



CLARK COUNTY WASHINGTON

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Clark County Climate Change Planning

Environmental Justice Coalition Meeting #5

June 3, 2024, 3:30-6:30pm PT

Public Service Center in Vancouver, WA and
Zoom Webinar

Meeting Summary

FUNDED BY WASHINGTON'S

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The WA Department of Commerce climate planning grant is supported with funding from Washington's Climate Commitment Act. The CCA supports Washington's climate action efforts by putting cap-and-invest dollars to work reducing climate pollution, creating jobs, and improving public health. Information about the CCA is available at www.climate.wa.gov.

Attendees

Environmental Justice Coalition members:

- Ana Bentancourt (Latino Leadership NW)
- Laura Ellsworth (Council for the Homeless)
- Gabriela Mendoza Ewing (Pasitos Gigantes)
- Josh Jones (Partners in Careers)
- Tavie Keo (iUrban Teen)
- Rebecca O'Brien (Free Clinic of Southwest Washington)
- Dania Otto (Sakura 39ers Youth Association)
- Minh Pham (Vietnamese Community of Clark County)
- Alana Tudela (Pacific Islander Health Board of Washington)
- Almendra Velazquez (Fourth Plain Forward)
- Monica Zazueta (League of United Latin American Citizens #47013 - Vancouver Metro)

Environmental Justice Coalition alternates: Abby Hollopeter (Odyssey World International Education Services), Lika Smith (Pacific Islander Health Board of Washington), Jude Wait (Farm and Food Justice Network)

County staff: Lauren Henricksen, Harrison Husting, Jenna Kay, Amy Koski

Consultant team: Ben Duncan, Nicole Metildi, Grant Simmons (Kearns & West); Tracy Lunsford (Parametrix); Dana Hellman (CAPA Strategies)

Number of members of the public in attendance: 6

Welcome and Updates

Clark County and Kearns & West staff welcomed everyone to the meeting. Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reviewed the agenda and outlined the purpose and desired outcomes of the meeting:

- Reflect on public engagement members have conducted to-date.
- Share an update on the Resilience sub-element goals.
- Review and discuss the revised Equity and Environmental Justice Lens.

Additionally, Ben reviewed meeting logistics and greeted members of the public, noting that there would be a public comment opportunity at the end of the meeting.

Ben then asked if members had corrections for Environmental Justice Coalition (EJC) Meeting Summary #4. There were no suggested corrections, and the summary was accepted as is.

Jenna Kay, Clark County, shared project updates. She shared that the county has been sharing project updates with the Planning Commission and County Council. They will be sharing updates again with the Planning Commission on June 20 and with the County Council on June 5. Members are welcome to listen in.

Jenna noted that the county will host a community workshop related to resilience on Saturday, June 22 from 9:00 to 11:00 AM at Sarah J Anderson Elementary School. She also shared that an Environmental Impact Statement comment period is open until 5:00 PM on June 5 for the Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan, if members would like to provide feedback.

Additionally, Jenna noted that after today's discussion, the county will draft a summary of the feedback EJC members have received through their engagement efforts to share at the next meeting in July. She asked that EJC members provide final comments on the next round of survey questions by June 10, with a goal to have translated versions finalized by the week of June 17. Jenna also noted the possibility of moving the next EJC meeting to July 8 as an alternative meeting date due to conflicts on July 1, that was discussed for a decision later in the meeting. The group will not meet in September as the EJC meeting falls on Labor Day.

EJC Announcements

Ben asked the group if they had announcements of interest to committee members. EJC members shared the following announcements and updates:

- Members briefly discussed sharing event materials with the group. Jenna noted that members should send materials to the county for distribution to stay in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.
- One member announced the upcoming Juneteenth Vancouver Freedom Celebration on June 15th and extended an invitation to EJC members.

Reflection on Engagement

Ben invited EJC members to share reflections on their recent engagement efforts and highlight key lessons learned. Below is a summary of the group's discussion. See [Appendix A: Zoom Chat](#) for comments submitted through the chat, which are included in the summary below.

