

**Draft Report of Recommendations**  
**by the**  
**Attendees and Workshop Participants at the Town Meeting**  
**“Growing Pains: Health and Community Impacts of Goods Movement and the Ports”**  
**Long Beach, CA**  
**February 25-26, 2005**

These recommendations stem from discussions at the Town Meeting, including panel discussions, Open Mike comments, and discussions at workshops. There were six workshops at the Town Meeting, including:

- The Ports: Ships and Other Emissions
- Freeways and Roads: Truck Emissions
- Railroads and Intermodal Facilities: Locomotive Emissions
- Warehouses, Distribution Centers and Truck Emissions
- Community Input into Scientific Research Agendas
- Hazardous Materials at the Ports, on Roads and on Rails: Health and Safety Concerns

Each workshop had a facilitator and a recorder and included representatives with diverse perspectives. At each workshop, the participants selected a workshop “reporter” who was selected to report back their workshop’s recommendations at the Town Meeting’s final plenary session.

Following the workshop reports – in the final plenary session of the Town Meeting – Professor Robert Gottlieb of Occidental College summarized the key points raised during the 2-day meeting:

- Every workshop – and every panel heard at the Town Meeting – made it clear that health, environment, and community not only need to be part of the agenda around goods movement but they have to be a priority in developing that agenda, and they are not currently a priority. As a core goal, health, environment and community need to be central to any discussion of the Ports and goods movement.
- Underlying what Town Meeting and workshop participants have been saying is that the current process underway to develop an “Action Plan” for goods movement at the state level leaves much to be desired. Right now there is no good process to incorporate health, environment and community issues as part of the very rapid activity that is happening at the state agency level in developing an “Action Plan.” In this regard, there are two goals that have been identified during this Town Meeting:
  - Slow the Action Plan process down.
  - Include the input, discussions and recommendations from this Town Meeting in the development of the state Action Plan.
- The issues raised by the workshop participants and Town Meeting panelists, as well as during Open Mike discussions, transcend a number of different categories:

- a. Technology change is needed, with many valuable suggestions made, such as the notion of a model warehouse system that moves goods efficiently but also protects communities and residents.
- b. Education and training is needed to develop new kinds of mechanisms to inform the public and address these problems from the worker side and the community side
- c. New policy, regulatory and legislative changes are needed, as well as better enforcement mechanisms across the board
- d. Imbalances need to be addressed because Town Meeting participants say that health, environment and community are short-changed when it comes to resources, at multiple levels.
- e. Research agendas need to be examined. There are strong arguments that in many ways we have enough research now to take protective action. Any new research agendas need to be developed in the context of not only the issues of health, environment and community impacts, but also in ways that allow community engagement.
- f. Next steps. There has been a strong desire by attendees to create an information exchange so that participants can stay on top of goods movement issues that affect their communities. This is a charge to the organizers of the conference.

#### Workshop Recommendations:

Although not all workshops reached consensus on their recommendations, specific key recommendations presented in the final plenary session by the Workshop reporters are summarized below:

##### 1) Process recommendations

The main problem with the current process of creating a State of California “Action Plan” for the ports and goods movement issue is that it is happening too fast. Community members and representatives of community-based, environmental and other groups cannot adequately contribute their input into an Action Plan that will soon be finalized. Participants recommend: “Slow down and establish a process with open channels of communication that will enable community and environmental input.” In addition, the community requires recognition that it is not only a part, but actually a priority, in developing the goods movement agenda.

The following are some of the Town Meeting participants’ recommendations for how this can be accomplished:

- a. Create a statewide communications network of stakeholders involved in port activities and keep all stakeholders up-to-date on what is happening, with well-publicized opportunities for public participation

- b. Create an Action Plan that 1) identifies environmental and health impacts, including recent scientific findings, 2) that specifies solutions, and 3) that considers CEQA requirements
- c. Look at the logistics and goods movement industry in a holistic way by considering local impacts vs. national needs
- d. Adopt an interstate approach to cleaner fuels
- e. Create a risk assessment process for better understanding the health threats of moving goods via rail, since this is often promoted as a more environmentally-sound alternative
- f. Create a “West Coast goods movement plan”, not just a regional or statewide one, to facilitate a more equal distribution of goods and health/community/environmental impacts along the West Coast
- g. Develop an economic analysis that not only looks at the value of the logistics industry to the regional economy but that also calculates the true health and social costs of expanding this industry in Southern California

## 2) Technological change

Technology should be embraced with a two-fold approach. First, invest in new technologies that prevent or reduce pollution. For example, manufacture new ocean-going cargo ships designed to use the cleanest technology possible, because even though the initial cost is higher, the long-term cost is much lower than continual incremental improvement. Second, invest in training and education programs that enhance the rate of technological transition. The following are some of the Town Meeting participants’ recommendations for how this can be accomplished:

- a. Consider only the newest technologies for preventing and reducing pollution so that we do not commit ourselves to outdated methods
- b. Create a model warehouse system (plan) to consider the most efficient factors for sustainable “green” development, including stricter zoning regulations, truck routes that protect neighborhoods, etc.
- c. Provide funds not only for long-term infrastructure improvement projects but also for short term programs that will utilize existing cleaner technologies
- d. Charge the true price of gasoline, diesel and imported goods to help pay for mitigation of impacts
- e. Invest in alternatives to oil-based fuels and reduce the use of sulfur in fuels
- f. Evaluate the true impacts of truck versus rail transportation of goods. See-sawing between trucks and rail is not the solution, because both of these produce considerable emissions. Reducing truck traffic and having incentives for rail may result in shifting the burden from one community to another.
- g. Create a comprehensive catalog or report of all the existing freight-moving technologies that are less polluting than diesel technologies currently in use
- h. Provide incentives and training programs that enable distribution centers to utilize the newest technologies
- i. Create a public trust fund that all users pay into to fund cleaner technology

### 3) Policy Change

Current policy can be improved by making regulatory changes and opening lines of communication among local, state, and federal actors. Policy makers should consider the balance of localized costs versus nationalized benefits in deciding if and how the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles should be expanded. In addition, policy makers should seek to address the significant health costs born by the communities of Southern California and should find a way to hold industry – and even the rest of the country – accountable for these externalities.

The following are the Town Meeting participants' recommendations:

- j. Reconsider whether the goods movement is the best economic option for Los Angeles and California given that the costs are localized while benefits are national
- k. Encourage policy makers to pay attention to substantial evidence that pollution in Southern California – at current levels – is seriously impacting health
- l. Support the No Net Increase legislation because Southern California residents cannot sustain any further degradation of the air they breathe
- m. Allow no expansion of the ports, or infrastructure accommodating increased international trade, until health is prioritized and air pollution is reduced; expansion must happen only in a sustainable manner that protects the health of southern California residents
- n. Establish clear responsibilities at the Ports for regulation and enforcement of policy decisions
- o. Hold the Ports (tenants and shippers) accountable for the impacts of their industry by having comprehensive accounting to tally the burden of disease from emissions at the ports
- p. Consider local impacts vs. national needs. The lack of an interstate approach to cleaner fuels is an obstacle to progress.
- q. Consider whether it is necessary to nationalize the ports so that they are taken out of the hands of local decision makers and private industry
- r. Invest in regional public transportation to relieve freeway congestion

### 2) Community Resources (financial and other needs)

With respect to health and environment, community members believe that their interests are consistently short-changed. The significant health concerns of the community need to be better represented at the local, state, and federal levels. Community relations can be improved by increasing funding for research, education, and notification services that maximize community awareness and protection.

The following are the Town Meeting participants' recommendations:

- a. The warehouse economy, despite claims to the contrary, is viewed by many Town Meeting participants as not advantageous to the regional economy. The State should offer alternative sources of funding to local governments so that they are less dependent on the warehouse economy
- b. Create a community advisory committee for the combined Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles; these issues must be dealt with by both Ports combined, not competitively or singularly
- c. Create buffer zones between neighborhoods and freeways and rail operations
- d. Develop and enforce rules prohibiting truck-idling next to sensitive receptor facilities like schools
- e. Create a better notification system, so that the public is immediately aware of hazardous chemical spills resulting from transportation accidents.
- f. Invest in education so that tomorrow's workers will be prepared for higher wage jobs, rather than saying that low-wage logistics jobs are valuable because the workforce is uneducated
- g. Use money from the private sector for infrastructure development and mitigation of the effects of goods movement

### 3) Community Input and Awareness

Numerous health studies provide considerable evidence that air pollution causes a number of diseases and adverse health outcomes. Communities would like to contribute to future studies by incorporating local concerns and issues into research agendas. This can be facilitated by university research centers if additional funding is provided. At the same time, the media should be used to enhance public awareness of the considerable health risks associated with Port and goods movement growth.

Town Meeting participants made the following recommendations:

- a. Create outlets and a means for the community to add their input into scientific research agendas
- b. Find a way to make scientific data available to a broader range of people, by translating science into formats that can be understood by the general public
- c. Better utilize media channels to spread information to the public about the health concerns of pollution and poor air quality, especially in the Ports areas and along routes of goods movement transport (such as communities near rail yards, along freeways, and near distribution centers).
- d. Create environmental education programs so that school children will understand the effects of the environment on health and society, and that will encourage them to have a stronger connection with nature