



County Of Dane
Office Of The County Executive

Joe Parisi
County Executive

Dane County Executive Parisi Announces Bold Action on Climate Change

Co. Exec Creates New Office, Community Council of Local Public, Business Leaders to Coordinate Efforts; More than \$2Million Solar Development for '17 Budget

Today, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi announced the first initiatives in his 2017 budget proposal, Dane County's boldest action yet on addressing Climate Change. The County Executive's budget triples Dane County's production of solar power, creates the new Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change, a new Council on Climate Change to coordinate the community's work to reduce carbon emissions, and accelerates the county's conversion of snow plows and other fossil fuel burning vehicles to cleaner burning renewable compressed natural gas.

"Dane County has a consistent track record of pursuing cleaner, greener sources of energy, reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, and reinventing county operations to make them run better not only for the public, but also the environment," said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. **"This is our boldest action yet to address climate change and lead the way for our community and the State of Wisconsin."**

Office of Energy And Climate Change

Dane County Executive Parisi announced the creation of the Office of Energy and Climate Change, a new division within the County Executive's Office. This office will lead public and private efforts across the community to implement climate change strategies county government has embraced in recent years. Including the Office of Energy and Climate Change within county government's highest elected office demonstrates the critical nature and priority this issue deserves in the decades to come.

This brand new office and the corresponding new Dane County Council on Climate Change are the next steps in the work Dane County initiated years ago which resulted in creation of the "Dane County Climate Action Plan." The Council will include representatives of local governments, business, utilities, and environmental advocates, working together to extend the work of county government. A recent agreement with the La Follette School of Public Affairs at the University of Wisconsin will help us better assess the impact of the progress Dane County has made to date at

reducing carbon emissions, increasing green energy production, and consumption, and making energy efficiency improvements to facilities.

"Thanks to Executive Parisi's leadership, Dane County is poised to be Wisconsin's leader in addressing climate change, the greatest environmental threat of this century," said Mark Redsten, President & CEO of Clean Wisconsin. **"Executive Parisi clearly understands the environmental and economic impacts of climate change to this community, and he is providing important solutions. We look forward to working with Executive Parisi to reduce carbon emissions in Dane County, and to replicate the successes in other counties and communities across the state."**

Convert County Fleet to CNG

Under Dane County Executive Parisi, Dane County has embarked upon an aggressive conversion of our county fleet of cars and trucks, away from fossil fuels, and toward cleaner burning vehicles that run on renewable compressed natural gas (CNG) that county government produces. Dane County was among the first places in the country to plow snow with CNG powered highway patrol trucks. With funding included in Parisi's 2017 budget, Dane County will have 75 vehicles running on CNG by the end of next year, including nearly one-third of the county's highway fleet. This carbon friendly CNG is produced naturally at our county landfill.

Tripling Down on Solar

With Parisi's 2017 budget, Dane County will soon have the four largest publicly owned solar arrays in the state of Wisconsin. The budget includes the most robust solar power program in Dane County history, allowing more of the county to be self-sustaining and more efficient. Dane County Executive Parisi is proposing more than \$2 million in new solar development, more than tripling all of county government's total solar energy production portfolio next year alone.

New systems for the Dane County Job Center and the Dane County Alliant Energy Center will have enough panels to generate 770 kWh of sustainable sun-powered energy and cut CO2 emissions by 777 tons per year. Combined, these systems will cut direct energy costs by over \$2.1 million over the next 20 years.

Under County Executive Parisi, Dane County has prioritized adding solar to new facilities. A maintenance facility at the Dane County Regional Airport was the largest publicly owned solar array in Wisconsin until the county's new East District Campus opened this year. With well over 800 solar panels, the new "Green Highway Garage," generates 222 kWh of power to offset our electrical usage.

"Leadership matters, and Dane County continues to lead the way on solar and renewable energy by investing in solutions that are both fiscally and environmentally responsible," said Tyler Huebner, Executive Director of RENEW Wisconsin. **"Solar projects generate energy locally which keeps more taxpayer dollars in the local economy, strengthening the whole community."**

Reducing Carbon Footprint

Dane County has partnered with the private sector to build manure digesters near Waunakee and Middleton which capture the methane equivalent to taking 8,000 cars per year off the road. A new pilot project at the Dane County Landfill captures carbon dioxide and converts it into dry ice, reducing emissions and bettering the air we breathe. When fully implemented, this project will

reduce CO2 emissions by 59,000 tons per year, the equivalent of taking 10,000 cars off the road. Additionally, by converting more of the gas in the landfill to clean fuel burning compressed natural gas we can reduce carbon emissions by another 30,000 tons per year.

Green Energy and Climate Change Action

2014 was the hottest year on record until 2015. Now in 2016 the hottest August on record continued a streak of 11 consecutive months that have set new monthly high-temperature records. Given recent analysis from NASA that Earth is warming faster than it has at any time in the past 1,000 years there's every reason to believe this calendar year will top all of its predecessors.

Climate change is happening and it's not just the polar ice caps melting. It's happening in Dane County. Lakes Mendota and Monona are not staying frozen as long as it used to. 150 years of recordkeeping of when the lake freeze over and when the ice breaks up shows a long-term downward trend. 150 years ago the ice lasted 4 months on Lake Mendota. Today it lasts only 3 months.

While Congress balks at new emissions restrictions proposed by the President and state experts are prohibited to work on climate change because of an Executive Order from the Governor, local governments are once again in the best position to demonstrate leadership and vision.

"We cannot wait for the state to step up, we must lead the effort to address climate change," concluded Parisi.

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Summary

- [Menu](#)

February 29, 2016 / By JACQUELINE PATTERSON

Meanwhile corporate interests take the profits from the same polluting practices to suppress laws that will safeguard environmental health, as well as policies that will advance a more energy efficient, clean energy transition that would stem the tide of climate change.

Bound by darker hued skin, political disenfranchisement, and disproportionate impact, nations in the Global South and communities of color in the global north, sometimes calling ourselves “the south within the north”..... these communities and nations share common cause against the moneyed goliaths of the world.

Last night over dinner, someone asked me, with overtones of bemusement, why the NAACP would be working on climate change. My response was that for a civil rights organization with a mandate to advocate on the behalf of the oft-voiceless, the reasons, in the form of politically disenfranchised nations, marginalized communities, fractured families, and lost and damaged lives, are innumerable!

- When it comes to a civil rights analysis, it's not equal protection under the law when we have more legal handles to protect big polluters than we do to protect the communities that bear the brunt of pollution-driven climate change.
- It's not equal protection under the law when a Navajo family in New Mexico can be polluted upon by coal fired power plants to such an extent that everyone in the family has respiratory illnesses from ingesting sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide while 70% of the people on the reservation don't have access to the very electricity being generated by the coal plants and only 30% of the residents on the reservation have running water.
- It's not equal protection under the law when there is a breakdown in democracy that allows an entire community like Flint, Michigan to be poisoned with impunity by lead in a completely avoidable travesty that started with historic pollution and was perpetuated by non-elected, non-representational “governance” that prioritized finances over families.
- It's not equal protection under the law when in the aftermath of Hurricane Isaac in 2012, which took lives and livelihoods in Plaquemines Parish in Louisiana, Senator Mary Landrieu asked the Army Corps of Engineers why the levees weren't fortified and they responded that [they use a formula for prioritization of levee fortification which assigns points for economic impact if the levee is breached](#).

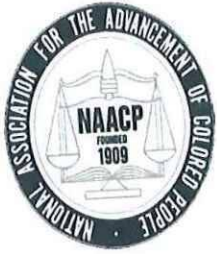
What kind of society have we built that institutionalizes the prioritization of economic loss over loss of human lives?

To invoke a resonant mantra and movement that, in this context, certainly transcends geographic boundaries, we as oft-marginalized communities held a demonstration at the United Nation Climate Talks in Paris last December to call out the geopolitical, racial justice, and broader social justice intersections. Together, as communities from across the African Diaspora, in linked arms with our allies, we declared that [Black Lives Matter](#) from Virginia Beach to Victoria Falls to Vanuatu and beyond!

