

- [Encore](#)
- [Politics](#)
 - [Courts, Justice](#)
 - [Voter Guide 2012](#)
- [Satire](#)

Rebuilding Barrio Logan Begins on Tuesday – And You Can Help

by [Source](#) on September 13, 2013 · [0 comments](#)

in [Activism](#), [Environment](#), [Health](#)



A Call to Support Alternative 1

By Environmental Health Coalition

When you think of a healthy community, what comes to mind? Maybe you picture a park where children play, sustainable local businesses or tree-lined paths winding through clean neighborhoods. This is realistic for most of San Diego, unless you're in Barrio Logan. Intermingling land use patterns designate parks, paths, businesses, schools and homes to share streets with heavily polluting industries. This incompatible mix not only makes residential neighborhoods feel more like industrial zones, but contributes to air quality so poor that children who breathe it go to the emergency room three times more than the rest of San Diego County.

These circumstances beg the question: What happened to this neighborhood, which was once one of the most thriving areas in San Diego? Full of [legends, heroes](#) and [rich culture](#), Barrio Logan seems to have caught the short end of the stick since the 1950s. It helps to remember Barrio Logan (once known as Logan Heights) was once a flourishing local community, fostering a culture of musicians, artists, local businesses and a strong workforce, contributing to San Diego's overwhelming success as a national destination.

Now it seems San Diego has forgotten its own history. While other neighborhoods have improved community plans to keep residents healthy and happy, Barrio Logan's community plan hasn't seen an update in over thirty years.

Recent studies have ranked the area in the top five percent for environmental justice risks in the state of California, and the highest in San Diego County- between shipyards, cargo terminals, the I-5 freeway, railroads and toxic chemical-spewing factories- well, it's really no surprise.

Residents of Barrio Logan report [keeping their windows shut to avoid the toxic air](#) getting into their homes. Children play inside so they can breathe easier while also avoiding the semi-trucks lugging cargo through their neighborhood. Barrio Logan demands a strong community plan that will effectively separate its industrial businesses away from homes, parks and schools and restore environmental justice to one neighborhood that needs it most.



One of many Barrio Logan children with asthma.
Photo by EHC.

On Tuesday September 17th at 2 p.m., the long-awaited opportunity arises as the San Diego City Council votes on an update to Barrio Logan’s Community Plan. Environmental Health Coalition (EHC), an organization dedicated to fighting toxic pollution and achieving environmental and social justice, has worked with community members for over ten years to develop a Community Plan update. If passed, it will lay the groundwork for Barrio Logan to get back on the path towards becoming a toxic-free community with basic environmental rights; this update is known as [Alternative 1](#).

Alternative 1 proposes to manage Barrio Logan’s most pressing problems by separating incompatible land-use patterns (industries mixed with houses), creating more affordable housing and designating parking structures for the large industrial workforce. This option is community developed, supported and compliant with all laws and regulations.

While the concentrated existence of toxic industries in Barrio Logan impacts the community health, Alternative 1 does not propose to remove them from the community but instead, to designate a heavy industrial zone away from homes and schools. Alternative 1 also proposes to build parking structures to serve workers in these areas while creating a buffer zone between massive industrial zones and residential areas.

“Enough is enough,” says Georgette Gomez, associate director of EHC and Barrio Logan native. “It’s long overdue that Barrio Logan see the same environmental justice as other San Diego neighborhoods, and Alternative 1 is their chance. Barrio Logan doesn’t have to be a toxic hot-spot, and residents don’t have to suffer. We have a chance to do something really amazing here.”

It seems backwards that Barrio Logan residents have to fight so hard for the basic environmental rights most neighborhoods never even have to think about, much less advocate for. The neighborhood isn’t asking for a new stadium or to eliminate the industries that create good jobs – just a livable, breathable neighborhood that doesn’t make residents perpetually ill. Alternative 1 gives Barrio Logan an opportunity to become a vibrant and thriving

community once again.

While many of us don't live within the geographical borders of Barrio Logan, we are all San Diegans and we can all help. Who wants to be part of a city that dumps toxic pollution on its vulnerable communities? Everyone in San Diego has a responsibility to stand up for their neighbors, friends, families and the future of our city as a whole by supporting a healthy alternative for Barrio Logan – Alternative 1.

Please join us in supporting Alternative 1 at City Council – 202 C Street, San Diego, CA. 92101 – at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, September 17.

Since 1980, Environmental Health Coalition has fought [toxic pollution](#), [discriminatory land use](#), and [unsustainable energy policies](#). Through [leader development](#), organizing and advocacy, EHC empowers residents to achieve public policies that improve the [health of children](#), [families](#), [neighborhoods](#) and the [natural environment](#) in the San Diego/Tijuana region. To learn more about Environmental Coalition and its fight against toxic pollution, please visit www.environmentalhealth.org.

Tagged as: [Barrio Logan](#)

0 Like 3

Tweet 2 1

{ 0 comments... [add one now](#) }

Leave a Comment

Name *

E-mail *

Website

Submit

Be notified of followup comments via e-mail. You can also [subscribe](#) without commenting.

Older Article: [Language Interpreters Are California's Lifeline](#)