Workshop Summary

Yolo County Sustainability Plan Community Workshop #2

December 09, 2020, 6:00 pm

This meeting summary provides an overview of the December 9, 2020 community workshop hosted by Yolo County (and held virtually via Zoom), and it focuses primarily on capturing the comments and questions posed by members of the public. This document is not intended to serve as a transcript of the presentations or discussion. A recording of the meeting is available on the Yolo County Sustainability website: https://www.yolocounty-sustainability.

Introductions

Ben Gettleman, facilitator, introduced Yolo County Supervisor Gary Sandy and invited him to provide opening remarks.

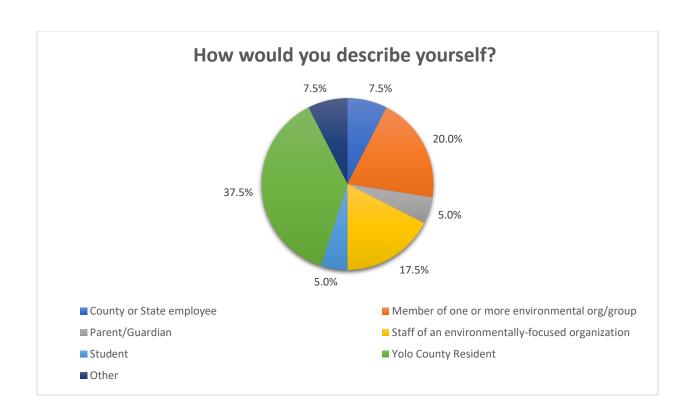
Supervisor Sandy shared that one of the five primary goals in Yolo County's 2020 – 2024 Strategic Plan is a "Sustainable Environment," defined as "Efficiently utilizing natural resources to provide recreational opportunities and ensure availability for generations to come, protect and improve water quality and quantity, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and maximize the use of renewable energy."

The panelists and supporting staff of the workshop introduced themselves:

- Alexander Tengolics, Manager of Governmental Relations, Yolo County
- Charlie Tschudin, Associate Planner, Yolo County
- Dan Krekelberg, Sustainability Planner, Ascent Environmental
- Angie Xiong, Environmental Sustainability Planner, Ascent Environmental
- Ben Gettleman, Workshop facilitator, Kearns & West
- Ivana Rosas, Webinar coordinator with Kearns & West
- Jennifer Vazconcelo, Webinar and note-taking support, Kearns & West

Gettleman shared the workshop goals as follows: learn more about the Sustainability Plan development process, the draft recommendations in the Sustainability Plan, and how stakeholder feedback has informed the draft recommendations. He shared webinar instructions and urged participants to reach out to the project team for additional information or provide feedback at sustainability@yolocounty.org. Ben also invited participants to submit questions in the Q&A box throughout the workshop.

Gettleman invited the webinar participants to answer a poll question regarding how they described themselves. A summary of their responses is included below.



Part 1: Update on the Sustainability Plan Development Process

Dan Krekelberg began the presentation by explaining how the County's Sustainability Plan both overlaps and is distinct from the Climate Action Plan.

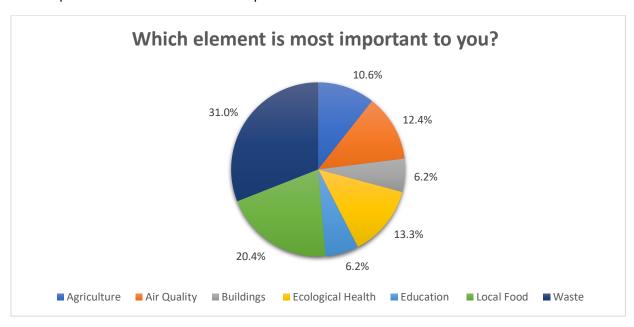
Sustainability Plan	Climate Action Plan
 Assesses and highlights existing sustainability programs and processes. Identifies gaps, inconsistencies, and opportunities for Yolo to become a more sustainable community. Serve as a tool for decision makers and community members in charting a path to the future. Supports the County's Strategic Plan Goals of achieving a Sustainable Environment. 	 Was adopted by Yolo County in March 2011. Includes GHG reduction strategies for Agriculture, Building Energy, Solid Waste and Wastewater, Transportation and Land Use Adaptation, and Adaptation. Set targets for GHG reductions consistent with state policies at the time. Specifically addresses GHG emissions and vulnerabilities to climate change.

