

Location: Chula Vista

Issue: Chula Vista's Green Development

Methodology: PlaceMatters – Civic Engagement (Visualization/Impact Analysis/Scenario Analysis)

Link to more: <http://www.placematters.org/node/62>

PlaceMatters is a design and planning organization that believes in effective and informed citizen engagement. They make certain that communities and organizations achieve processes that involve citizen engagement, such as public involvement and support, which result in sustainable communities. In order to reach their goals, PlaceMatters ensures an understanding of tradeoffs during decision-making, shares outcomes of on-the ground projects with others in the deliberative democracy field through their conferences and information on their website, and uses innovation decision-support tools, as well as public engagement techniques.

Through the coordination with partners like Global Energy Center for Community Sustainability (GEC) at the Gas Technology Institute and U.S. Department of Energy, PlaceMatters designed a comprehensive and innovative community- scale model for the 15,000-acre Otay Ranch development in Chula Vista, California, which is a city south of San Diego. The reason for the development in Chula Vista was to ensure housing for a city with a growing population. The transit-oriented development includes three to six villages and provides housing for 70,000 additional residents in 23,732 new dwelling units within the next 15 years. The development also plans to have a mixed-use village uniting a unique campus that will be shared by five area colleges and universities, including two from Mexico.

PlaceMatters' Planning Collaborative used CommunityViz to analyze impacts, create land use alternatives while at the same time maximizing efficiencies through the integration of power generation technologies. PlaceMatters combined American Forests' CityGreen software with CommunityViz in order to provide citizens and municipal officials with a well-educated analysis of both built and green infrastructure.

The goals that PlaceMatters set for the Chula Vista development project included minimizing energy consumption in buildings, transportation and water systems; maximizing the use of cost-effective renewable energy resources, maximizing the reliability and security of energy services to the community, as well as critical facilities and functions, and reducing energy-related emissions from both on and off site sources.