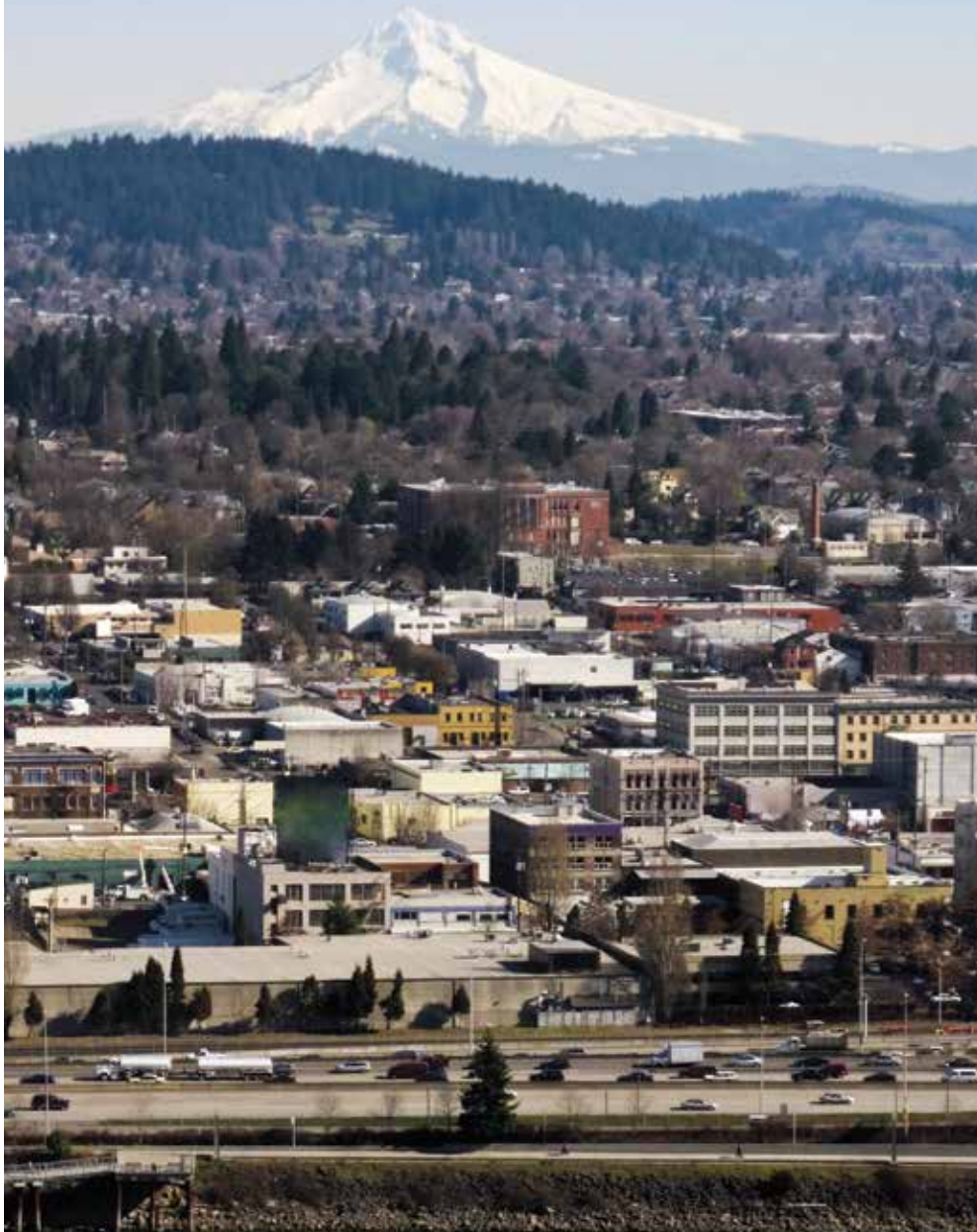


# CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH EQUITY



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

July 12, 2016



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# 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.