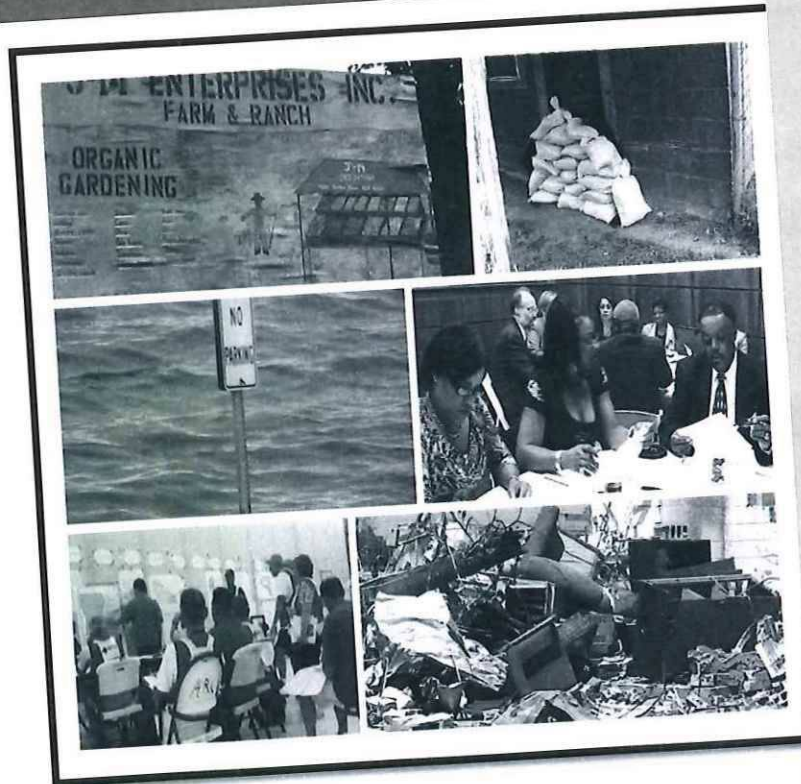
Therefore, we need to transform the decision making spaces from the court rooms, to the zoning boards, to the hearing rooms of the Public Utilities Commissions, to the halls of Congress, to the auditoriums of the United Nations and beyond. We must transform them from spaces where those in power are acting at the behest of corporate interests, to spaces that are truly representing the needs of the people, the nations, and the planet they should serve, starting right here in the US with getting money out of politics through campaign finance reform and reversing Citizen's United.

While simultaneously, we must be the change we want to see in the world by advancing a Just Transition at the local levels starting with the United States, which only [represents 4% of the global population, but contributes upwards of 25% of the global emissions](#) that drive climate change. We must make fundamental shifts from a society that drills and burns to power our communities, to one that harnesses the sun and the wind; from a society that buries or burns our waste, to one that recovers, reuses, and recycles; from a society that genetically modifies, trucks, and ships food, to one that advances local production of food that is nutritious and accessible for all; and more. Overall, we must have a radical transformation from extracting, polluting, and dominating policies and practices to regenerative, cooperative systems that uplift all rights for all people while preserving the environment upon which we all rely for our existence.

[Climate, Climate Justice](#)



Equity in Building Resilience in Adaptation Planning





Equity in Climate Adaptation Planning

RESILIENCE INDICATORS

What constitutes strengthening resilience through equitable adaptation planning? How do we assess the context comprehensively so that effective methods are designed? ***To be able to declare that community resilience has been achieved, we must develop systems that address the needs and provide protection for those most vulnerable and marginalized.***

What about the elderly woman who has a physical disability, has no private vehicle, lives in a flood plain, and has no homeowner's insurance? What infrastructure and other improvements are we implementing that will effectively strengthen her resilience to the next disaster? What about the African American child with asthma who lives next to a coal plant? What will we do to strengthen his resilience as he faces the next heat wave which concentrates pollution, activates his asthma, and jeopardizes his life? How do we make sure he has access for emergency health needs while working on the political context that allows 68% of African Americans to be situated near these facilities?

As a conversation-starter for deepening work around incorporating intersectionality in equitable adaptation planning, below is a sample list of indicators/measures of vulnerability and resilience in terms of infrastructure, community/population characteristics, systems, policies, programs/services, protocols, and governance/decision making. This is not an inclusive list. Because these are examples, the indicators ***span the impacts of climate change including shifts in agricultural yields, sea level rise, and extreme weather.***

Some indicators of pre-existing vulnerabilities/risk factors cannot be changed (ex. age, gender, race, pre-existing health conditions, etc.) However, ***it is critical that these characteristics be taken into account in planning as each may be indicative of the need for a different design, for adaptation planning, to accommodate differential pre-existing vulnerabilities.*** Some of the pre-existing vulnerabilities (income/wealth, employment, literacy, education, housing stock, insurance status, etc.) can and should be changed if we hope to achieve true resilience.

To optimize program design and evaluation, ***ideally, these factors should be cross-referenced because of intersectional relationships in systems, communities and individual lives.*** For example, during Hurricane Katrina, low income, African American women suffered the highest rates of injury and mortality. So looking at any of those indicators in isolation would be insufficient in assessing and addressing vulnerabilities. Similarly, it would be important to note if the vast majority of those who don't have uptake of a certain service are of a specific religion because it might signal a cultural norm that must be addressed in program design. Or, if a racial group is disproportionately exposed to toxic facilities, there may be a civil rights issue to be addressed through regulatory measures. ***Categories of these indicators must be catalogued at the smallest possible geographic level to address clusters of populations, issues, circumstances, etc.*** Also, as demonstrated by illustrative scenarios above, it is important to note that some of the vulnerability indicators are also process/outcome indicators and vice versa which highlights the interconnection and the critical need for cross referencing indicators due to the layered interplay of factors and dynamics.

Adaptation planning must also take into account short and long term resilience. Therefore, plans must encompass service availability, access, and uptake for disaster relief while also working toward levee reinforcement, coastal restoration, etc.

About the pre-existing vulnerabilities/assets indicators

There are social, cultural, economic, and political factors that combine to render populations and communities vulnerable to the myriad results of climate change. Multiple communities, populations, individuals face double or multi-jeopardy due to the layered dynamics/characteristics within which they exist. Vulnerabilities can be due to demographic factors and are affected through differential impact of sea level rise, shifts in agricultural yields, and extreme weather, as well as differential systemic and structural access and treatment in adaptation programming. At the same time having assets in place will protect individuals/families/communities from the impact of sea level rise, shifts in agricultural yields, and disasters.

PRE-EXISTING VULNERABILITIES/ASSETS

Demographics	Age
	Gender
	Race/ethnicity/indigeneity
	Income/wealth
	Employment
	Education
	Literacy
	Disability/ableism
	English as a Second Language
	Recent Immigrant
	Sexual Orientation
	Religion
	Undocumented persons
	Homeless persons
	Persons with criminal records
Housing Security	Quality of Housing stock (mobile homes, housing age, etc.)
	Homeowners
	Homeowners with homeowners insurance
	Renters
	Renters with renters' insurance
	Homes in flood plains
	Homes with flood-proofing
	Homeowners with flood clause in homeowners insurance
	Availability and access to vouchers for flood insurance assistance
	Number, location, and population of prisons
	Domestic violence shelters
Food Security	Shelters for LGBTQ youth and adults
	Households with grocery store within a XX mile radius of the home
	Farmers' markets/community markets per capita
Mobility	Households identified as food insecure
	Homes with vehicles
	Public transportation availability and access
Health Status/System/Services	Evacuation routes
	Individuals with health insurance coverage
	Persons with pre-existing health conditions
	Persons with substance abuse
	Mental health services

