LBNL COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP

Preliminary Community Issues and Concerns

As part of the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab (LBNL) CAG formation process, Daniel Iacofano of MIG conducted a series of community interviews to bring to light topics of particular interest and concern. This memo is a compilation of issues and opinions expressed by the community members interviewed (see attached list) and does not necessarily represent the views and opinions of LBNL staff or management.

Issues are organized according to the following main topics:

- Future Lab Growth and Development
- Hazardous Materials
- Water Quality and Watershed Health
- Transportation
- Sustainability
- Community Relationship

Future Lab Growth and Development

Community interviewees identified many issues related to LBNL's overall future growth and development. Key development-related issues are organized under two broad categories: "where to grow" and "how to grow."

"Where to Grow"

- There is a process of "industrial creep", whereby the Lab proposes facility expansion and development projects every two to three years.
- The potential for hazards, including fire, earthquakes, and landslides, is significant at the current site.
- There is a history of unconsolidated fill and collapsed bedrock. Soil stability is questionable.
- Development costs associated with building on the hillside in seismically and geologically unstable areas are high.
- Abandon building on the hill. Move somewhere where there are no streams to impact, no fire potential, and no earthquake fault.
- Look at alternative sites, such as Richmond, Emeryville, Alameda and Downtown Berkeley.
- The Lab has value for the City of Berkeley.
- A facility Downtown might be OK if facilities were of acceptable height, the facilities were "green," and the lab adequately addressed public health and safety concerns. A community benefits agreement would be needed to address potential impacts on services and facilities.
- Richmond needs jobs. Locating future Lab facilities in Richmond has the potential to create jobs and business spin-offs.
- Whether or not there is the need to find an alternate site depends on the actual use of the building.

"How to Grow"

- It is possible to do things differently. Build only on infill sites and explore adaptive reuse possibilities.
- Contribute to improving the quality of life in Berkeley. Look at the relationship between the University of Michigan and Ann Arbor as an example.
- The Lab does not adequately compensate the City for its impacts. Mitigate growth and development by investing in City infrastructure.
- Ensure that mitigations identified in all EIRs are enforced.
- Provide workforce development. Create a training program to help workers advance their careers. Build ties to high schools and community colleges.
- A more collaborative approach to planning is needed.

Hazardous Materials

Interviewees expressed concern with a number of issues related to hazardous materials. The following statements summarize the key points:

- Memories of past incidents, including those of the radiation leak that occurred in the 1980's, demonstrate the potential risks posed by Lab activities.
- Apply the precautionary principle and take the highest level of protection when addressing potential impacts to human health and the environment.
- The hazardous waste handling facility must be addressed.
- Buffer zones around hazardous facilities are inadequate.
- The nanotechnology facility poses a danger to the community.
- Nanoparticles are in proximity to wildlife, residential areas, and public learning institutions including the Lawrence Hall of Science.
- Nuclear facilities should be removed.
- Provide more information about how hazardous materials are transported and disposed. Clearly label trucks carrying hazardous materials.
- Remediate contaminated sites and clean up groundwater contamination.
- Move beyond remediation requirements and reach a higher standard.
- Apply bioremediation techniques, including the use of vegetation to extract toxics and radiation.
- There is a low level of trust related to the tritium situation. Assurances that tritium is not an environmental health threat are not sufficient.
- There are adversarial relations between the City of Berkeley and LBNL around developing City policy related to nanotechnology.
- The Lab should answer the question of how much radiation exists and where it is located.
- LBNL employee health should be monitored.
- There must be more transparency around the remediation program for the Lab, as well as independent oversight of this operation.

Water Quality and Watershed Health

Water quality and overall watershed health are top level concerns. The following statements provide an overview of key points:

- The alteration of hillside hydrology is cause for concern. LBNL development and operations have damaged Strawberry Creek headwaters and Canyon springs, filled intermittent creeks, and reduced perviousness of the watershed.
- There have been recurring stormwater quality compliance violations.
- Restore, preserve, and conserve the Upper Strawberry Creek Watershed.
- Use the natural history of creeks and maps of historic springs as conservation and development resources.
- The Lab impacts both flora and fauna.
- Clean up tritium groundwater contamination and mitigate health and environmental impacts.
- Eucalyptus groves have been negatively impacted by tritium. Trees and plants transpire tritium.
- Remove solvents.
- Look for partnership opportunities to improve watershed health.
- LBNL is far ahead of UC Berkeley with respect to lead-related water quality issues.
- Apply low impact development (LID) practices and become a model for stormwater management.

Traffic and Transportation

Interviewees identified traffic and roadway impacts associated with Lab activity as described below:

- Compensate the City for the traffic-related impacts of LBNL development.
- LBNL shuttles are at or over capacity.
- Increase transportation service. Vehicle costs led to a reduction in service. However, this resulted in too little capacity.
- Explore ways for Lab shuttles to serve the community while not raising security concerns for LBNL, including allowing out-bound trips to serve community members.
- Provide amenities to encourage alternate modes of transportation, such as bike racks on shuttles.
- Provide incentives for employees to use transit. Examples include offering pre-tax commuter checks or partnering with BART to link the Bear Pass to BART.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions of transportation-related operations by using hybrid vehicles and implementing a car-share program.

Sustainability

Community members interviewed during the CAG formation process recognize great opportunity for LBNL to serve as a model for sustainability in many respects:

- Become a "green lab."
- Develop an energy efficiency program and apply new energy concepts.
- Implement stormwater management best practices and become a model for low impact development.
- Design and build facilities using green standards and materials.
- Remediate contaminated land and water resources.
- Implement water conservation efforts.
- Provide the public with information about Lab sustainability programs and efforts.

Community Relationship

Many interviewees called for greater transparency in Lab planning, development and operations, and expressed a desire for greater community influence in physical planning. Specific comments include the following:

- LBNL has failed to provide adequate answers to many key questions.
- Work to resolve the problem, rather than simply manage the problem.
- Be a good neighbor.
- Be clear and direct in communications with the community.
- Provide solid, quality information.
- The Lab should strive for a high level of transparency in all development activities.
- Recognize the value of community participation and create meaningful forums for the community to provide input to lab planning and development issues.
- The CAG process must be one with integrity, rather than an empty public relations exercise.
- Make a commitment to CAG members to make real changes, and convince members that this process is worth their investment in time.
- "Do the right things."

ATTACHMENT

List of Interviewees

- Nabil Al-Hadithy
- Gene Bernardi
- Josh Bradt
- Whitney Dotson
- Farid Javandel
- Greg Leventis
- Dan Marks
- Sylvia McLaughlin
- Dean Metzger
- Phil Price
- Carole Schemmerling
- Susan Schwartz
- Pamela Sihvola
- Anne Wagley
- Rob Wrenn