- Multiple members noted common challenges facing community members, which consisted of housing constraints, financial instability, and infrastructure limitations impacting preparedness for extreme weather events. Survey results also emphasized the financial and health impacts of severe weather on vulnerable populations, including people lacking housing and those with intellectual and developmental disabilities, asthma, and limited access to resources.
- Multiple members noted that most community members felt either not well prepared or only somewhat prepared for severe weather events.
- Multiple members noted that some community members felt the survey was too long.
- One member emphasized community building, storytelling, and educational elements as pivotal to meaningful engagement, especially around racial healing.
- One member discussed their community engagement efforts with homeless service providers and individuals experiencing homelessness, highlighting severe impacts of severe weather and differing feelings of preparedness.
- One member, who exclusively surveyed women, noted that common themes among that demographic included severe weather affecting their ability to leave the house, impacting health and safety, and facing difficulties in paying energy bills and housing costs.
- One member noted that students surveyed highlighted high financial costs such as housing, utilities and other living expenses, lack of access to air conditioning, mental health impacts of missing school, and concerns for vulnerable populations during extreme weather events.

Ben thanked everybody for their contributions.

Resilience Goals Update

Dana Hellman, CAPA Strategies, presented on the current draft Resilience Goals. She outlined the process undertaken by the technical team in collaboration with the Community Advisory Group (CAG).

Dana noted that this process started with the initial brainstorming of Resilience goals by the CAG and subsequent feedback from the EJC. Dana also stated that over 240 comments were received, leading to the development of a draft list of 28 goals matched with 42 policies. They noted that CAPA plans to refine these goals and policies through subsequent feedback from the CAG, aiming to ensure alignment with community priorities and equity considerations.

Dana emphasized the importance of incorporating detailed feedback into the draft list while maintaining a balance between specificity and broadness in goal and policy language. Dana outlined the next steps, including further refinement with the CAG and eventual review by the EJC, with a focus on evaluating the draft list through the Equity Lens.

The group had the following questions:

- Question: How would you advise members to achieve the right level of granularity with their input on the goals and policies? Are there specific examples members can look at to model suggestions from?
 - *Answer: It is important to ensure that the language used in Resilience goals and policies aligns with equity values and principles, even if it remains broad. We recognize that it is challenging to balance specificity without delving into tactical details, particularly within the context of the comprehensive plan. The iterative nature of the process, refining the goals and policy list with both the EJC and the CAG, attempts to mitigate this particular challenge. Additionally, county and technical consultant teams will collaborate to incorporate EJC and CAG feedback and draft policies that are the right level of specificity.*
- Question: How are priorities chosen during this process? And does this process intersect with the counties' Growth Management Plan? Should the EJC engage with the current State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process?
 - *Answer: For how priorities are chosen, we will analyze policies with various criteria before final recommendations. The criteria for the prioritization process have not been set yet. Environmental Justice Coalition members are not required to engage in the SEPA process for the Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update. However, EJC members may submit comments as an individual or on behalf of their organizations.*
- One member introduced the concept of four key societal denials: complicity in violence, unsustainability, entanglement with nature, and the depth of our challenges. These denials hinder our ability to address climate change and ecological collapse. They noted that from the survey comments, there's a clear need for truly affordable housing, fair wages, and jobs that will help people be resilient to climate change (like mental health counselors and community organizers). They implored this group to consider innovative housing solutions, such as 3D-printed homes and Earthships, which use recycled materials and sustainable designs.

Ben noted questions members had regarding the SEPA comment process and asked the project team to consider these comments and identify future opportunities for EJC members to contribute to processes related to but separate from this process. Jenna noted that she was

available to meet outside of these meetings and that, through the SEPA process, the county is looking for comments to inform the environmental analysis of the county Comprehensive Plan Update. Additionally, members are welcome to submit comments individually to this process.

Ben thanked the group for their thoughtful questions and discussion.

Revised Equity and Environmental Justice Lens

Ben reviewed the goals of the EJC group, which includes creating a climate element that best serves overburdened and vulnerable communities. Ben noted that members' stories and challenges were essential in shaping strategies. Ben also reviewed topics from the last meeting which included considering economic impacts, building community capacity, and addressing past and current trauma, especially for those affected by climate change.

Ben then reviewed the Revised Equity and Environmental Justice Lens, noting this lens is meant to provide guidance and prompts for analyzing how different communities are impacted by policies, focusing on both positive and negative effects. It aims to develop thoughtful, high-level goals and policies that consider the diverse experiences and needs of the community.

Below is a summary of the group's discussion. See [Appendix A: Zoom Chat](#) for comments submitted through the chat which are included in the summary below.