Charlie Tschudin then provided an overview of the Sustainability and an update on the Plan development process. The first step was putting together the Existing Conditions Assessment, which was completed in July 2020. The second step was to engage with various stakeholders through interviews regarding sustainability programs and priorities. The County also solicited input from stakeholders via an online survey and the first workshop which was held in September 2020. The feedback received in the first workshop, and today's feedback will be incorporated as part of the Sustainability Plan's recommendations.

Dan Krekelberg outlined the following eight sustainability elements considered in the Sustainability Plan:

- Ecological Health
- Water
- Air Quality
- Buildings
- Waste
- Local Food
- Agriculture
- Education

Krekelberg invited the workshop participants to answer a poll question regarding which element was most important to them. The results are provided below.



Part 2: What has Yolo County accomplished so far?

Tschudin explained that the Existing Conditions report helped identify the baseline of the County's programs and policies. He also explained that, after reviewing existing conditions and taking stakeholder input into consideration, the County developed a draft list of recommendations for inclusion in the Sustainability Plan. The draft recommended strategies and actions can also be accessed at the following link: https://bit.ly/33YHe3W

Part 3: What are the draft recommendations for the Sustainability Plan?

Krekelberg shared a high-level overview of the draft recommendations in each of the eight sustainability elements.

Comments and questions from this part of the presentation are provided below.

Part 4: What are the next steps in Sustainability Plan Development?

Tschudin outlined next steps in the Sustainability Plan development process.

- Integrate public feedback to the plan December-January
- Plan release in late January 2021
- Revise plan based on public feedback
 - o 2021 & beyond implement the plan

Gettleman invited participants to email questions and suggestions to the project team at sustainability@yolocounty.org and mentioned that all the information from the workshop will be available on the project website: http://bit.ly/YCsustainability.

Discussion Questions & Comments

Participants submitted written questions and comments via the Zoom Q&A function throughout the presentation. Some participants questions were read aloud and addressed verbally during the workshop, and others were answered in writing and posted for all participants to view. Questions that were submitted during the workshop and will be addressed within the Sustainability Plan are available in Appendix A.

Water

Questions and Responses

- Q: When you increase water supply, there seems to be a corollary "more development" as you have increased capacity is there already some thinking about how to create water resilience without more coverage of ag M1 and ag/open space generally?
 - R: Generally when there is more water available, then there is more development, but that is not my understanding of what actually drives development. There is market demand for housing, real estate, or agricultural products that is a primary driver of those facilities or those things being produced.

Comments Provided

- Safe tap water is also essential. Reduce the use of bottled waters (less plastic in the waterways).
- Please include incentives for building surface water/reservoir storage on private land to improve groundwater recharge, reduce groundwater extraction, and reduce flood water levels during high rainfall years.

Air Quality

- Q: Regarding air quality and reducing miles travelling, are there channels toward incentives for electrifying/or using hydrogen cells for hauling trucks, tractors, or water pumping?
 - R: I think this is something that can be taken into consideration. Our recommendation is not as specific to those specific technologies. Still, part of the idea of reducing vehicle miles traveled and ensuring that those vehicle miles that are traveled are done so by vehicles that have fewer emissions associated with them, including trucks and tractors (off-road vehicles) electrification potentially alternative fuels as well.