	Substance abuse services
	Domestic violence hotline
	Household distance to nearest hospital
	Doctors per capita
	Nurses per capita
Environmental Hazards	Air quality
	Homes within a 10 mile radius of a nuclear reactor/chemical plant or other hazardous facilities, including brownfields
	Proximity of schools to brownfields/toxic sites
	Adequate/Effective Sewage /Waste Management Systems
Emergency Services	Household knowledge level of disaster resources
	Households with disaster kits
	Household distance to nearest fire station
	Household distance to nearest EMT services, including ambulance
	Availability of hazmat certification programs
	Hazmat certified individuals
	Disaster plans in place—schools, businesses, churches, organizations, prisons, etc. (quality of plans)
	Pre-Disaster Mental Health Preparation for First Responders
Businesses/Jobs	Locally owned/community based businesses
	Minority owned businesses)
	Women owned businesses
	Businesses with flood proofing
	Businesses with insurance
	Employment Rate
	Wages
Public/Private Utilities	Union Jobs
	Telecommunications—availability and access (Phone/texting, Television/cable, Radio, broadband, etc.)
	Households with water shut-offs in the last 12 months
	Households reliant on well-water
Social Services	Households with electricity shut-offs in the last 12 months
	Social services-availability and access
	Services for undocumented persons—availability and access
Governance/Policies	Inclusive governance with appropriate representation in stakeholders given meaningful authority
	Extent to which decision makers match the demographics of the community make-up (somewhat subjective but measures should be identified like race, class, and gender minimally)
	Voting participation in the last presidential election
	Policy landscape—health codes, building codes, zoning codes, ordinances, etc. , labor policies (including local hire provisions)
Community Knowledge/Attitudes	Neighborhood cohesion-attitudes
	Knowledge of disaster services and protocols
	Knowledge of financial literacy
Culture	Identifies as having religious/cultural ties to land/water

About the Process/Outcome Indicators

Overarching *intended resilience outcomes that demonstrate successful adaptation to the shifts in agricultural yields, sea level rise, and extreme weather caused by climate change* include equitable preservation of:

- Life and health;
- Safety and wellbeing;
- Community and culture;
- Land, home, and property;
- Livelihoods and economic security;
- Core systems, services, and basic needs;
- Environmental quality; and
- Democratic systems of governance.

PROCESS/OUTCOME INDICATORS	
Infrastructure	Levees fortified (mapping/distribution)
	Coastal restoration projects (mapping/distribution)
	Storm water management projects (mapping/distribution)
	Flood control measures
	Solar and wind installations—community level, home, commercial/businesses (mapping/distribution)
Economic Development/Jobs	Jobs Lost-Temporarily
	Jobs Lost Permanently
	New, Local Jobs Created
	Businesses temporarily closed
	Businesses permanently closed
	Business owners returning/rebuilding on same site
	Local hires for infrastructure projects (storm water management, solar installations, waste management, etc.)
	Contracts for infrastructure projects (storm water management, solar installations, waste management, etc.)
	Contracts for infrastructure projects (storm water management, solar installations, waste management, etc.) awarded to WBEs
	Community Workers Agreements for new developments
	Community Benefits Agreements for new development
Food Security	Households identified as food insecure
	Community seed banks
	Local/Community Farms/Gardens
	Crops Lost/Farms Lost due to drought/flooding
Housing	Households temporarily displaced
	Households permanently displaced
	Homeowners displaced (temporarily)
	Homeowners displaced (permanently)
	Renters displaced (temporarily)
	Renters displaced (permanently)

	Homes flooded
	Homes damaged
	Homes destroyed
	Homes without basic necessities—running water, electricity (including length of time)
	Property values increased or reduced
	Residents returning/rebuilding on same site
Education	Schools temporarily closed
	Schools permanently closed
	Education (attendance, grades, graduation rates)
Health Care Services	Health care facilities
	Mental health services
Gender Responsive Emergency Management	Domestic violence incidence pre and post disaster
	Sexual violence incidence pre and post disaster
	Domestic violence shelters
	Domestic violence programs
	Inclusion of gender justice groups in planning
Emergency Management Services	Vulnerability/risk/ hazard assessment conducted
	Early Warning System reach/access
	Community Emergency Response Teams
	Effective implementation of disaster plans
	First responder organizations
	Information sharing and coordination mechanism for first responder and disaster relief organizations
	Disaster Recovery Center availability/capacity/access
	Emergency shelter availability/capacity/access
	Provisions for persons with disabilities
	Sheltering provisions for LGBTQQI persons
	Sufficient interpretation/language access to match populace
	Availability of mass evacuation resources/plans/mechanisms
	Feeding Centers
	Cooling Stations for heat waves
	Emergency child care services
	Availability of and access to emergency supplies (sand bags, masks, etc.)
	Animal rescue, care, and sheltering
	Uptake of services
Adaptation Specific Planning/Decision Making	Inclusive stakeholder engagement in climate adaptation/sustainable communities planning
	Inclusive stakeholder engagement in emergency management planning processes
	Inclusive stakeholder engagement in sea level rise response planning processes
	Inclusive stakeholder engagement in food security planning
	Equity based resource allocation
Politics/Policies/Democracy	Redistricting
	Voting records/rates
	Laws/ordinances to prevent gentrification (whatever those might be)

	Law/ordinance requiring Environmental Impact Studies for all redevelopment projects
	Law/ordinance requiring Community Impact Reports for all redevelopment projects
	Law/ordinance requiring Community Workforce Agreements for all redevelopment projects
Health/Wellness	Mortality incidence
	Morbidity incidence (including Injury/acute health challenge such as disaster injuries, asthma attacks, etc.)
	Persons with short term disabilities resulting from injuries; persons with long term disabilities resulting from injuries
	Reported mental health challenges
	Hate crimes incidence
	Elder abuse incidence
	Child abuse/trauma incidence
Culture	Reported culture shift as a result of disaster/displacement/ shifts in agricultural yields, etc. (need to identify metrics on this, but it is critical)

Summary/Recommendations:

As stated, the above is not intended to be an inclusive list. The purpose is to provide a guide to localities to enable them to integrate an equity lens as they seek to build resilience in designing adaptation plans. Too often research designs only consider one or two variables. But in order to effectively strengthen resilience, plans must consider intersecting vulnerabilities, and outcomes for adaptation planning must also be comprehensive. This set of indicators should be used to spark an in depth analysis at the local level of what are the factors that truly make the local residents vulnerable to the effects of climate change and what variables must be evaluated to declare success in implementing equity based adaptation planning. This tool should be used by researchers, city planners, local government, environmental and social justice advocates, social service agencies, emergency management agencies, and others. The resources below provide further information on broader sets of indices in areas such as gender, disaster, coastal resilience, etc.

RESOURCES:

- I. **Achieving Resilience in Coastal Communities: Resources and Recommendations**
<http://online.nwf.org/site/DocServer/ac-proof-aug.2014.pdf?docID=15501>
- II. **Building Indexes of Vulnerability: A Sensitivity Analysis of the Social Vulnerability Index**
<http://ehs.unu.edu/file/get/3596.pdf>
- III. **Disaster Resilience Measurements: Stocktaking of Ongoing Efforts in Developing Systems for Measuring Resilience**
http://www.preventionweb.net/files/37916_disasterresiliencemeasurementsundpt.pdf
- IV. **Gender Mainstreaming in Emergency Management**
http://www.gdnonline.org/resources/Enarson_GenderMainstreamingCanada.pdf
- V. **Social Vulnerability to Climate Variability Hazards: A Review of the Literature**
http://adapt.oxfamamerica.org/resources/Literature_Review.pdf

QUESTIONS? CONTACT: Jacqui Patterson jpatterson@naacpnet.org

Dane County Council on Climate Change

Steering Committee Member Organizations

Municipal

Dane County, Madison, Middleton, Monona, Fitchburg (invited), Public Health of Madison and Dane County

Utilities

MGE, Alliant Energy, WI Public Power (Sun Prairie, Waunakee, Mt. Horeb and Stoughton)

Businesses

Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, UW-Health, H &H Energy Services, Clean Fuel Partners, BIOFerm Energy Systems, Epic (invited), American Family (invited)