- Members discussed housing's historical context, including how neighborhoods' design and resource allocation affect communities differently, highlighting the importance of understanding these patterns. Another member cited examples of inequitable housing policies rooted in white supremacy.
- Members discussed data biases and limitations, emphasizing the need to consider what data is valued and how it informs goals and policies to benefit vulnerable communities.
- One member stressed the significance of who asks questions during community engagement, especially considering that many communities may lack trust with government and health institutions.
- One member raised the need for multi-lingual support and trained interpreters to bridge language barriers. They also suggested compensatory measures like gift cards for survey participation, and door-to-door outreach.
- Members discussed the importance of inclusive engagement methods, such as using culturally appropriate spaces and approaches, to ensure meaningful community participation and input.
- One member recognized the role of community-based organizations in bridging gaps and building trust with marginalized communities to facilitate meaningful engagement.
- One member highlighted the challenges faced by undocumented community members, their fear of engaging with local officials, and the need to create safe spaces for their voices to be heard.
- Members acknowledged the difficulty in engaging certain communities due to various barriers like time constraints, survival priorities, and past traumas.
- Members discussed the SEPA further. Some participants expressed concern that EJC input, particularly regarding environmental justice and equity, should be included in the scoping process for SEPA analysis. The group discussed how best to ensure EJC comments could be integrated into the official record, given upcoming deadlines and procedural constraints. They also discussed whether individual submissions or a collective approach would be more effective. During the meeting, Jenna said that EJC members

could only submit as individuals since the SEPA work was beyond the group's charge, however, she said she could share individual EJC comments submitted for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) scoping comment period with the rest of the EJC members. However, after speaking with her manager and director, it was recommended that she do not do that. Instead, Jenna recommended EJC members look at the recent comments submitted on the public comment webpage (<https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/2025-update-public-comment>) to see other comments submitted.

Ben thanked the group for their discussion.

Public Comment

Ben opened the public comment period.

- Heather Tischbein: I'm grateful to Jude for persistently seeking specificity on how the environmental justice and climate impact work related to the climate element can be incorporated into the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) scoping document. I share concerns about the importance of integrating these aspects into comprehensive planning, and I want to thank Jude, Ben, and Jenna for their dedication today. Integrating the work of the Environmental Justice committee into the EIS scoping document is crucial and must continue. I commend everyone for the progress made in this regard and express my gratitude.

One EJC member asked if EJC members were allowed to make a public comment because they are contracted with the county. Jenna responded that EJC members can provide public comment on the county's Comprehensive Plan project as individuals. For the topic under discussion, the Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Statement scoping, it would not be appropriate for the EJC to comment as a group since the comment period is outside the scope of the group's charge.

Ben reminded the public that there is a form on Clark County's website to submit comments at any time during the project at <https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/comp-plan-comments> and comments can be emailed to comp.plan@clark.wa.gov.

Next Steps

Jenna surveyed the group on which date between July 1 and July 8 would work best for members to attend. After surveying members, the group decided to meet on July 1. Ben and Clark County staff then went over next steps for EJC members, which consisted of:

- Complete by Monday, June 10: EJC members to send feedback on phase two engagement questions to Jenna (jenna.kay@clark.wa.gov).
- EJC Members: Submit invoices for May.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, July 1, 3:30-6:30p.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:30pm PT.

Appendix A: Zoom Chat

Below is a verbatim transcript of the webinar Zoom chat.

15:36:49 From Grant Simmons, Kearns & West (he/him) to Everyone:

Hi all - feel free to DM me here or text me at 831-331-7077 if you run into any tech issues during this meeting.

15:38:55 From Monica Zazueta, EJC Member to Everyone:

Sending healing vibes

15:39:27 From Lika Smith to Hosts and panelists:

Thanks so much Monica. I'll let Alana know

15:46:32 From Grant Simmons, Kearns & West (he/him) to Everyone:

Email comments to comp.plan@clark.wa.gov or submit a comment online: <https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/comp-plan-comments>

15:50:04 From Monica Zazueta, EJC Member to Hosts and panelists:

May you please put the event in the chat?

15:50:45 From Tavie Keo, iUrban Teen (EJC) to Hosts and panelists:

Yes

15:53:37 From Amy Koski, Clark County to Everyone:

Here's a link to the climate project page that includes information about the event at the top under project news: <https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/climate-change-planning>

15:54:35 From Rebecca O'Brien, EJC Member to Everyone:

That time frame works well for us!

16:01:12 From Tavie Keo, iUrban Teen (EJC) to Everyone:

We're excited to be there, Abby!

16:02:43 From Lika Smith, EJC to Hosts and panelists:

Yes. We'd love materials to share on our social media accounts

16:03:01 From Monica Zazueta, EJC Member to Hosts and panelists:

Thank you 😊👍

16:46:35 From Gabriela Ewing, EJC Member to Hosts and panelists:

Sorry I need to turn off my camera, my internet connection is unsustainable.