- Q: Dust is also an air quality issue. Should it be noted in the Plan?
 - R: Yes, that is a good point, and it can be mentioned in the Plan. I know that some projects like new construction projects; for example, often have some measures to help mitigate the fugitive dust from projects.
- Q: Are there recommendations to phase out wood-burning stoves and fireplaces?
 - R: This is not currently included in the Sustainability Plan, but we will look into it; thanks for your input!
- Q: Would you consider adding Fire Reduction as a strategy for Air Quality?
 - R: Wildfire risk reduction is already being addressed in the County's safety planning efforts (General Plan Safety Element, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan).
- Q: Under Air Quality > Reducing VMT: Where is increasing accessibility of public transit as an action?
 - R: Thanks for your input we will investigate adding this as a recommendation.

- Wildfires caused air quality problems now, part of "normal" needs to be called out, and
 mitigations succeeded (public health programs/masks give out, etc.), Much more critical, by 10x,
 than any other Air Quality issue noted here.
- Thanks, I am curious why it was not also included in the Air quality element. Rescuing food reduces methane and food production and distribution of CO2 emissions.
- Regarding vulnerability to community air quality, the County needs to identify what communities are eligible for AB 617 grants to create Community Air Quality Protection Plans.

Buildings

- Q: Does the County have any incentive mechanisms to encourage solar or energy efficiency upgrades for multi-family and/or low-income housing?
 - R: The County has participated and been partners with utility providers on various local government programs that help with energy efficiency upgrades and renewable energy installations. Some non-profit organizations have done some work in Yolo County; we can follow up more specifics, but I am aware that those programs have successfully operated in the County. The recommendation here would be to continue that work and perhaps expand into other things like decarbonization, as mentioned, which is a new pathway for achieving sustainability and buildings.
- Q: Valley Clean Energy Team (Yolo County's CCA) is happy to discuss decarbonization and electrification of the transportation system, buildings, and energy sector in general with the Sustainability Plan Team.
 - R: Thank you, we review VCE's Electrify Yolo Program and are happy to connect to learn more about how these efforts align with the Sustainability Plan.
- Q: I am concerned about the recommendation about incentives to switch to electricity over gas, as does not this move the pollution point to the location where the electricity is generated?
 - R: California has a set of renewable electricity generation targets that are ramping up, which means that electricity generation is becoming cleaner over time. Thus, electrification leads to increased use of renewable energy sources and decreased pollution and reliance on non-renewable sources like natural gas.

 Also, as a resource: the USDA Community Facilities loans and grants help fund construction of solar systems, green building, and other construction \$ to help improve community facility building energy efficiencies, would also add that public parks help

Waste

Questions and Responses

- Q: Do you know where the county is with respect to state mandates for waste diversion (specifically, food waste and recovery)?
 - R: I do not have these numbers readily available, but we will follow up in an email after the workshop, thank you!

Comments Provided

- Assess needs further, especially with rural populations, for the scheduling of bus transportation throughout the county
 - o R: We will note this input under the Water Element.

Local Food

- Q: I was hoping to inquire more information regarding Yolo County's Sustainability Plan and/or County's plan regarding compliance with SB 1383, including funding edible food recovery services and/or other policies advancing edible waste reduction. Does the County feel that we are on track as a community to comply with the state sustainability deadline?
 - R: I cannot speak to specific deadlines that have been set under that regulatory program, but what I will say is that two of our upcoming elements, both waste and local food, do have a crossover with SB 1383 compliance. I will point out those specific strategies that align with SB 1383, so it is a consideration of the County's sustainability work in the future.
- Q: Increased food recovery is the only place food is mentioned in the preliminary recommendations. My point relates to food scarcity throughout the county. Can the document implement a value of finding food sources and support for agencies that provide food support? I think it should be in the document that specifies that we support health by supporting the Yolo Food Bank.
 - o R: I think that is a good recommendation, and it will be considered going forward.
- Q: What is the point of local food if public health nutrition is ignored?
 - R: Some of the specific recommendations in the Local Food and Education elements deal with nutrition education and awareness.
- Q: Is Yolo Food Bank specifically identified in existing conditions?
 - R: It is not, but we are aware of the important role the food bank plays in ensuring food security in the County and can include a recommendation to support the food bank in the sustainability plan.
- Q: Do you know where the county is with respect to state mandates for edible food waste recovery as well?

