



Clark County Climate Change Planning

Environmental Justice Coalition Meeting #8

October 7, 2024, 3:30-6:30pm PT

Public Service Center in Vancouver, WA and
Zoom Webinar

Meeting Summary

FUNDED BY WASHINGTON'S



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:

- Alana Tudela (Pacific Islander Health Board of Washington)
- Almendra Velazquez-Perez (Fourth Plain Forward)
- Ana Bentancourt (Latino Leadership NW)
- Angela William (Pacific Islander Community Association of WA)
- Dania Otto (About Sakura 39ers Youth Organization)
- Gabriela Mendoza Ewing (Pasitos Gigantes)
- Josh Jones (Partners in Careers)
- Minh Pham (Vietnamese Community of Clark County)
- Rebecca O'Brien (Free Clinic of Southwest Washington)
- Tavie Keo (iUrban Teen)
- Yolanda Frazier (NAACP Vancouver)

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

County staff: Jenna Kay, Amy Koski, Lauren Henricksen

Consultant team: Ben Duncan, Nicole Metildi, María Verano (Kearns & West); Tracy Lunsford, Joshua Proudfoot (Parametrix)

Number of members of the public in attendance: 3

Welcome

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 conducted to date and prepare for upcoming engagement.
- Discuss draft Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction policies.

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 #7. There were no suggested corrections, and the summary was accepted as is.

Project Updates

Jenna Kay, Clark County, provided project updates. Jenna noted that new public comments and feedback from EJC members were included in the materials email for this meeting. Additionally, Jenna informed the group of an upcoming community workshop on GHG reduction on October 19 at Sarah J Anderson Elementary School. Registration for this event is required by October 15. Jenna also shared that an upcoming County Council work session on land use alternatives for the broader comprehensive plan project will occur on October 9. Public hearings with both the Planning Commission and County Council will follow this work session, with exact dates to be confirmed.

EJC Announcements

EJC Members shared the following announcements and invited members to their events (listed below):

- Pacific Island Health Board (PIHB) and the Pacific Islander Community Association of WA (PICA-WA) will be hosting a Spooktober Wellness event at the PICA-WA offices on October 26 from 12 – 4 pm. This event will include focus group discussions from 10 – 11 am and surveys will be distributed to community members.
- Odyssey World is partnering with SWACH to put on a community engagement event on October 15. The event will focus on social and environmental disparities. The event will be hybrid. Participants can attend at the SWACH offices or on Zoom. A flyer will be shared with the group with more information.
- One member expressed their gratitude for the county staff who attended the Latino Leadership NW's event in early October, sharing that over 670 students participated in the event.
- An EJC member shared that they have been following the integration of the EJC's work into the broader climate element development process and attended a CAG meeting where the CAG raised concerns about how equity priorities are being addressed through this process. They suggested that EJC members might want to provide separate comments and input.

Reflection on Engagement

Jenna reviewed the project process and timeline with the group, highlighting how engagement feedback collected by the EJC can help inform the forthcoming equity lens discussions and review of draft climate policies.

Jenna reviewed highlights from the final summary of Phase 1 community engagement work focused on severe weather impacts. She emphasized how important the EJC member's work has been in highlighting key issues and in reaching a diverse range of people to participate in the project. She also explained how the EJC member feedback provided at the Aug. meeting was incorporated into the final phase 1 engagement summary.

Moving into an initial review of Phase 2 community engagement feedback, Jenna reminded the group how this phase centered on gathering feedback on potential resilience goals. She also reminded the group that some EJC members were still wrapping up their phase 2 engagement work, so the feedback findings were still tentative. She reviewed resilience goals with the most positive support, those with the least support and those with more of a mixed reaction from those providing feedback. She also highlighted key themes in the feedback on ensuring resilience goals benefit community members most vulnerable to climate impacts, including: targeted support, improved access, outreach and education, sustainable funding, and listening and consulting with vulnerable community members.

EJC members had the following reflections, comments and questions about the preliminary phase 2 engagement summary key themes:

- One member shared that they were concerned that the high cost of heating and cooling homes, especially for those without appropriate weatherization, was not sufficiently addressed in the drafted policies.