Environmental & Community Organizations

Clean Wisconsin , Sierra Club, Sustain Dane, RENEW WI, CRANES

UW-Madison

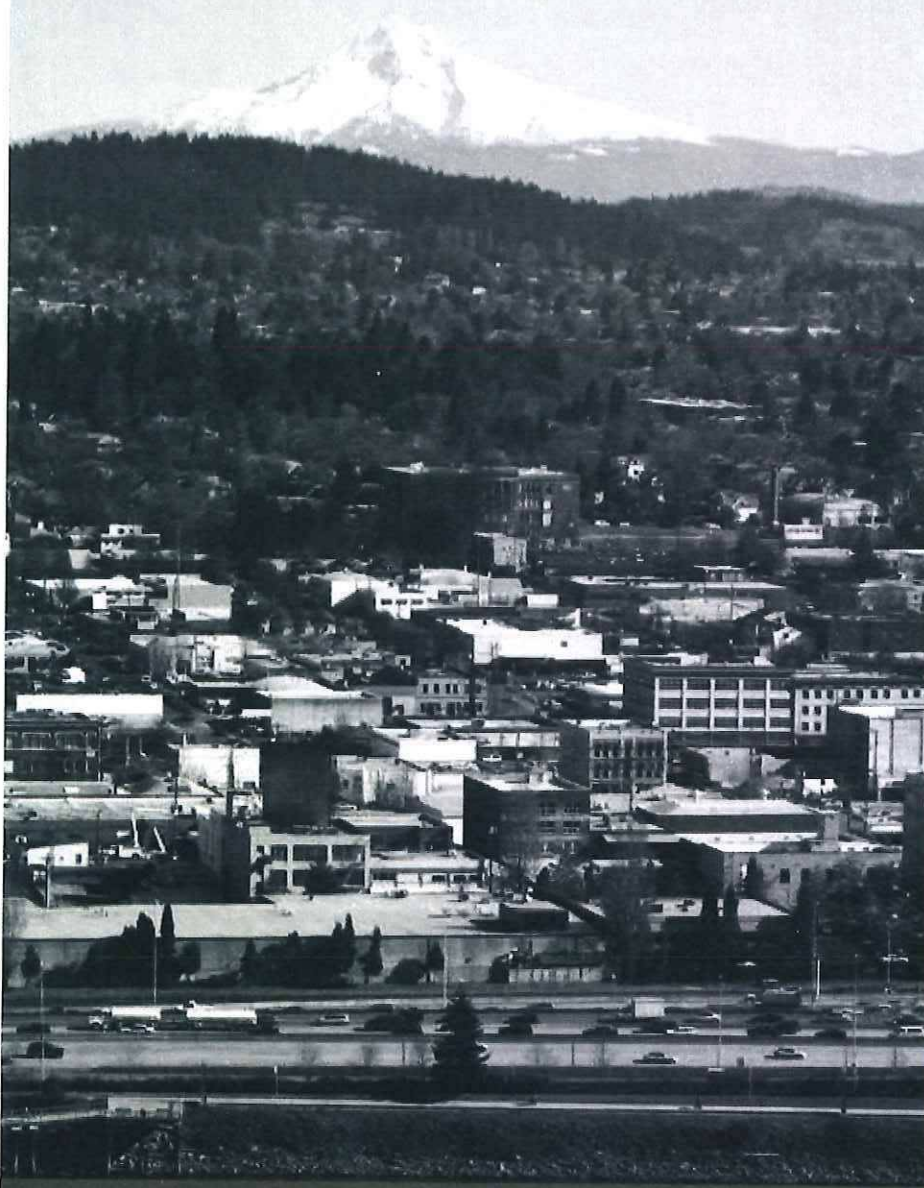
Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies

UW-Extension

Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI)

LaFollette School of Public Affairs

CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH EQUITY



**The integration of equity in the Portland/
Multnomah County 2015 Climate Action Plan**

July 12, 2016



**Multnomah
County**

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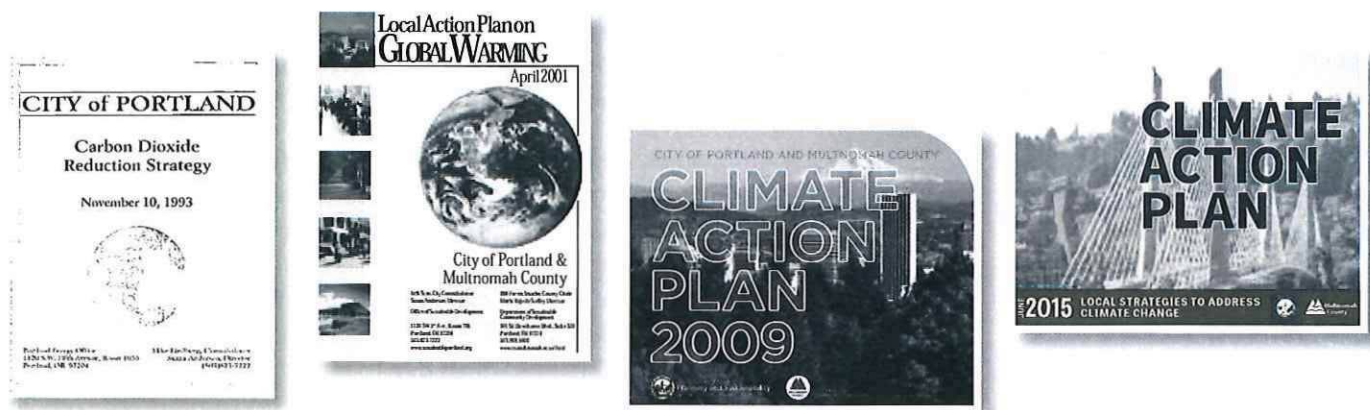
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503-823-7700

Our changing climate

Two decades of climate action are delivering results

The City of Portland has long been a global leader in addressing climate change. In 1993, Portland became the first city in the United States to adopt a local plan to address climate change. Since then, while carbon emissions have increased nationally, Portland and Multnomah County have achieved significant declines in emissions. In 2014, total emissions were 21% below 1990 levels.



But we still have a long way to go

As Portland increasingly contends with heat waves, droughts, flooding and other extreme weather events, awareness of the need to take action on climate change has grown, yet recognition of the connection between climate action and social equity has often been absent. The City of Portland and Multnomah County have a goal to reduce carbon emissions 80 percent from 1990 levels by 2050. In the face of projected population increases and changing demographics, the need for a more broad-based movement is apparent. Government action alone is not enough; everyone must be a part of the solution and all must benefit from the solutions created. Currently, however, not everyone has equitable opportunities to participate and benefit. The 2015 update to the Climate Action Plan seeks to remedy this.

The City of Portland and Multnomah County's prior climate action plans focused on reducing carbon emissions while lacking discussion of who benefits and who is burdened. The absence of such an assessment resulted in missed opportunities to share the co-benefits that can result from climate action efforts. Co-benefits are positive impacts other than carbon emissions reduction that occur as a result of climate change mitigation. Such positive impacts can include increased access to greenspace, more pedestrian and bike-friendly communities that encourage active transportation, and the creation of green jobs that can stimulate the local economy.

Furthermore, communities of color and low-income populations in Portland have been under-served by programs and investments and under-represented in decision making on climate policy. Lack of low-carbon, safe transportation options, inefficient housing and the inability to afford healthy food are examples of disparities experienced by these communities that result in fewer benefits from climate action opportunities.

These inequities primarily result from ongoing institutional racial bias and historical discriminatory practices that have resulted in the inequitable distribution of resources and access to opportunities.

Climate equity ensures the just distribution of the benefits of climate protection efforts and alleviates unequal burdens created by climate change. This requires intentional policies and projects that simultaneously address the effects of and the systems that perpetuate both climate change and inequity.

2015 City of Portland and Multnomah County Climate Action Plan

The Green Divide

Climate change, and other environmental issues are often viewed as issues that are not relevant to low-income communities and communities of color. Concern with the environment is frequently perceived of as being a concern of more affluent and less diverse communities. Yet this narrative paints a false portrait and obscures the real diversity that exists. While there may be a lack of representation of low-income people and people of color in mainstream environmental organizations, this does not then translate to a lack of concern with environmental issues. On the contrary, research has shown that people of color support environmental protection at a higher rate than whites. 68 percent of minority voters feel that climate change is an issue we need to be worried about right now, not something we can put off into the future.