- R: I do not have these numbers readily available, but we will follow up in an email after the workshop, thank you!
- Q: The Food Bank may be important, but please, why aren't the federal food assistance/ nutrition programs mentioned as existing programs/resources?
 - o R: Thank you for mentioning the federal resources -- we will take those into account.
- Q: I cannot add any more comments in the chat, so I need to speak here on behalf of many existing public health nutrition programs. The Food Bank is not the ultimate solution to food insecurity. There are critical federal food assistance programs that will feed people, provide them more choice, and stimulate the economy.

- I want to double down that "local food systems" only work in healthy food economies. I believe those days are over for the foreseeable future. Many will have tough financial decisions, and "farm to fork" will now be out of their financial comfort zone.
- I clicked local food but did not know if it would mean to you what it means to me. One thing we have learned through the pandemic is that we have feed scarcity issues. We had food scarcity issues before the pandemic, but there are many people without food in Yolo County during the pandemic. The only place I saw that food was addressed in the document was in the WASTE area. I think increasing food recovery is essential; it seems we should have a sustainable food resource value through agencies like Yolo Food Bank.
- Rescuing food reduces significant GHG emissions (methane) per Cal Recycle and SB 1383.
- Increase water as a beverage, decrease sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Again, a roadmap without sufficient consideration of public health nutrition programs, opportunities, and food security is a road to a future of more significant health disparities. Social inequity is not compatible with a sustainable future.
- As a Yolo County resident and parent of children attending public school in Davis, I want to
 advocate for the county to fund food recovery operations to reduce food waste, feed the foodinsecure folks in our community, and divert edible "waste" from the landfill. The Yolo Food Bank
 is on track to meet this need but would require county funding to help meet the goals of SB
 1383.
- Food recovery should consider ways to enable low-income people to get cheaper/discounted/ free produce directly at the point of purchase. This could be part of an EBT enhancement for Cal Fresh, WIC participants. Again, ask the public health experts!
- We need to be mindful of not creating two separate, unequal food systems (one with plenty of choices for the rich and another with minimal, uncertain food for the poor).
- The scale of the food recovery is well beyond what any community center or kitchen can handle. In Yolo County, only Yolo Food Bank has the appropriate scale for this food recovery and distribution work to serve tens of thousands of residents in need.
- Food security is essential to sustain a strong agricultural workforce.
- Yolo Food Bank sits at the intersection of elements 5, Waste, and 6, Local Food. Its mission is food security and equity and keeping edible food out of the landfill. No other organization comes close in terms of excess food distribution. It is sustained almost entirely through philanthropy.
- [The Food Bank] should be valued and supported by the County.

 Cal Fresh and other assistance programs are not uniformly available to all. Food Bank is. No qualifications, registrations, citizenship requirements, etc.

Agriculture

Questions and Responses

- Q: How would the climate advisory work be able to balance groundwater use and agricultural land use? For example, ag use moving from rotating crops to perennial crops using far more water. Could the County reward farmers who convert their land to solar farms, thus reducing groundwater use and producing renewable energy?
 - R: I think with respect to the Climate Advisory Group, one of the key factors we are looking at is ensuring that it is inclusive not only of all the communities within Yolo County but also the various interested groups. There could certainly be someone who would represent the fields of groundwater and agriculture.
 - R: With the recommendations, we are bringing awareness to groundwater and agricultural land use, making some recommendations that focus on a Sustainability Plan in the future that should work to ensure adequate water supplies and that the uses of those are sustainable.
- Q: While I am not representing USDA, I am a veteran USDA employee, and notice many of these topics intersect with agriculture. The product of ag is food. And while local food is important, it is only realistic in a healthy food economy. Looking forward, many farmers will struggle to stay in business. Some will not be able to afford the food they are producing. What is the county's plan to make safe and healthy food available to those in need as we move into a time when a lack of food will be the greatest (Providing food on family tables, food kitchens, food banks, etc.)? Thank you.
 - R: Thank you for raising these important issues. We have heard from several
 participants that food security is critical and will look to include policies in the Local
 Food and/or Agriculture elements.

Comments Provided

• Jonathan Groveman's points are very important. It is important to research his question so that we are not romanticizing farming in our document. There is an inherent need for wish-sustainability, but we need science.

Sustainability Plan Process/Scope and Related Efforts

- Q: How would the Climate Advisory Group work with cities' climate committees/commissions?
 - R: The Climate Advisory Group's composition has not been determined yet. In line with how the County's general plan and planning documents support the four cities, the Climate Advisory Group would do the same and look to be as collaborative as possible.
- Q: Is the CAP more about meeting State/California Adaptation requirements?
 - R: The CAP is intended to meet state GHG reduction mandates found in Assembly Bill 32, Senate Bill 32, and Executive Order B-55-18. These regulations call for local governments to adopt goals to reduce GHG emissions by 15% below 1990's levels by

2020, 40% below 1990 levels in 2030, and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. EO B-55-18 calls for carbon neutrality by 2045.

- Q: When will the progress and outcomes of current plans, programs, policies, and gap analysis be available to the public?
 - R: This is included in the existing conditions report that is available on the County website: https://www.yolocounty.org/home/showpublisheddocument?id=67064
- Q: Is the Climate Working Advisory Group referenced the one that will be created as directed by the Climate Mobilization and Just Transition Resolution adopted by the BoS on 09.29.20?
 - o R: Yes!
- Q: I have read the Current Conditions Assessment. I did not see a gap analysis included in the
 narrative or the chart. I asked this question at the last workshop, and it was answered that a
 second part of the Current Conditions Assessments was in the works and would be made
 available. Is that no longer the case?
 - R: The project includes an Existing Conditions Assessment report and the Sustainability Plan. The Existing Conditions Assessment report is the complete report -- there is no part two. A formal gap analysis was not conducted. Instead, we presented what is currently in place and relied on public outreach and research to understand where gaps are. The public outreach and gaps informed the development of this preliminary set of recommended sustainability strategies.
- Q: I do not get where these plans fit with other plans. Can you share a document to help me here? I see here we want to implement electrification of buildings here. Why not electrification of auto and/or shift to transit, including here? Where does this idea fit?
 - R: Here is the existing County CAP, which is focused on GHG reduction measures: https://www.yolocounty.org/community-services/planning-public-works/planning-division/climate-action-plan
 - R: The Sustainability Plan is building upon existing strategies in the CAP, which is why we
 have not included recommendations for EV adoption or transit (those are already in the
 CAP)."
- Q: Sorely missing from the draft is a public health perspective. What are Ascent's plans for seeking more input from these stakeholders? Without this piece, the plan will be assessing existing programs (like WIC, Cal Fresh, etc.), opportunities, and tools for measuring important outcomes (like food security). A roadmap without a public health nutrition perspective could lead us to widen social inequities. Greater health disparities and food insecurity cannot lead us to a sustainable future. Why is human health not an element?
 - R: We are following the County's key elements for analyzing sustainability. The aspect of health was not one of the key elements identified; there is potentially some crossover with ecological health as part of a strategy to benefit the community. If there are specific recommendations for public health that should be considered, we are open to hearing those as part of this meeting's feedback.
- Q: I am also seeking the progress report on goals and actions specified in various plans, such as
 the CAP adopted in 2011. It was my understanding these updates would be provided in the
 Current Conditions Assessment.
 - R: Apologies, this progress report was not part of the Sustainability Plan project. Future
 CAP updates should include monitoring and assessment of progress on CAP strategies.