- *Response: Energy costs were part of the financial impacts section of the engagement report, but this could be more explicitly addressed.*
- Another member shared that they would prefer for each sector to have specific metrics to address the funding and support.
 - *Response: Discussions around sector-specific funding will be a key part of the Equity Lens review. The draft policies are not yet finalized and there is still time to ensure that these critical areas will receive the necessary attention. Also, as a reminder, comprehensive plan policies are fairly high-level, so there may be specifics that are not precisely reflected in the policy list. The key will be to set-up a policy framework that is in alignment with specific ideas.*

Jenna explained the next step for the EJC will be to review the Resilience goals and policies through the Environmental Justice Lens at their November meeting and noted that EJC members can bring what they have heard through their engagement into those discussions.

Next, Jenna reminded the group to work on wrapping up their Phase 2 and Phase 3 engagement as soon as possible, with Phase 4 engagement ending by the December EJC meeting.

Draft GHG Reduction Goals and Policies

The conversation transitioned to a review of the draft GHG reduction goals and policies. Tracy Lunsford, Parametrix, provided an overview of the draft GHG Emissions Reduction goals and policies. She shared how CAG and EJC feedback was reviewed and then used to create draft goals and policies. Tracy outlined that there are five draft goals for each of the building energy and transportation sectors, the two largest emission sources in Clark County. Additionally, she mentioned that five goals have been established for agriculture, forestry, and land use. Her overview also covered four draft goals for other categories, including industrial processes, waste and wastewater, and consumption.

Members then took ten minutes to review the full set of draft goals and policies individually. After, the group reconvened for a roundtable discussion focused on three questions:

1. What is most aligning with what you've heard and what your communities care about?
2. Are your communities' priorities reflected in these policies?
3. Is there anything missing?

Members shared feedback and asked clarifying questions about specific sections of the policies (summarized below).

- Several members agreed that there was an elevated need for increased focus on transportation. Ideas were shared about how to make bus stops and sidewalks safer, and how to offer transportation services to communities which were further away. A couple of EJC members spoke about light rail not being available in SW WA. Other members spoke about micromobility options like bicycles and scooters. The C-TRAN Current and small community electric vehicle services, like the Ryd and Get There SW Washington, were discussed. Safety improvements included: better/more complete sidewalk network; more people using the sidewalk; teaching people how to ride the bus and how to use new bicycle lanes.
- Several members agreed on the importance of green spaces, trees, quality of agriculture, and land use.

- Accessibility for overburdened communities was mentioned repeatedly throughout the discussion of various policies.
- One member expressed support for creating subsidies and rebates rather than mandates or regulations and advocated for making it easier and more affordable for consumers to adopt green policies. They noted for Goal 3, Policy 1 their preference would be for an incentive-based approach.
 - *Response: There is a need to create fiscal opportunities instead of barriers, and the options for addressing inclusivity in the document will be explored, including changing the language to include equity strategies.*
- A member shared a concern about the document's inclusivity for the undocumented community. They recognized the challenges of using federal funds for this group and asked for clarity on how the policies will be inclusive of undocumented community members. They emphasized that if the intention is to serve all communities, it should be made clear from the start.
 - *Response: The project team can explore how to include explicit language regarding the undocumented community in the comprehensive plan. Generally, there are a few places this could be done, from background information that provides context, definitions, etc., to language in specific policies, to equity considerations for implementing policies, to an overarching equity policy.*
- One member expressed that because federal money does not reach the undocumented community, subsidy applications should stop asking for gross income and instead look at the total income after taxes (net income). They also raised concerns around affordability, such as the cost of electric vehicles and electricity costs.
- An EJC member reflected on the policies for providing incentives for switching to high-efficiency electric appliances and where providers pick up and dispose of old appliances. They shared that the community they represented was skeptical that a program like this would be accessible to them.
 - *Response: There is a necessity for clearer communication regarding accessibility and the importance of changes to promote initiatives like these.*
- A member highlighted that planning for jobs and daily services near homes was really important to their community because of impacts to the environment and improved accessibility.
- A member highlighted that for energy efficient apartment buildings, the building owner should take the burden off of renters.
- One member expressed a desire for public space and transportation planning to include community input.
- A member noted that the unhoused community will not be as impacted by many of the proposed policies as other community members might be. They appreciated the conversation about ensuring public transportation is accessible to them but noted that some solutions might not meet the unique needs of this population. The resilience policies related to things like emergency management for severe hot and cold weather were really important for their community.
 - *Response: The overlap between severe weather and vulnerable populations is significant, which seems more relevant in discussions about resilience than in GHG reduction. Staff confirmed that it is ok that not all policies or policy topics are applicable to every community group and encouraged EJC members to identify the items in the GHG reduction list that could directly or indirectly benefit their community, such as the example provided on improving accessibility of public transportation.*