16:50:15 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Hosts and panelists:

why can't you be inclusive? how/who is choosing priorities? maybe you answered this "tactics" but how to avoid losing details needed to educate everyone and affect GMP

16:53:19 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Hosts and panelists:

Does EJC intersect with the Environmental Impact process wrt GMP?

16:54:53 From Amy Koski, Clark County to Everyone:

If comments or questions are posted in the chat, please be sure to send the Everyone.

16:56:26 From Nicole Metildi, Kearns & West (she/her) to Everyone:

Here are Jude's questions, copying so Everyone can see: why can't you be inclusive? how/who is choosing priorities? maybe you answered this "tactics" but how to avoid losing details needed to educate everyone and affect GMP

Does EJC intersect with the Environmental Impact process wrt GMP?

17:02:16 From Amy Koski, Clark County to Everyone:

Here's a link to the SEPA Environmental Impact Statement process that Jenna mentioned. This process is currently open for public comment through June 5th at 5pm:
<https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/2025-update-eis>

17:07:19 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Everyone:

here's looking at the Goal & Policy List from CAG [[what does "Menu of Measures" mean, Agriculture and Food systems. Are these the "tactics" and where is the Menu?]]
<https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2024-05/2024-0522-draft-resilience-goal-policy-list.pdf>

17:08:50 From Gabriela Ewing, EJC Member to Hosts and panelists:

Thank you

17:12:20 From Jenna Kay, Clark County, she/her to Hosts and panelists:

In response to Jude's question about where is the Menu of Measures: the Menu of Measures is a list of WA Dept. of Commerce provided climate goals and policies that is a part of the agency's guidance for local jurisdictions implementing HB1181. As Dana described in the overview of the goal and policy list development, that was one resource (of many) referenced when considering possible policy ideas. You can find a copy of it here:
<https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/n34kivgzn9rfe74jfz2vvzxqlrv7j9m9>

17:14:20 From Jenna Kay, Clark County, she/her to Hosts and panelists:

In response to the question about the draft goal and policy list on the CAG webpage. There is a draft working goal + policy list:
<https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2024-05/2024-0522-draft-resilience-goal-policy-list.pdf> and there is also a comment tracker:
https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2024-05/comment-tracker-v1_comments-through-may-18.pdf

17:18:16 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Everyone:

Is there a DRAFT scoping document about which to comment upon? Add, modify, reflect upon? There are lots of comments 836... all in individual PDFs. It looks like some EJC comments are included. Does this mean the input is part of the SEPA scoping such that the issues will be evaluated? Given Scoping Deadline June 5... seems like we need to figure out what/if EJC members can do to elevate and ensure issues will be analyzed even tho' we are early in the processes EJC and CAG...

17:18:21 From Jenna Kay, Clark County, she/her to Everyone:

Reposting my notes for everyone to see: In response to Jude's question about where is the Menu of Measures: the Menu of Measures is a list of WA Dept. of Commerce provided climate goals and policies that is a part of the agency's guidance for local jurisdictions implementing HB1181. As Dana described in the overview of the goal and policy list development, that was one resource (of many) referenced when considering possible policy ideas. You can find a copy of it here:

<https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/n34kivgzn9rfe74jfz2vvzxqlrv7j9m9>

17:18:26 From Gabriela Ewing, EJC Member to Hosts and panelists:

I'm here

17:18:53 From Jenna Kay, Clark County, she/her to Everyone:

Reposting my note for everyone to see: In response to the question about the draft goal and policy list on the CAG webpage. There is a draft working goal + policy list:

<https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2024-05/2024-0522-draft-resilience-goal-policy-list.pdf> and there is also a comment tracker:

https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2024-05/comment-tracker-v1_comments-through-may-18.pdf

17:22:46 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Everyone:

June 5th is now, so thanks. Are EJC comments included as posted... are all being forwarded to SEPA scoping, or just some that people have inputted?

17:23:07 From Jenna Kay, Clark County, she/her to Everyone:

If you are looking for the formal Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Statement notice, that is here: https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2024-05/ds-and-scoping-notice_2025-comp-plan_final_signed.pdf

17:24:24 From Jenna Kay, Clark County, she/her to Everyone:

EJC comments submitted to staff/consultants are not considered EIS scoping comments. So, if you want to elevate comments raised in this group, please submit per the instructions in the above EIS notice to make sure they are included as EIS scoping comments.

17:27:14 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Everyone:

Ok. So these <https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/2025-update-public-comment> are for the UPDATE and not the SEPA scoping. ARE any Scoping Comments submitted showing somewhere?