- Q: How are mobile sources of GHG being addressed in the plan? In Davis, it is 71% of GHG, and no doubt is similar in rural areas where people drive even more.
 - R: The primary intent of the Sustainability Plan is not GHG reduction. GHG reduction falls under the County's Climate Action Plan, which includes several strategies and measures to reduce transportation sector emissions, including from mobile sources.
- Q: Would the Plan go so far as exploring case studies or specific opportunities in our county, such as the opportunity in our Yolo Food Bank to meet both local food security and waste diversion mandates, reducing GHGs?
 - R: While the Plan does not explore case studies, we have heard from several people that
 the Yolo Food Bank is a key partner in ensuring local food security. Thanks for
 mentioning them we will research strategies to support and partner with the food
 bank in the Local Food Element.
- Q: Some of your recommendations address GHG sequestration, but I am told in chat GHG is not the point of this plan, i.e., we are not focusing on mobile sources, 2/3 source of GHG here (transit is no referenced here?) Transportation is key to sustaining a rural economy (farm to market connections, commuting, trucking, etc.).
 - R: Yes, some of the sustainability strategies are related to carbon sequestration, which is different from reducing GHG emissions from anthropogenic sources.
- Q: What actions do you recommend the county take to achieve lower VMT?
 - R: I would refer you to the CAP Transportation and Land Use Chapter, which includes a measure to reduce VMT: https://www.yolocounty.org/home/showpublisheddocument?id=17990
- Q: Land Use is not mentioned in this plan. Denser development is more efficient in so many ways.
 - R: Thanks for the comment many of the County's land-use policies, which encourage denser development and transit-oriented development, can be found in the County's General Plan.

- It is encouraging to see the comprehensive approach becoming a part of County policy early in the presentation, but I want to point out that this is encouraging.
- Thank you to the County for looking forward to sustainability for now and the next generation. The Yolo County Resource Conservation District (RCD) is looking forward to assisting the County in implementing the plan. The RCD has fine-tuned specific recommendations for local resource concerns that overlap with many of the Sustainability Plan's Element Actions outlined in the long-range plan:
 - Noxious and Invasive Weeds
 - Biodiversity
 - Water Quality and Quantity
 - Riparian and Aquatic Habitats
 - o Soil
 - Wildfire
 - Carbon
 - o RCD's strategic plan can be found on our website:

- https://yolorcd.org/wpcontent/uploads/YCRCD Strategic Plan 2019.1120 ADOPTED.pdf"
- I am concerned about ensuring we have integration and connections in the interrelationships between water, ag, food, and food recovery. I am worried about the possibility of being oversiloed.
- A missing element is my concern, human health.
- I have read the document and feel that it misses existing programs, opportunities, and decision-making tools (food security). Stakeholder engagement has entirely missed the public health nutrition perspective; a roadmap without this lens is doomed to a dead-end of widening health inequities.
- I am very struck that the only infrastructure-related element in the recommendation is buildings. Mobile sources are 2/3 of the source of GHG in the County. Primarily people are driving.
- I suggest the climate vulnerability assessment examine food insecurity in the County.
- Recommendation to not address mobile sources for GHG. And if we want people to shift to noncarbon transportation mode (walk/bike) or mass transit. Shade along streets is needed as temperature rise.
 - Thank you for your comments, we will include this input in the meeting summary. As a reminder, the primary plan that addresses GHG emissions is the County's CAP. The Sustainability Plan is intended to support the CAP and go beyond GHG reduction to address other sustainability concerns.
- In developing an outreach plan, also confer with public health nutrition program managers and their clientele.
- We need more shade in our downtown area and parking lots if we want people to go out to shop locally as temperature increase to match those of Tucson, as predicted-- i.e., half the days during the summer over 100 degrees.
- The City of Winters often wants to do more, but being so understaffed, we cannot get there without county help- ergo adaptable language.
 - R: Agreed, those are co-benefits of food waste reduction. We are trying to streamline the Sustainability Plan, so strategies are only included under one Element. Many of the strategy recommendations have co-benefits for other sustainability elements as well.
- I would like to see county parks highlighted.
- Sustainable communities. Benefits: outdoor recreation for healthy communities, wildlife
 corridors, connectivity between federal, state, county public lands, and tree/plant coverage for
 increased shade, carbon capture, and wildlife habitat.
- Public and mental health
- All the sustainability recommendations need to be considered through the lenses of equity and public health. The COVID pandemic has shown the consequences of not prioritizing health and equity in all policies. We need to evolve our understanding of sustainability to address these pressing realities.
- YC's GP states that park space should be available to the public at a rate of 5 acres per 1000 people. The Sustainability plan should include this goal so that it is tracked to ensure that new housing development and growth include park development to satisfy this GP goal.