- A member shared that many of the community members which they represent see the benefits in the policies but feel they would not be accessible to them in their daily lives.
- A member expressed that the feedback from their community was focused more on their immediate needs, rather than specific goals related to GHG reductions. They wondered how to bridge the gap between high-level policy discussions and the community's actual needs.
 - *Response: The challenge of bridging the gap between high-level policies and community understanding is difficult, this highlights the importance of education and outreach to the community.*
- A member highlighted youth priorities for education, volunteering opportunities, and promoting walking and bicycling, and parks. They also noted that youth tend to really like hands-on activities, so policies related to tree planting are an example of a good educational opportunity that is also creating benefit for the community.
- One EJC member pointed out that Goals 12 and 13 address sustainable agricultural practices, noting that many members of their community are in favor of this.
- A member expressed concerns about the safety of EV charging stations, batteries, and the compatibility of charging attachments.
- Members noted that community elders and larger families were concerned about the costs of EV vehicles. Members also shared the difficulty in qualifying for a Washington State rebate for the purchase of an EV, income level thresholds being an issue for some members of their community, and challenges encountered with dealerships to offer the rebates. They also noted the amount of research needed to navigate these items was a lot.
- A member highlighted concerns of their community related to the cost of electricity bills if more homes become all-electric.
- A member asked about how to incentivize more builders to build green.
- An EJC member highlighted the community's interest in agriculture and suggested offering classes or educational opportunities related to farming. They also highlighted interest in more education on waste and consumption for their community. With these opportunities, they also fear that the language barrier for their community to access this type of education is challenging, because their community doesn't see people providing the education who are like them. A member emphasized the need for environmental justice to be integrated throughout all policies and in an overarching policy.
- A member emphasized providing incentives for institutions like the county, universities, hospitals, schools, etc.
- A member suggested expanding the policy that mentions building a green building workforce across more fields, to build a green workforce.
- A member noted some issues like land conversion problems could be addressed through an entity like a county agricultural commission and was wondering how that might be reflected in the policy list.
- A member noted that an equity or environmental justice commission would ensure in the future that policies in the plan are carried out.
- A member pointed out the need to consider the specific needs of rural communities where infrastructure has been lacking and are generally underserved.

Tracy concluded by reminding the group that the feedback from this session would be incorporated into the next version of the GHG reduction goals and policies. She emphasized that the Equity Lens review would be the key opportunity for EJC members to shape the policies further and ensure that the needs of vulnerable communities were fully integrated.

Public Comment

Ben opened the public comment period. There were no public comments.

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.

Wrap-up and Next Steps

Jenna and Tracy thanked everyone for their participation in today's meeting. Jenna shared that they plan to integrate the feedback from this meeting, along with insights from the recent CAG meeting, into the next version of the draft list of GHG reduction policies. The technical consultants will perform the first level of analysis on this updated draft.

Jenna reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule and reviewed the next steps, which consisted of:

- Integrate CAG and EJC feedback into the draft GHG reduction goals and policy list.
- Project team first level analysis of the draft GHG Reduction Goals and Policies.
- November EJC Meeting: Equity Lens discussion of Resilience policies.
- December EJC Meeting: Equity Lens discussion of GHG Reduction policies.
- Phase 2 and 3 engagement: The project team needs the final data and progress reports for these phases of engagement. EJC members should send Lauren, Amy, and Jenna their final data, deliverables, and progress reports by mid-October.
- Wrap-up Phase 4 engagement by the December EJC meeting.

Ben thanked the members for participating in the meeting and shared that the next meeting will be held on Monday, November 4, 3:30-6:30p.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:19pm PT.

Appendix A: Zoom Chat

Below is a verbatim transcript of the webinar Zoom chat.