The 2015 Climate Action Plan represents a step in this direction by connecting climate change with other community concerns of low-income communities and communities of color.

Source: Climate Change and Communities of Color, Key Poll Findings and Top Lines Report

Climate change impacts some people more than others

Low-income populations and communities of color will be disproportionately impacted by climate change

Low-income populations and communities of color are more likely to live in areas with less greenspace and to be more vulnerable to heat-related and respiratory illnesses.

Low-income populations and communities of color are more likely to be impacted by extreme weather events that occur as a result of climate change. This is due to reduced access to key information and available programs and services as a result of language, cultural, or geographic barriers. For example, community members may be unaware of the existence of resources such as cooling centers that may be open during heatwaves due to materials not being translated or available in areas that they traditionally access community information. Service boundaries and language restrictions can provide additional barriers in accessing programs and services.

Carbon reduction strategies can exacerbate existing disparities unless there is an explicit equity focus. Communities are not all starting from the same place. Low-income populations and communities of color often have less access to healthy and energy efficient housing, transit, or safe bicycling and walking routes. Consequently, any strategies to reduce carbon emissions must seek to remedy these deficiencies.



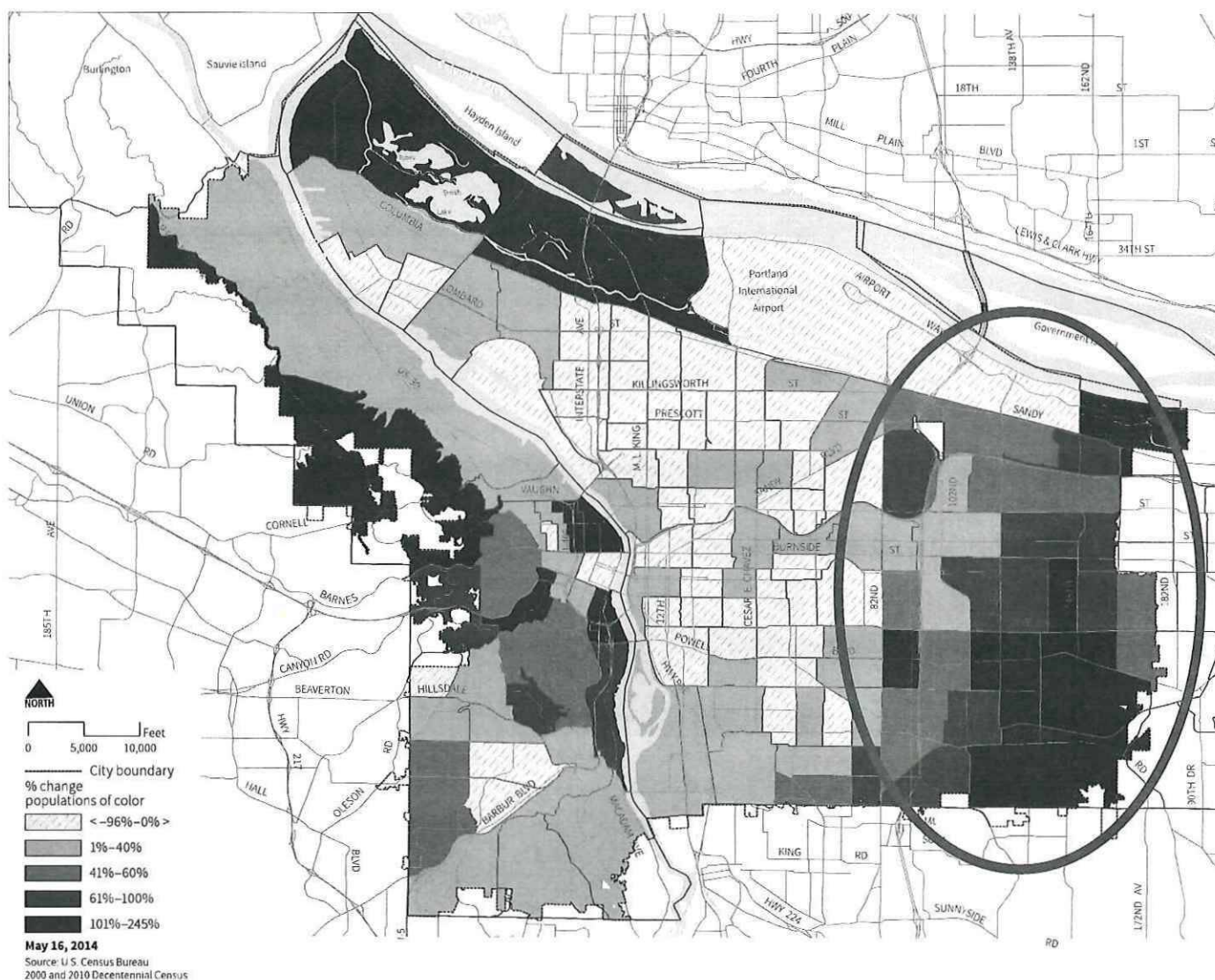
According to a 2014 report prepared for Green 2.0 that studied diversity in environmental organizations, a broadening of the movement must grow and embrace different perspectives to appeal to diverse communities.

Source: diversegreen.org

Mitigating for unintended consequences: investment and displacement

Successful implementation of the Climate Action Plan will include targeted investments, particularly in areas that have seen under-investment in the past. However, investment in some of these locations can be a catalyst for displacement. As areas gain amenities and become more desirable, property values rise and long-time residents who are no longer able to afford the area may be displaced.

This map shows that communities of color are growing in East Portland, an area of town that has less transit connectivity, sidewalks and other infrastructure. Many African-American residents have moved to East Portland from N/NE Portland over the past 20 years and have not benefited from the green investments that have taken place in their former inner neighborhoods. To address this, the 2015 Climate Action Plan emphasizes investing in people as well as infrastructure. Connecting community members with job opportunities that result from actions in the plan and providing training opportunities for local youth can build wealth and avoid displacement in communities.



*"A **targeted universal** strategy is inclusive of the needs of both dominant and marginalized groups, but pays particular attention to the situation of the marginalized group ... Targeted universalism rejects a blanket approach that is likely to be indifferent to the reality that different groups are situated differently relative to the institutions and resources of society."*

-John Powell, Racing to Justice

Old problems require new thinking

Our vision for a climate-positive future cannot be achieved without advancing equitable outcomes and addressing existing disparities. These approaches must enlist a **targeted universalism** approach, where solutions begin with addressing the needs of those who are most vulnerable to climate change, or experiencing disparate outcomes. Doing so will produce benefits for everyone. For this reason, the 2015 Climate Action Plan used an equity lens that prioritized the needs of low-income communities and communities of color.

How is equity integrated in the Climate Action Plan?

Equity played an integral role in all phases of the 2015 Climate Action Plan, including an intentional community engagement process that included the creation of an Equity Working Group made up of representatives from six community-based organizations representing the interests of low-income populations and communities of color. The insights and local knowledge that these groups provided was invaluable. This work resulted in a plan that is inclusive and recognizes the unique strengths that exist in communities.

Equity is featured from the guiding vision for the plan through the implementation stage. This intentional integration throughout the plan seeks to ensure that the Climate Action Plan is more than just words on paper, but a plan for inclusive accountable implementation.



Equity Working Group Meeting



"A notable success is how the group was able to grapple with the potential negative impacts/missed opportunities for communities of color and low income populations for all topic areas, considering as many aspects as was possible in our short time together. By leading with equity, the recommendations and action considerations were stronger than they would be otherwise."

Vivian Satterfield, OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon, Equity Working Group Member

Vision

The City and the County's vision of equitable climate action is reflected throughout the plan's vision for 2050 for a prosperous, connected, healthy and resilient and equitable future. The 2050 vision specifically imagines a future where everyone has access to a walkable and bikeable neighborhood; employment and small business opportunities are led by and employing underserved and underrepresented communities; and communities of color and low-income populations are involved in the development and implementation of climate-related programs, policies and actions.

