sufficiently support the development, implementation, and deployment of community plans.

⁶ Eastern Coachella Valley and Southeast Los Angeles were designated in 2019 to develop both a community emissions program and air monitoring system. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/capp-communities>

⁷ South Los Angeles is designated as a “2020” or “Year 3” community despite the CARB Board meeting for community selection being held in 2021, <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/community-air-protection-program/communities/south-los-angeles>

⁸ California Health and Safety Code, Section 44391.2 (c)(2)

⁹ California Health and Safety Code, Section 42705.5 (d)

Purpose of this Community Emissions Reduction Plan

This CERP is developed to achieve air pollution emission and exposure reductions within the SLA community and address this community’s air quality priorities. This plan also describes the community outreach conducted to develop this CERP and provides emissions and exposure reduction actions, an implementation schedule, and an enforcement plan (Chapter 4).

Community Emissions Reduction Plan Development Process and Emphasis on Community Input

Community engagement and input to inform both the process and the actions in a CERP are a primary element of the AB 617 program. Public meetings, subcommittee meetings, conversations, and communications among CSC members, the community, South Coast AQMD, and CARB staff contribute to developing and implementing this CERP. Chapter 2 – Community Outreach, Community Steering Committee and Public Process describes the CSC and outreach efforts for CERP development.

About this Community

On January 14, 2021, South Coast AQMD initiated the Community Kickoff Meeting. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings were held virtually via Zoom. On February 25, 2021, SLA was designated by CARB as an AB 617 community. Since the designation, there have been a series of community meetings to develop the CERP and CAMP; see **Figure 1-2** for SLA’s CERP development timeline.

Figure 1-2: South Los Angeles CERP Development Timeline



This community includes Compton, Lynwood, Watts, the unincorporated areas of Willowbrook and Westmont, and parts of Inglewood and Los Angeles (Figure 1-3).

Figure 1-3: South Los Angeles Community Boundary

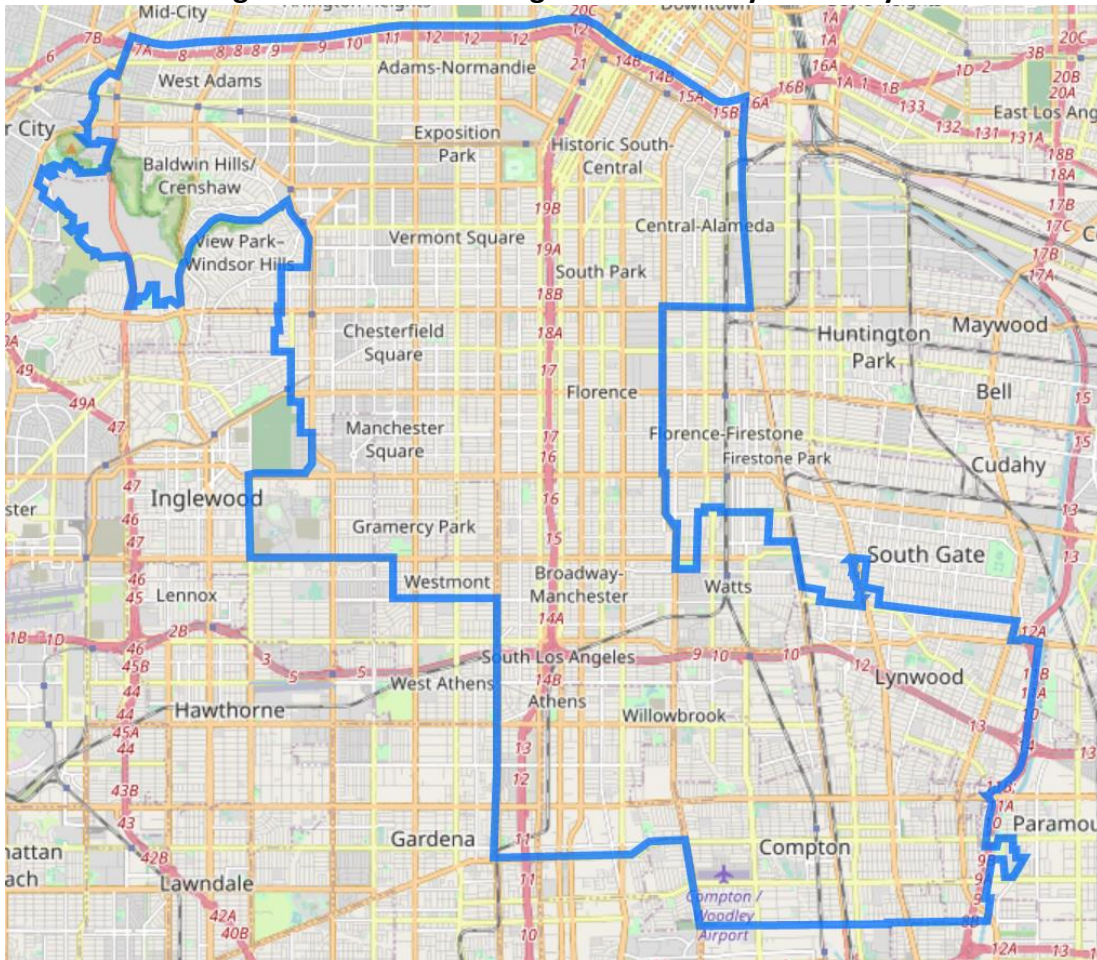


Figure 1-4: Location of the South Los Angeles Community within South Coast AQMD’s Jurisdiction

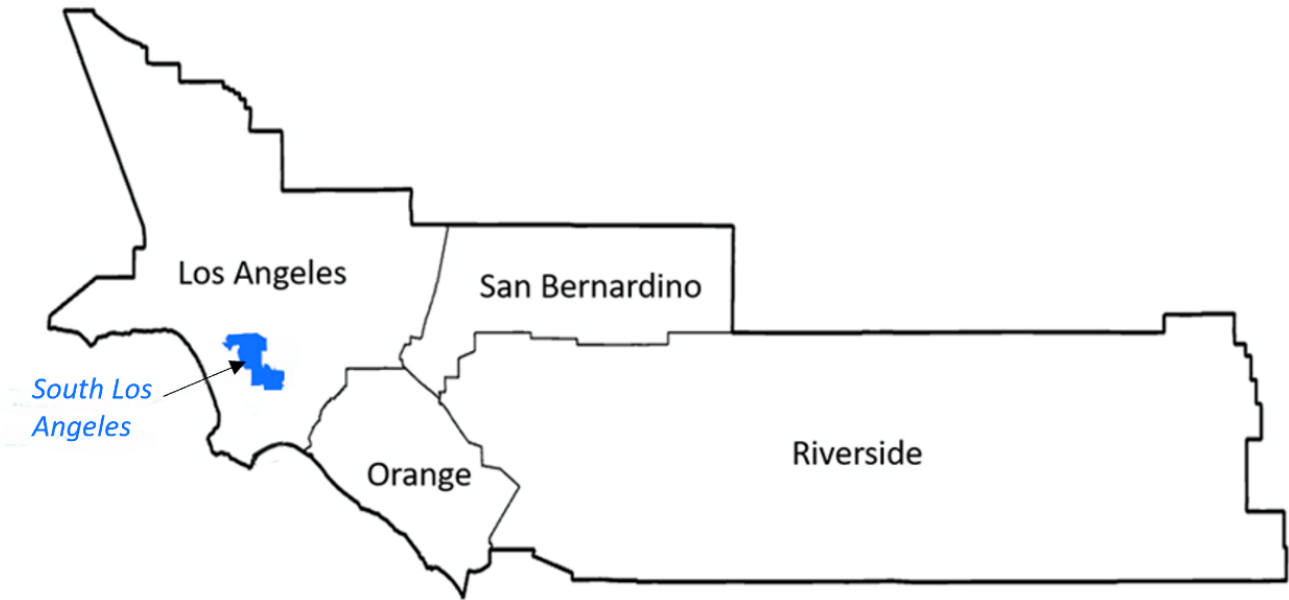
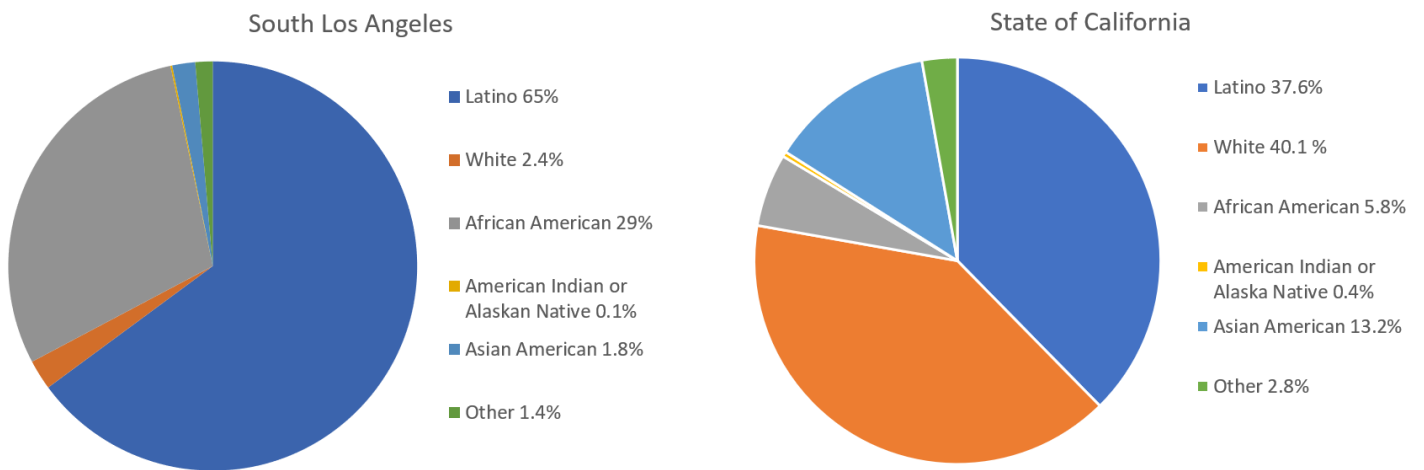


Figure 1-5: Population by Race/Ethnicity in South Los Angeles and the State of California, based on 2010 Census



According to the 2010 Census, approximately 904,000 people live within the SLA boundary: approximately 65 percent are Hispanic or Latino, 29 percent are African American, and 2.4 percent are White (Figure 1-5).¹⁰ Sensitive receptors are young children (under 10 years old) and older adults (over 65 years old) and can be more sensitive to air pollution’s health effects. The population in this community is younger than the average California population, with about 16.8% of children under the age of 10

¹⁰ Definitions of races are the same as version 3.0 of the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (CalEnviroScreen 3.0), <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-30>

years and 7.6% adults over the age of 65 years versus the state which has 13.5% and 11.4%, respectively (Figure 1-6).

Figure 1-6: Age Profile in South Los Angeles and the State of California, based on 2010 Census

