San Diego City Council Approves Alternative 1 for Community Plan Update

Community-developed plan to be first update in Barrio Logan in over thirty years

SAN DIEGO, September 17, 2013 – Environmental Health Coalition (EHC), an organization that fights toxic pollution, celebrates today's enormous victory for environmental justice in Barrio Logan with the approval of a new community plan update. Today's San Diego City Council approval of the community-developed plan—known as Alternative 1—breaks a 30-year history of toxic land-use planning that allowed houses, parks and schools to intermingle with polluting industrial properties. The newly approved plan will finally separate industrial establishments and residential neighborhoods in the interest of breathable air, affordable community housing and support for the maritime workforce.

"Barrio Logan deserves this community-approved update that protects its residents' health without sacrificing jobs and protects its residents' jobs without sacrificing health and quality of life," says Georgette Gómez, associate director of EHC and a Barrio Logan native. "Alternative 1 ends decades of environmental injustice by placing uses on the right path toward a better quality of life."

Dozens of community members packed today's meeting at the City Council Chambers, where they shared stories about their Barrio Logan community, the jewel that this community has been for many but at the same time the adverse effect that toxic pollution has on their lives and their efforts in the city's five-year, community-involved process to generate Alternative 1.

"I'm relieved to know that the San Diego City Council listened to our community and selected a plan that will protect our families and our local workforce," says Barrio Logan Resident Maria Martinez, whose children have asthma. "As an 18-year resident of this community, I'm proud to say that I fought for this victory that will right environmental injustice and finally allow my neighbors and family live better."

Barrio Logan's newly approved community plan designates a heavy industrial zone away from homes and schools. With this clear separation of industrial and residential zones, along with a buffer zone that incorporates office buildings and parking structures, Barrio Logan can finally regain a safe place to live, work and play.

Prior to Alternative 1, Barrio Logan's community plan had little land-use zoning, which allowed for polluting industries to move next door to homes and schools. Once a thriving and treasured part of San Diego, over the years Barrio Logan
became a neighborhood incompatible land uses, poverty and three times the asthma hospitalization rate of the rest of San Diego.

With the unanimous support of the San Diego City Planning Commission in July, a recommendation from city staff and today's full council approval, EHC and Barrio Logan community leaders are thrilled to see over three decades of hard work pay off.

For more information on Environmental Health Coalition and its efforts in Barrio Logan, please visit www.environmentalhealth.org.

###