Equity Commitments

The City and County are committed to equitably implementing the actions in the Climate Action Plan in ways that address health, safety and livability, access, prosperity and inclusive engagement.

Actions

Strategies and actions to advance equity and reduce disparities are highlighted in the chapter narratives, as well as called out explicitly in several key actions. In addition, actions with a significant opportunity to advance equity are identified with an "E" icon.

Equity Considerations

City and County staff incorporated key equity considerations in the implementation of the actions contained in the plan.

Equity Implementation Guide

The Climate Action Plan Equity Implementation Guide provides support for City and County staff on best practices and tools for integrating equity into their work.

Climate-Equity Metrics

The City and County will develop climate-equity metrics to track the degree to which equity considerations are integrated into the decision-making processes and implementation of the Climate Action Plan, and will report on progress in a transparent manner.

Achieving equitable outcomes starts with new processes

Portland Plan set the stage

The process to update the Climate Action Plan began shortly after the 2012 adoption of the Portland Plan, the City's strategic plan. The Portland Plan established an overarching equity framework that articulated the citywide need to prioritize racial equity and established an intentional action plan to work towards the elimination of racial and other disparities experienced in Portland. Borrowing from this framework, the Climate Action Plan prioritized the needs of communities of color and low-income populations in its approach to applying an equity lens. The Climate Action Plan equity project included three primary goals and project deliverables:

1. An updated Climate Action Plan that better integrates equity to maximize benefits and reduce barriers for communities of color and low-income populations.
2. A set of climate equity metrics that can be used and refined to track progress on 1) ensuring Portland's climate actions are more equitable, and 2) furthering equity goals as defined in the Portland Plan through climate actions.
3. A plan to continue to build relationships with diverse communities, and diverse membership within these communities, around climate change.

Funding identified for community engagement

In 2013, the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability received a grant from the Bullitt Foundation and Partners for Places, a partnership between the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities and the Urban Sustainability Directors Network, to support community engagement and equity integration into the 2015 Climate Action Plan.

- \$5,000 for an equity scan of Portland's 2009 Climate Action Plan.¹
- \$5,000 for an equity intern to support staff.
- \$20,000 for community engagement.

Community invited to design community engagement process

The budget for community engagement was not enough to support a large engagement effort, but it did provide a unique funding opportunity. Community partners who had been part of the Portland Plan process and new partners who serve low-income populations and communities of color were invited to join staff in a preliminary meeting to design the community engagement process.²



Participants explored what was meaningful and feasible to accomplish with \$20,000 for community engagement. Feedback from that meeting included:

- Climate change is not a lead issue for most local community-based organizations, and engaging in this effort would be taking away from existing priorities. Having access to new funds could bring attention to the climate action effort.
- There is a need to attract new community leadership to the table. This process could be an opportunity to cultivate new leaders.
- This effort should be a partnership with staff and community members.

As a result of the meeting, a sub-grant process was established. Community organizations were invited to apply for a \$4,000 grant to support an organizational representative to participate in the Climate Action Plan Equity Working Group.

¹ The Equity Scan was performed by Dr. Greg Schrock, and Jamaal Green from Portland State University. This report can be found online at: <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/463573>.

² The work of Center for Earth, Energy, and Democracy (CEED) and the staff of the City of Minneapolis in the development of the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan provided inspiration for a straw man proposal that was presented to the community in the meeting.



"Although, environmental justice (EJ) communities have historically carried the burden and effects of climate change, funding CBOs and organizations of color to work on EJ issues is new because it's been vastly underfunded. Being on this project, I see the commitment to bring us to the table. I would like to see our perspectives and work materialize in the update of the plan to really highlight this funding model to identify and prioritize the engagement of EJ communities as common practice."

Demi Espinoza, Coalition of Communities of Color,
Equity Working Group Member

JUNE 2013

First meeting of the
Equity Working Group

JULY 2013

Weekly meetings begin for the Equity
Working Group to apply an equity lens
to CAP actions

AUGUST 2013

Equity Working Group finalizes nine
equity considerations for staff to use
in conducting equity assessments of
CAP actions

2013

Organizations selected and form the Equity Working Group

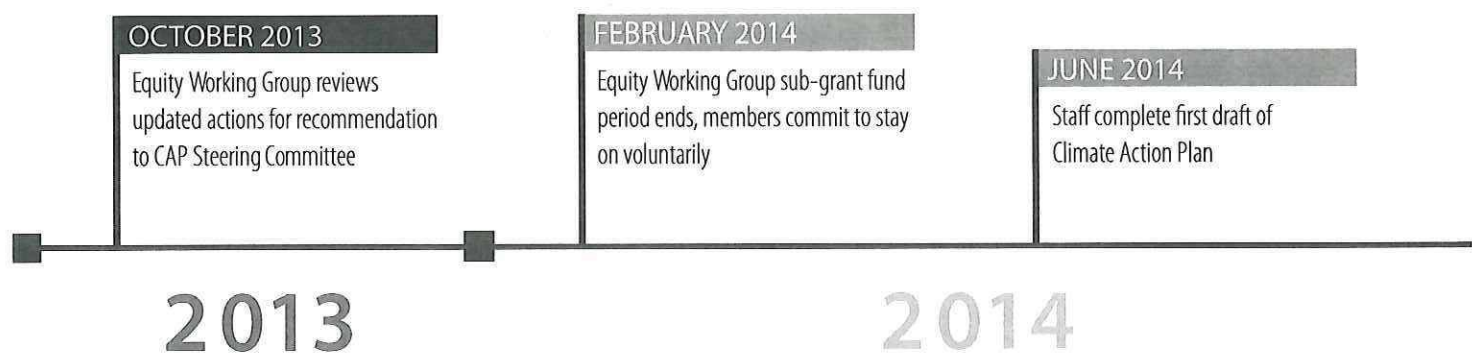
Eight organizations applied, and five were initially awarded sub-grants. Because a sixth was identified as a strong candidate, Multnomah County, the City's partner in the Climate Action Plan, contributed an additional \$4,000. Verde, a community partner that is focused on sustainable economic development within the Latino community participated in the process as a grant reviewer. The Equity Working Group community membership consisted of representatives from Groundwork Portland, Upstream Public Health, the Coalition of Communities of Color, OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon, Wisdom Council of the Elders and the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO).

Members of the Climate Action Plan Steering Committee were also invited to participate in the Equity Working Group. Their role was to facilitate cross-over communication between the two groups and facilitate the advocacy of policy ideas from a non-staff perspective. To bring in professional perspectives on planning, community engagement and public health, staff from the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and Multnomah County Health Department also joined the Equity Working Group.

Effective partnership requires a common vocabulary and shared goals

The Equity Working Group began work in June 2013 with a two-part orientation. The first meeting focused on getting to know the participants and staff, as well as establishing shared understanding of the working group's role and the expected outcomes. Because participants were not expected to have a background in climate change, staff provided an overview of both the scientific context and the policy framework for large-scale carbon emission reduction. The second meeting was focused on developing a shared concept of "equity." For this, the group enlisted the help of a tool developed by Multnomah County, the 4-P Analysis, which helps groups develop their own equity lens for a particular policy issue.

³ The analysis is now called the 5-P Analysis and is available at <https://multco.us/diversity-equity/equity-and-empowerment-lens>.



Best laid plans go astray

Initially, each chapter (e.g., energy, transportation, solid waste, etc.) of the draft Climate Action Plan was presented to the Equity Working Group via a conference call. Participants were then given a worksheet outlining all of the proposed climate actions for that chapter and were asked to identify the equity implications of each action (e.g., benefits, burdens, unintended consequences). The following week the completed worksheets were due at the in-person meeting where Equity Working Group members were asked to share their feedback directly with the City and County staff that had authored that chapter. This process was to be repeated every two weeks until all nine chapters of the draft Climate Action Plan had been assessed.

Project staff checked in weekly with the grantee organizations to get feedback on the process. A month into the process staff learned that Equity Working Group members found this approach to be constraining the creativity of the group and creating an imbalanced power dynamic between chapter authors (staff) and grantee organizations (community). So, based on this feedback, staff changed the entire meeting process and structure.

To foster better dialogue, the in-person meetings were scheduled first and used to introduce a topic and to create the opportunity for the grantees to share relevant experiences from their community related to the topic area. Only then did participants review the actions and ask follow-up questions of staff. Participants were given an additional week (per chapter)

to review the proposed actions in more detail and provide additional feedback in writing and during a conference call.

The process changed from grantees being tasked with identifying the equity implications of an action such as “adopting context sensitive street design standards for residential streets” to being asked “what are the transportation related challenges and opportunities in your communities,” and tasking staff with figuring out how the group’s feedback should inform street design standards.

This group process change was sizable and required more time for a project that was already behind schedule. But the time and effort was worth it as it ultimately ensured the process was both accessible and meaningful for all participants.

“I found the responsiveness of staff to issues around process to be commendable. It actually shifted the group from being constrained by existing silos and processes of government to a more broad conversation of ‘what kind of outcomes/shifts/changes do we want to see?’ and then have the government process fundamentally change the way it approaches the solutions to those problems.”

Vivian Satterfield, OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon,
Equity Working Group Member

SPRING 2015

Public comment period for the
Climate Action Plan

JUNE 2015

Portland and Multnomah County
Climate Action Plan adopted by
City Council and County Board
of Commissioners

2016

Equity Implementation
Guide published

2015

2016

Feedback was molded into 9 equity considerations

Staff summarized the feedback from these work sessions and finalized them after review by the Equity Working Group. (See Equity Considerations text box for more details).

Staff then used the Equity Considerations to conduct a basic equity assessment of every action proposed in the draft Climate Action Plan. Actions were revised based on that assessment and the updated actions were shared with the Equity Working Group to determine if their feedback had been adequately integrated.



"For the community-based grantees, we learned how to better navigate the government bureaucracy while developing our own internal leadership around the issues of climate change. This small investment in our organizations had great returns in terms of building new capacity within various groups that are often ignored in the civic process due to cultural or language barriers. Moving forward, this grant could be a great model for future meaningful community engagement in a policy making process."

Duncan Hwang, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO),
Equity Working Group Member

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

1. Disproportionate impacts

Does the proposed action generate burdens (including costs), either directly or indirectly, to communities of color or low-income populations? If yes, are there opportunities to mitigate these impacts?

2. Shared benefits

Can the benefits of the proposed action be targeted in progressive ways to reduce historical or current disparities?

3. Accessibility

Are the benefits of the proposed action broadly accessible to households and businesses throughout the community — particularly communities of color, low-income populations, and minority, women and emerging small businesses?

4. Engagement

Does the proposed action engage and empower communities of color and low-income populations in a meaningful, authentic and culturally appropriate manner?

5. Capacity building

Does the proposed action help build community capacity through funding, an expanded knowledge base or other resources?

6. Alignment and partnership

Does the proposed action align with and support existing communities of color and low-income population priorities, creating an opportunity to leverage resources and build collaborative partnerships?

7. Relationship building

Does the proposed action help foster the building of effective, long-term relationships and trust between diverse communities and local government?

8. Economic opportunity and staff diversity

Does the proposed action support communities of color and low-income populations through workforce development, contracting opportunities or the increased diversity of city and county staff?

9. Accountability

Does the proposed action have appropriate accountability mechanisms to ensure that communities of color, low-income populations, or other vulnerable communities will equitably benefit and not be disproportionately harmed?

How actions are implemented is critical to achieving more equitable outcomes

During the process, the Equity Working Group provided considerable feedback about how to implement actions. Their feedback was rich in content but difficult to place in a policy document. This eventually resulted in the development of an Equity Implementation Guide, a companion document to the Climate Action Plan that captures the specific recommendations as well as an overall approach to incorporating equity as actions are implemented. The guide serves as a tool for building staff capacity to effectively implement the policy guidance in the Climate Action Plan.

Building partnerships for the long haul

The committee initially set a timeline to complete the Equity Working Group process within three months and to draft the Climate Action Plan update by the end of 2013. It became clear that effectively incorporating equity into the plan would require more time. When the Equity Working Group finished its meetings in October 2013, it had provided staff with feedback on the chapters and actions, but also a direction for integrating equity throughout the content. Staff set to work on developing the rest of the content of the *Climate Action Plan*, but this process took longer than anticipated.

The grant fund period ended in February 2014, which meant that the Equity Working Group process would end before the Climate Action Plan was completed. At the closing meeting, all organizations that had participated expressed a willingness to continue in a partner role to advise on the content and process even though continued funding was not available. To respect the time of the organizations, they no longer met regularly but were instead reconvened at key times to review the recommended draft and then later the proposed draft of the plan.

When the 2015 Climate Action Plan was ready for adoption, Equity Working Group members testified at Portland City Council and the County Board of Commissioners to communicate the importance of the process, the value of integrating equity into the Climate Action Plan, and the need for public agencies to hold themselves accountable to communities most vulnerable to the effects of climate change through an ongoing commitment to measure progress.



"I believe again the other notable success was having that nine point action statement around equity issues. I think that's very great and I think that as I deal with folks in the community I look forward to sharing that with them just as part of the thing that the city is trying to do as far as bringing citizens in. I personally think that's a great statement in itself and really a nice kind of big picture thing to look forward to and I look forward to just kind of educating folks about some of those issues."

Les Shannon, Groundwork Portland,
Equity Working Group Member

Sharing the lessons we learned



"I felt genuinely valued as a community partner. I also thought that the city staff were very responsive and bent over backwards to accommodate us. I was very impressed by that.

I wish the timeline had been a little less tight. With more time, I might have enjoyed engaging in some more dialogue and learning with city staff and grant partners about some of the ideas that came out of the process."

Claudia Arana Colen, Upstream Public Health,
Equity Working Group Member

Meeting the needs of participants. Learning to recognize and meet the needs of participants was an important component of the process. Rather than strict adherence to a predetermined process, flexibility regarding the form, content and logistics of the engagement was necessary. Notable modifications to the process include:

- Meetings were moved from a downtown location to a more convenient location for Equity Working Group members.
- Printed handouts were provided rather than electronic files.
- Meeting agendas were restructured to foster more productive discussions by focusing on the experience and wisdom of members instead of line item feedback on each action.
- Separate meetings were organized with individual Equity Working Group members to solicit feedback if schedule conflicts prohibited their attendance at the regular meeting.
- The timeline was extended several times to allow time to cover more complex topics.

Facilitating with awareness of power and privilege. Creating a space of mutual learning requires intentional creation of space that acknowledges the inherent power dynamics between community members and government employees, people of color and white people, and socio-economic class differences. Some of the tactics used included creating and reinforcing ground rules, prepping staff for what to expect before coming to Equity Working Group meetings, and frequent one-on-one check-ins with the Equity Working Group participants.

Building capacity and relationships. Successful integration of equity issues into climate planning requires the development of new relationships between staff and community. City and County staff provided technical and logistical support throughout the process to facilitate learning by both staff and organization representatives. For example, the Equity Working Group orientation included an introduction to climate change and an exploration of equity and social justice language to begin building a bridge and shared goals between staff and community representatives and to honor the collective wisdom and experience in the room. Later, Equity Working Group members invited City and County staff to their organizations to meet with and further develop relationships within their communities.

Funding matters. All organizations reported the importance of funding, and for some it was the decisive factor that made it possible for them to participate.

Implementation and metrics. Through discussions with the Equity Working Group it became clear that the potential equity implications (positive or negative) of a given Climate Action Plan action had more to do with how that action was implemented than the action itself. For example, the Climate Action Plan action to plant more trees does not necessarily have equity implications, but decisions about where those trees are planted and who is planting those trees do.

Community members also identified the importance of “being able to see the needle move toward equity outcomes.” This proved difficult to solve for within the update period of the plan. The Equity Implementation Guide provides a framework for measuring equity in the implementation of actions, but staff were not able to develop equity indicators or metrics during the planning period. Instead, this became an action of the plan.