Time	Sender	Message
15:21:59	Tavie Keo, iUrban Teen	Hi everyone! Joining via phone today
15:35:11	María Verano, Kearns & West	For Zoom technical issues, email mverano@kearnswest.com
15:46:34	María Verano, Kearns & West	Email comments to comp.plan@clark.wa.gov or submit a comment online: https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/comp-plan-comments
16:09:44	Jude Farm+Food Justice Network EJC	"Adoption Process" Adoption of the Climate Element, The GM Plan? The Alternative??
16:22:44	Rebecca O'Brien, FCSWWA	I need to step away for about 10 minutes to grab my kids from daycare
16:32:57	Rebecca O'Brien, FCSWWA	I'm back!
16:36:16	Amy Koski, Clark County Public Health	Welcome back Rebecca.
17:03:59	María Verano, Kearns & West	Link to goals and policies: https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2024-09/draft-ghg-policy-list-as-of-2024-0923-without-comments.pdf
17:04:46	María Verano, Kearns & West	Prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is most aligning with what you've heard and what your communities care about? - Are your communities' priorities reflected in these policies? - Is there anything missing?
17:06:44	Nicole Metildi, Kearns & West	We'll come back at 5:17
17:20:21	Lika Smith	I agree

17:29:53	Lika Smith	Why is gross used anyway? Everything should be based on net
17:31:28	Nicole Metildi, Kearns & West	Hi Lika, would you please send your messages to "everyone"? thank you!
17:32:00	Lika Smith	Can we send in our thoughts? One thing I would like to see are public spaces planners and transportation planning should include community input
17:33:21	Nicole Metildi, Kearns & West	Hi Lika, Can you please change your settings to send messages to "Everyone"?
17:33:33	Nicole Metildi, Kearns & West	We need to do this for the Open Public Meetings Act
17:34:30	Nicole Metildi, Kearns & West	From Lika Smith at 5:29: Why is gross used anyway? Everything should be based on net
17:34:42	Nicole Metildi, Kearns & West	From Lika Smith at 5:32: Can we send in our thoughts? One thing I would like to see are public spaces planners and transportation planning should include community input
17:44:58	Jenna Kay, Clark County	Hi Lika, in response to your question about sending in your thoughts -- if you would prefer to send thoughts in writing, you are welcome to do that too. Thanks!
17:45:44	Jenna Kay, Clark County	Hi, reposting so everyone can see: Hi Lika, in response to your question about sending in your thoughts -- if you would prefer to send thoughts in writing, you are welcome to do that too. Thanks!
17:47:35	Dania-EJC	For me, a lot of the feedback from my community weren't as detailed and specific as these goals and policies. Their priorities were more general like saying they need support when the power goes out during severe weather. The answers I got from my community spoke more about how we need more access to housing because of the worry of being unhoused during severe weather.
17:48:03	Nicole Metildi, Kearns & West	From Dania at 5:47: For me, a lot of the feedback from my community weren't as detailed and specific as these goals and policies. Their priorities were more general like saying they need support when the power goes out during severe weather. The answers I got from my community spoke more about how we need more access to housing because of the worry of being unhoused during severe weather.
17:48:31	Nicole Metildi, Kearns & West	Hi Dania! Could you please send messages to "everyone"? Thanks!
17:48:59	Dania EJC	oh yes..sorry about that!

17:50:10	Nicole Metildi, Kearns & West	No worries!
18:08:02	President Yolanda	I do know that TESLA has an amazing benefit whereby people of a certain income bracket are incentivized to purchase a vehicle and their down payment is covered. Please research
18:09:50	Lika Smith	The research involved for electric vehicle qualification is also wild
18:13:15	Nicole Metildi, Kearns & West	From President Yolanda at 6:08: I do know that TESLA has an amazing benefit whereby people of a certain income bracket are incentivized to purchase a vehicle and their down payment is covered. Please research.
18:13:28	Nicole Metildi, Kearns & West	From Lika at 6:09: The research involved for electric vehicle qualification is also wild
18:15:14	María Verano, Kearns & West	Email comments to comp.plan@clark.wa.gov or submit a comment online: https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/comp-plan-comments
18:18:47	María Verano, Kearns & West	EJC webpage: https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/environmental-justice-coalition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project webpage: clark.wa.gov/community-planning/climate-change-planning - Project contact: Jenna Kay, jenna.kay@clark.wa.gov