

Pilot program helps low-income families get financing for advanced-technology, clean cars

Program benefits six Bay Area counties: Contra Costa, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Alameda, Santa Cruz and Solano

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RICHMOND – Benefits of a new pilot program – from financial savings to reduced air pollution in neighborhoods – were celebrated today at a press event hosted by the Community Housing Development Corporation (CHDC) of Richmond, in coordination with the California Air Resources Board (CARB). Recipients shared their experiences with the program, which helps lower-income Bay Area families get grants and loans for clean-technology vehicles.

Eight families have benefitted from the program since June, getting the financing they need to get into cleaner cars. And many more just like them are expected to benefit from the pilot Light-Duty Financing Assistance in Disadvantaged Communities Pilot Project. The project provides loans, and grants of up to \$5,000 -- for financing hybrid-electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid-electric vehicles, battery-electric vehicles and fuel-cell-electric vehicles -- to individuals who live in eligible zip codes.

“Richmond-based CHDC has a proven track record of increasing housing and economic opportunities for lower-income residents so the organization is well suited to administer this important project,” Contra Costa County Supervisor and CARB Board member John Gioia said. “The pilot project has empowered CHDC to expand its existing financing-for-vehicles program, enabling more people to get into cars that help them save money at the pump and reduce air pollution in their neighborhoods.”

Today’s press event brought together program participants, County Supervisor Gioia, as well as Congressman Mark DeSaulnier, State Assemblymember Tony Thurmond, Oakland City Council Member-At-Large Rebecca Kaplan, Richmond Mayor Tom Butt and CHDC Executive Director Don Gilmore.

“We’ve been working diligently to develop a sustainable infrastructure that will continue to provide opportunities for residents in these disadvantaged communities to finance fuel efficient hybrid and battery-electric vehicles,” CHDC Executive Director Gilmore said. “The program,

made possible by a partnership with the California Air Resources Board, is already having direct benefits -- both financial and social --to our program participants. And that is something worth celebrating.”

The CHDC signed a grant with CARB one year ago for more than \$900,000 to administer the project, which is offered to eligible residents in six Bay Area counties, including Contra Costa, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Alameda, Santa Cruz and Solano. It is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while providing clean-air benefits to California neighborhoods, with an emphasis on disadvantaged communities. California Climate Investments programs are funded by the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund using proceeds from the state’s cap-and-trade auctions.

This program is just one part of a larger low-carbon transportation funding plan that uses proceeds from the state’s cap-and-trade program to make the cleanest cars available to low-income consumers and disadvantaged communities. Investments range from supporting increased numbers of zero-emission heavy-duty trucks and buses to rebates for low- and zero-emission passenger vehicles.

For more information, visit <https://drivingclean.chdcnr.com/>