- Also, perhaps more emphasis needs to be put on soil/plant management for carbon sequestration.
- I think sending a note to these Davis commission on your plan and your input desire is important. Tree Commission, Bike-Transport Commission, Unitrans Advisory, Open Space Habitat, and beyond just an email, I think a presentation to Davis Natural Resources Commission in person on zoom to get feedback is important. They meet once/month, so do not miss the window.
- Post an article on Davis Vanguard on efforts that should be part of outreach.
- I want to add that increasing awareness about YC Parks helps improve public health/sustain communities. A simple hiking outing announcement via social media or guided walks in the Rumsey canyon can promote health in many ways. Links to trail maps to yolohiker.org, wildflower tours, horseback trail rides, all these provisions and promote health outlets.
- This has been great! Thank you for doing this. a good balance. But it would be important for the participant to know who else was on the line so stakeholders can find each other, discuss/coalition, etc.
- There should be a list of participants from the Public Workshops, and all drafts and revised documents should be shared with those that provided comments in the registration process (csuzannereed48@gmail.com).
- Thank you all for your efforts!

Appendix A: Questions from Workshop for Plan Consideration

- Q: Will the Sustainability Plan prioritize actions according to needs and gaps, provide a timeline for implementation, and fully articulate the who, what, and how for implementing the actions?
 What is the timeframe for making the draft SP available to the public? Will there be a public workshop to help to receive public comment on the plan?
- Q: Dust is also an air quality issue. Should it be noted?
- Q: Did Kearns and West interview and outreach to farmworkers and native families? If they did, what was the outcome and concerns from these frontline communities. If they did not, why not?
- Q: What are the channels of communication being considered for public outreach and education? Is the development of a navigable County website portal with functional access and translation accommodations being considered to make links to information and resources, including technical and financial support to the public and private sectors?
- Q: What will it take for Woodland to get an electric bike program (such as the JUMP Bikes) that
 exist in Davis? Many low-income residents do not have space in their small homes to store bikes
 safely; such a program could encourage residents to consider alternative transportation and
 empower them to not rely on fossil fuel vehicles?
- Q: Can the county promote gray water or rainwater collection by providing cities with adoptable language to update their codes?
- Q: VMT reduction is the outcome of a strategy. What actions do you recommend Yolo County Supervisors take to reduce VMT?
- Q: How would climate advisory work address the balance of groundwater use and agriculture? For example, when ag land is dependent on groundwater and converts rotating crops to perennial crops, it uses much more groundwater. Can the county reward farmers who convert their land to solar farms, thus preserving water and not converting it to housing?
- Q: Sorry for the question brevity regarding the relationship between development and water supply - intentional - but the demand for housing is relatively content. What changes is the attitude/ability to establish an adequate water supply for developments that cannot otherwise get approved without a water supply? Not that you need to review the question this evening - I hope this clears up the question.