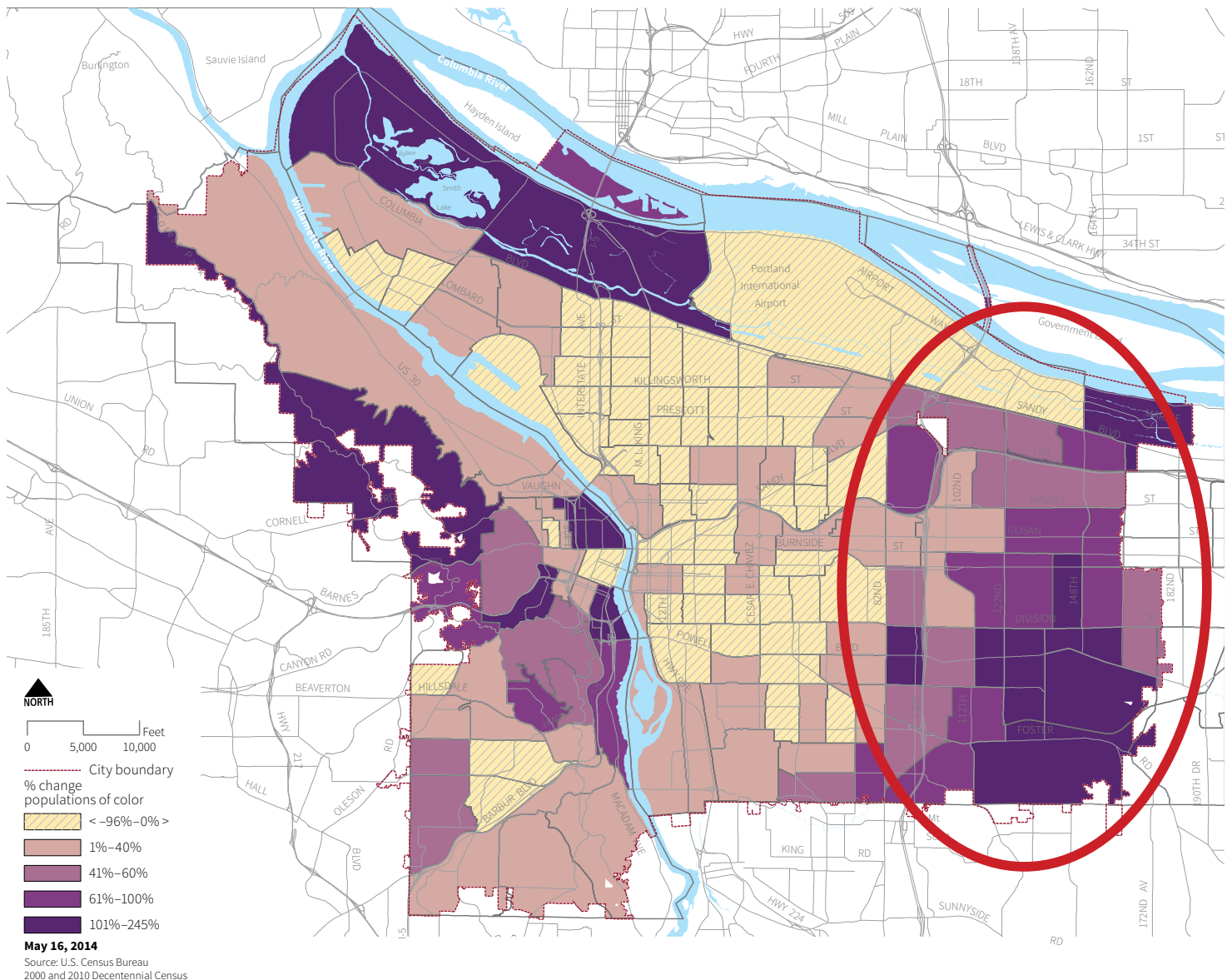
*According to a 2014 report prepared for Green 2.0 that studied diversity in environmental organizations, a broadening of the movement must grow and embrace different perspectives to appeal to diverse communities.*

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.

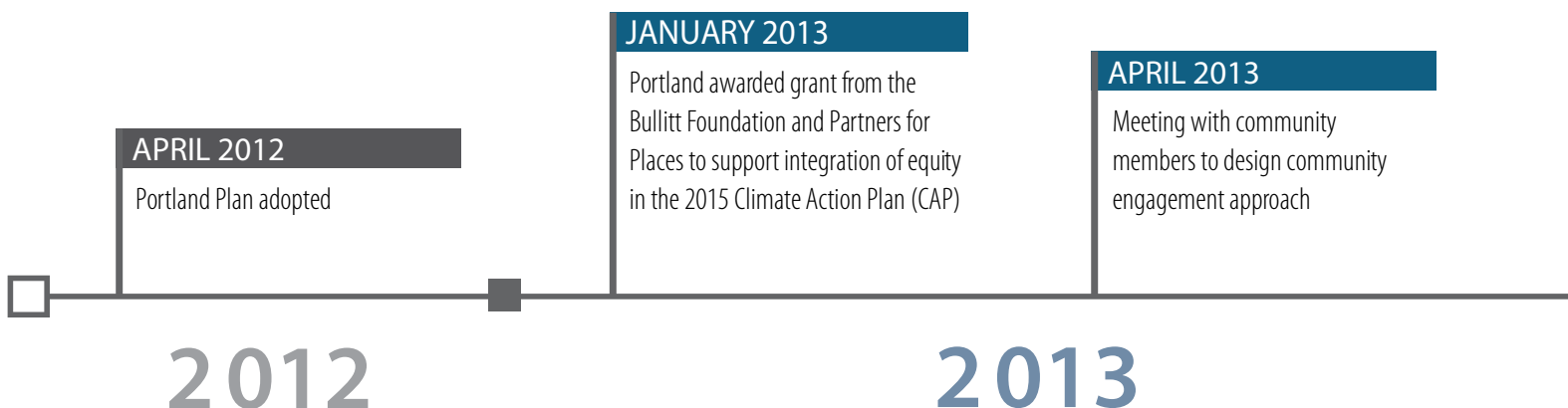
## Funding identified for community engagement

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.<sup>1</sup>
- \$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.<sup>2</sup>





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.

<sup>1</sup> 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>.

<sup>2</sup> 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

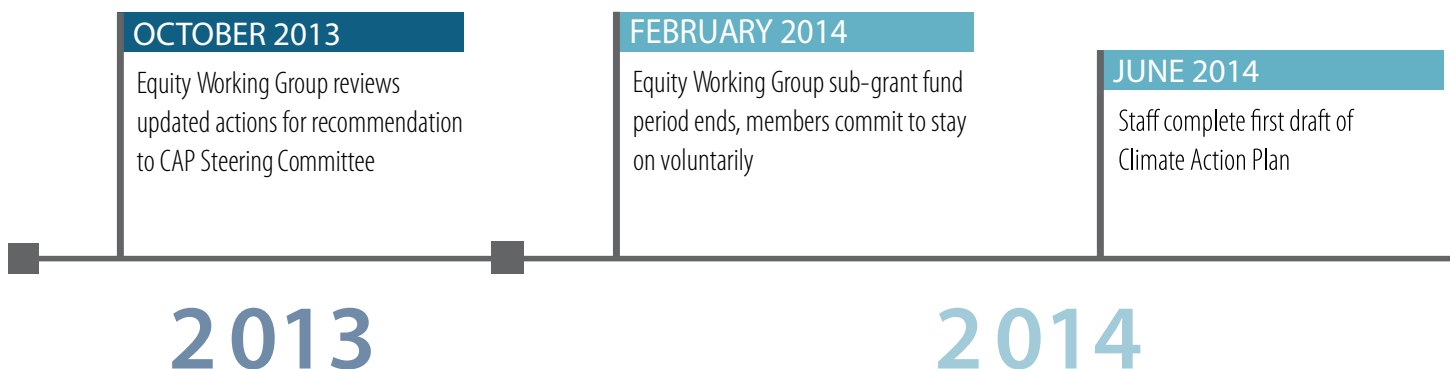
Eight organizations applied, and five were initially awarded sub-grants. Because a sixth was identified as a strong candidate, Multnomah County, the City's partner in the Climate Action Plan, contributed an additional \$4,000. Verde, a community partner that is focused on sustainable economic development 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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

**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.



*"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

**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

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# 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."*

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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)

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# 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 Toulan 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

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