This work takes time. The original timeline anticipated completing the update of the Climate Action Plan by the end of 2013. The Equity Working Group, along with City and County staff, worked rigorously from May to October 2013 to complete their initial equity review of the proposed actions for the updated plan. Coordination of the multiple components of the update project, including the significant overhaul of the previous plan to integrate equity (as well as other key topics like consumption and climate preparation) resulted in extending the overall project timeline considerably. The updated Climate Action Plan was adopted in June 2015.



“As a result of the grant, my organization had the opportunity to share our community’s concerns and questions dealing with climate change and to understand how the Climate Action Plan may impact/benefit our community. This grant gave us the funds to have our staff on the Equity Committee, justifying our involvement and time on the Climate Action Plan with our board. As well, these meetings were a great opportunity for our organization to connect and partner with other communities on environmental, climate, and health issues.”

Amanda Kelley-Lopez, Wisdom of the Elders,
Equity Working Group Member

Outcomes

Meaningful partnerships continued beyond the project period

The final 2015 Climate Action Plan update was not completed within the grant period, but the organizations that participated in the Equity Working Group remained engaged with the project beyond the grant period, with several Equity Working Group members testifying before City Council in support of the plan's adoption.

Catalyst for further work

As an outcome of relationships built during this project, Wisdom of the Elders is working to create a Native American Tribal Council on Climate Change. The Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) hired a full-time staff person to build out a new program to work on climate change and climate resilience following their experience with the Equity Working Group. Another initiative, informed by the experience of working on this project, was a joint effort by the Coalition of Communities of Color, Verde and the Oregon Environmental Council to begin a process of building relationships between leadership of organizations focused on equity and organizations focused on environmental issues. This effort held its first gathering in February 2014 with participation from many of the organizations involved in this grant, including the Bullitt Foundation and the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, both project funders.

Catalyst for City and County learning

The process proved invaluable for City and County staff involved. Many staff members noted that attending Equity Working Group meetings and hearing community concerns enabled them to see their work differently and better understand its equity implications. This resulted in rethinking actions and modifying them accordingly. The process highlighted that while City and County staff have expertise, there is also tremendous knowledge and expertise at the community level. This model of engagement can be replicated to foster mutual learning.

"I personally feel more committed to environmental and climate changes issues. I benefited from being at the table with my peers to learn about how this issue affects their community. We are prioritizing environmental justice in our organization and hope that we can build more partnerships with community-based organizations and government in the future."

Demi Espinoza, Coalition of Communities of Color,
Equity Working Group Member

New Actions for a Better Plan

City and County staff, with guidance from the Equity Working Group, incorporated equity throughout the plan. A few specific examples are outlined below:

New 2030 Objectives:

- **17)** Engage communities, especially impacted under-represented and under-served populations, in the development and implementation of climate change-related policies and programs. (Page 120)
- **20)** Build City and County staff and community capacity to ensure effective implementation and equitable outcomes of climate action efforts. (Page 133)

Added specificity to how actions are implemented:

- **1G)** Small Commercial – Support energy efficiency improvements to small commercial buildings, especially in under-served communities. (Page 64)
- **3C)** Community Solar – Support the development of community solar projects that benefit all residents, particularly communities of color and low-income populations. (Page 68)
- **4Q)** Affordable Housing Access to Transit – Use regulatory and voluntary tools to promote affordable and accessible housing development along...transit routes and in opportunity areas. (Page 81)
- **4EE)** Car Sharing – Partner with car sharing companies ... Consider programs to expand use of car sharing among low-income households. (Page 82)
- **13A)** Tree Programs – Continue tree planting and expand tree preservation and maintenance programs and incentives. Focus on low-canopy neighborhoods and neighborhoods with populations at higher risk of adverse outcomes of urban heat island effects. (Page 104)
- **13B)** Canopy Targets – Revisit urban forest canopy targets: Take into consideration ... equitable distribution of tree-related benefits across the city. (Page 104)
- **17A)** Alignment with Community – Identify and seek resources to support community-based initiatives, especially from low-income areas and communities of color, that align with climate change preparation priorities, carbon emission reduction efforts and low-carbon lifestyles. (Page 120)
- **20D)** Workforce Development – Create cross-bureau initiatives... to strengthen the capacity of firms owned by people of color and nonprofits serving underrepresented and under-served adults and youth to help implement Plan actions. (Page 133)
- **20E)** Career Development – Maximize career development opportunities, especially for low-income populations, communities of color and youth, in the fields of energy, green building, transportation, etc... (Page 133)
- **20L)** Metrics – Develop comprehensive qualitative climate action metrics to measure progress... that incorporate an evaluation of benefits and burdens to low-income populations and communities of color. (Page 134)

Frequently asked questions

1. What was the equity scan and how was it used to support the work of equity integration? Was it duplicative to the work of the Equity Working Group?

The City of Portland hired Greg Schrock, a professor at Portland State University's Toulon School of Urban Planning, to perform the equity assessment of the 2009 Climate Action Plan. This became known as the equity scan and its purpose was to identify gaps and missed opportunities in addressing equity in the City's previous climate plan, to research best practices from around the country and to develop equity metrics recommendations. Dr. Schrock, along with his research assistant Jamaal Green, produced the report and met with staff at length to share their findings and discuss opportunities to better integrate equity into the 2015 plan.

It was not duplicative to the Equity Working Group as their work was about the experience of the community. The Equity Scan provided a comparative analysis, and became a helpful tool for both staff and community members in their application of an equity lens.

2. How will the Climate Action Plan Equity Implementation Guide be used?

The Climate Action Plan has over 150 actions, but not every action is built the same. The manner in which an equity lens is applied varies depending on the type of action. Whether the nature of an action is regulatory, programmatic, policy or an investment shifts the questions staff should ask in applying an equity analysis to their climate work. Programs need to understand who is being served, while regulations should equitably distribute the burdens and benefits—intentional and unintentional—on various communities. This approach helped to structure the Equity Implementation Guide, which is intended to support staff in applying an equity lens. The nine equity considerations were condensed into six objectives that will be assessed in the Climate Action Plan annual progress report. The Equity Implementation Guide is scheduled to be released summer 2016.

3. How were you able to pay community members to participate in an advisory process? Did participants need to have a minimum set of qualifications? Was there a job description?

The City of Portland awarded subgrants from the Bullitt Foundation. The funds were provided to organizations and not individuals. Each organization signed a grant agreement which provided guidance, but did not restrict how funds could be spent to support an organization's involvement in the Equity Working Group. The Equity Working Group was not regarded as an advisory process, but rather a panel of paid community experts working in partnership with government staff on a project. The grant agreement outlined expectations for the participant, the organization, as well as government staff.

Each organization was responsible to identify a representative that would meet specific qualifications as outlined in the terms of the grant agreement. Representatives varied across the participating organizations and included a board member, an intern, program staff and an executive director.

4. Why didn't you have the Equity Working Group members participate as part of the Steering Committee?

Equity Working Group members did participate in Steering Committee meetings and vice versa, however they were managed as two separate processes to ensure the development of a focused work environment for grantee organizations. This was important as the Equity Working Group's task was more intensive in both timeline and topic than the 2015 Climate Action Plan Steering Committee, which had a more general focus.

Creating opportunities is the essential first step

This project enabled the City of Portland and Multnomah County to establish relationships and identify strategies to target climate action efforts that will help 1) achieve equity goals, and 2) reduce existing disparities facing communities of color and low-income households. Importantly, this project has established or strengthened relationships with diverse community organizations that are already generating positive impacts.

Creating the space, time and trust to identify shared interests and opportunities for mutual benefit has proven to be of immeasurable value. The reason that equity is an issue today is that past decisions, deliberate or not, created deep inequities in Portland and nearly every city in the country.

An essential step to addressing these inequities is to create opportunities for the people most impacted to be at the table for today's decisions. That can happen only if policymakers and members of impacted communities know each other and trust each other. This project has made a small but important contribution to that effort.



Additional information

Visit:

www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/cap

Or e-mail:

climate@portlandoregon.gov

**CLIMATE
ACTION**
THROUGH EQUITY