17:32:11 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Everyone:

"following areas for discussion in the EIS" does not explicitly include anything about climate resilience or social justice. But you said it would evaluate the Climate Element of the Comp Plan.

17:33:20 From Laura Ellsworth, CFTH EJC (she/her) to Everyone:

I have heard this in other community engagement work I've done for residents of low income affordable housing. This is a big issue.

17:40:22 From Rebecca O'Brien, EJC Member to Everyone:

looks good

17:40:23 From Laura Ellsworth, CFTH EJC (she/her) to Everyone:

looks good to me

17:40:35 From Minh Pham(EJC) to Everyone:

looks good

17:40:36 From Tavie Keo, iUrban Teen (EJC) to Everyone:

I think it looks good

17:41:03 From Almendra Velazquez, EJC Member to Everyone:



17:41:16 From Gabriela Ewing, EJC Member to Hosts and panelists:

Looks good to me

17:46:19 From Jenna Kay, Clark County, she/her to Everyone:

Jude, thank you for your additional questions. I don't multitask very well and want to get you answers. I can follow-up with you after this meeting so that we can all focus on the current equity lens discussion.

17:47:21 From Ana Betancourt Macias to Hosts and panelists:

The first question made me remember one parent that said that they can't even think to prep for the future because they are too busy trying to survive.

17:47:38 From Monica Zazueta, EJC Member to Hosts and panelists:

Yep.

17:49:34 From Grant Simmons, Kearns & West (he/him) to Everyone:

Reposting Ana's comment so everyone can see:

The first question made me remember one parent that said that they can't even think to prep for the future because they are too busy trying to survive.

17:50:15 From Tavie Keo, iUrban Teen (EJC) to Everyone:

Yes - Incentives/compensation

17:52:49 From Gabriela Ewing, EJC Member to Hosts and panelists:



17:54:17 From Monica Zazueta, EJC Member to Hosts and panelists:

Some people think they are not knowledgeable in these topics

17:54:23 From Gabriela Ewing, EJC Member to Hosts and panelists:

The fear is real for the undocumented community

17:54:53 From Gabriela Ewing, EJC Member to Hosts and panelists:

There's trust issues due to their immigration status

17:55:37 From Amy Koski, Clark County to Everyone:

Reminder to please change your chat to Everyone so everyone can see what is posted.

17:56:01 From Gabriela Ewing, EJC Member to Everyone:

Thank you

17:56:14 From Gabriela Ewing, EJC Member to Everyone:

The fear is real for the undocumented community

17:56:37 From Gabriela Ewing, EJC Member to Everyone:

There's trust issues due to their immigration status

17:57:05 From Grant Simmons, Kearns & West (he/him) to Everyone:

Tavie K: Yes - Incentives/compensation

Monica Z: Some people think they are not knowledgeable in these topics

18:01:46 From Laura Ellsworth, CFTH EJC (she/her) to Everyone:

Yes, Almendra!!

18:02:15 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Everyone:

With an "equity lens" EJC issues need to be included in the SEPA scoping. Explicitly and inclusively. The issues are highly "significant" and the EIS should analyze alternatives as such wrt Equity. Separation of the processes seems to reinforce the need to include voices. Is there a blanket way to interject scoping comments to elevate EJC issues?

18:05:20 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Everyone:

Link to "Online, self-paced" public meeting:

<https://gis.clark.wa.gov/portal/apps/storymaps/stories/1fda5ad3f0f44453e8f84953c06a5cfef>

18:06:59 From Gabriela Ewing, EJC Member to Everyone:



18:13:36 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Everyone:

3 ways: I suspect we need to submit our own as our organizations. AND we can each reference the EJC public meetings... I'm not clear on what Jenna just outlined

18:15:52 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Everyone:

i'll also submit to Jenna re EJC if that helps. As a coalition we can support each other and the whole:) thanks for all your voices and great work

18:19:04 From Ana Betancourt Macias to Hosts and panelists:

July 8th works for me!

18:19:28 From Dania to Everyone:



18:19:31 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Everyone:

any date works OK

18:19:47 From Almendra Velazquez, EJC Member to Everyone:

Both dates work for me

18:19:56 From Laura Ellsworth, CFTH EJC (she/her) to Everyone:

july 8 does not work for me

18:21:01 From Gabriela Ewing, EJC Member to Everyone:

Thank you

18:21:10 From Tavie Keo, iUrban Teen (EJC) to Everyone:

Thank you 👍

18:25:25 From Jude w/ Farm & Food Justice Network EJC to Everyone:

each voice counts louder

18:25:40 From Tavie Keo, iUrban Teen (EJC) to Everyone:

