

**Equity Advisory Group –
Equity Lens Session**

Meeting Date: March 15, 2023
 Time: 4:30pm – 6:00pm
 Location: Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

Facilitator:	EAG Members:
Avista:	Alex Swenson
Tamara Bradley	Cindy Kimmet
Ana Matthews	Clyde Abrahamson
Meghan Pinch	KJ January
Amanda Ghering	Jupiter
Kelly Dengel	
	Guests:

Agenda

- I. Welcome & Introductions
 - Overview of Meeting: Rules and Intent
- II. Member Spotlight
- III. Named Communities Investment Fund
- IV. Spokane Tribe – Energy Partnership
- V. Public Participation
- VI. Your Support Team and Next Meeting

Facilitator

- Tamara Bradley
- Tamara Bradley
- Ana Matthews
- Meghan Pinch
- Tamara Bradley
- Tamara Bradley

Meeting Notes

Welcome & Introductions

Introductions and Meeting Rules and Intent and review of today’s agenda.

Member Spotlight

Introduced Alex Swenson to the team.

Named Communities Investment Fund – Project Prioritization

The EAG has been instrumental in developing ideas on initiatives we can take to support our communities while using funds from Avista’s named community investment fund.

Here is the list combined between each EAG session last month, the items highlighted in blue will be discussed during this meeting. We will discuss projects Avista already has

that tie into these initiatives and new projects that we think match the goals of the EAG. Please let us know if we have hit the mark or if these needs to be improved upon.

Rank	Initiatives
1*	Focus efforts on improving energy efficiency (and EE awareness/education) for schools, community centers, and other places where Named Communities spend time
1*	Focus efforts on improving energy efficiency for Spokane Tribe partners
2	Improve energy efficiency in multi-family and mobile home communities
3	Increase tree canopy and shade in Named Communities (consider tradeoffs with solar)
3	Increase access to energy efficient products and appliances for Named Communities
4	Increase awareness of and engagement in energy efficiency programs while also meeting whole-house needs through community-based partnerships and referrals to services
5*	Set aside funds to match for energy efficiency grant applications for community organizations and tribal partners (could have higher feasibility)
6	Focus efforts on improving energy efficiency for community members without stable housing (consider including with other initiatives)

We are currently looking at each of these items and how we can make strides towards progress in each one.

Member: I really like the number 5 items to set aside funds for Energy Efficiency (EE) grant items. The tribal energy advisory group I am in is looking at a funding opportunity and one of my thoughts is around the campus near downtown for college, we may want to bring in some native students to teach them about energy use and how micro grids works for energy engineering students?

Company: That is an excellent idea, and we will take that topic offline and see how we can move forward in that arena.

Member: I know the girls scouts have made a pledge to plant 1000 trees, so the girls would probably be able to help and volunteer planting trees.

Company: Great idea, thank you, we will see what we can do for a partnership.

Member: I think this is a well-balanced list for all the communities in the area.

Company: This list will be an evolving list and so we can always add to it anytime.

Reflecting on the number one item on this list, through the state department of commerce there is a potential partnership that we could leverage state funds and bring in a project like back up solar, EE improvements, back up battery, EV charging, etc., We are exploring the potential right now. We are looking at a facility now but cannot share who that is yet as nothing has been finalized or agreed. We will create a model that we could replicate with other facilities throughout Eastern Washington. We need to apply for the grant next week, so we are still working on that. Does this model look like a good approach that supports the initiatives you are looking at supporting?

Member: I like it, this good to me.

Member: The only thing I would want to add is to set up one of our buildings as a learning center that has real time activities with a screen that tracks your solar power storage or shows things real time so people can learn from it.

Company: That is a great idea, thank you!

Member: So, the grant from the state would partner with the funds we have to use through Avista?

Company: Yes, that is correct, good clarifying questions. Thank you.

Are there any items that bring you pause towards this proposal?

Members: All say it looks good.

Member: I really love the idea of bringing in the monitor and showing the real time way that battery storage etc., is working.

[Spokane Tribe – Energy Partnership](#)

Grid modernization

Awarded project: Financial support to design and engineer a clean and resilient energy storage project in partnership with the Spokane Tribe. The project will support increased energy resilience and energy sovereignty. Funding does not include construction of project.

Project Funding: \$480,000 in total (Avista to provide \$240,000 in-kind match to \$240,000 in funding from Department of Commerce).

The tribe has a large initiative called children of the sun solar project, there was a big fire on the reservation, and it wiped out the distribution lines that bring power to Wellpinit and the surround area. There was no water, no fuel and it made the problem much worse. This issue would not have been quite as bad if there was backup power source. This project is to support the tribe in improving those resource needs.

Traditional Grid Model

[Clean Energy Fund IV – Natural Hazard Resiliency & Energy Sovereignty](#)

[Traditional Grid](#)



Trends challenging the Grid:

- Aging Infrastructure
- Increased variable generation and load mix
- Increasing risk from wildfires, big storm events and other natural disasters
- Vulnerability to outages in Wellpinit and surrounding areas due to lack of redundancy
- CETA



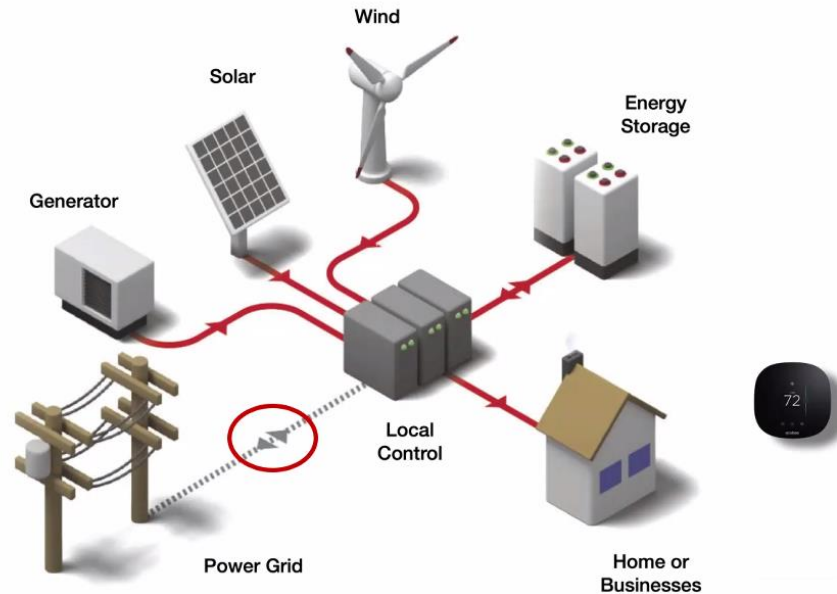
Microgrid model

What is a Microgrid?

A small power system with the ability to operate connected to the larger grid, or by itself in stand-alone mode.

5 key components:

- energy sources (generators, storage)
- Energy sinks (loads)
- a way to connect/ disconnect to the larger power system (PCC)
- means for controlling the microgrid
- appropriate safety assurance systems



Member: The things that intrigues be is the center piece of how it controls your generator or your back up battery and how they all work together. We are looking forward to bringing it in this summer and it will provide us with an early warning system which is being deigned now.

Company: This is technical so please let me know if you have any questions.

Wellpinit is small but has tons of critical infrastructure that needs to maintain power in the event of an emergency. A lot of their critical structures are located on the same feeder so the micro grid would help support those buildings. However, there are 3 circuits that support that feeder, and it is a challenge to decide which buildings we can support, so we are working through the complexities now. We are looking at redoing those circuits all together and moving all the critical buildings to operate off one circuit that is prioritized in the event of an emergency.

Spokane Tribe Grid Resiliency Hypothetical Design Concepts- For further development and analysis

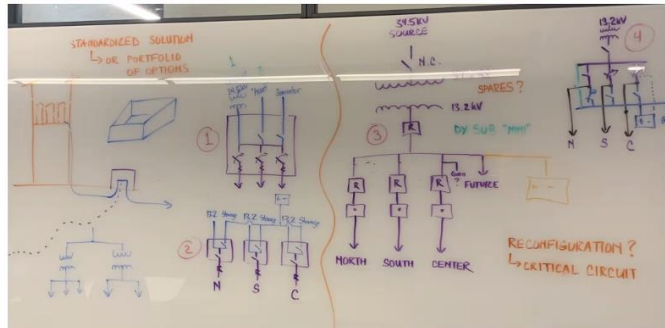


“Switchable” platform that could enable power to be switched between three or more stepdown circuits during an emergency

Could replace elevated building transformers currently located behind post office

Could potentially create a “critical loads” circuit- to ensure that power is available / prioritized to buildings that are critical to Tribal operations during emergencies

Location TBD, but would be somewhere in or near Wellpinit core area



We also needed to see the existing conditions of the buildings and loads before starting, which also brought up potential energy efficiency measures to reduce the load of the larger buildings which will help support the microgrid initiative. We couldn't potentially bring in 13 Energy Efficiency measures and potentially reduce the energy bill by up to 40%. They will be applying for the clean energy fund grant through the department of commerce to support these energy efficiency upgrades.

Member: It is nice to see this work happening since this building was not designed the right way for this type of climate. We are also installing about 120 roofs with solar and training individuals for installing those.

Public Participation

Through the CETA legislation, we are required to include our customers in our clean energy transition. As you know we hired a third-party consultant, P3, to develop a communication strategy for to help us in engaging out customers effectively. Below is a list of our outreach goals.

CEIP Public Participation Strategy

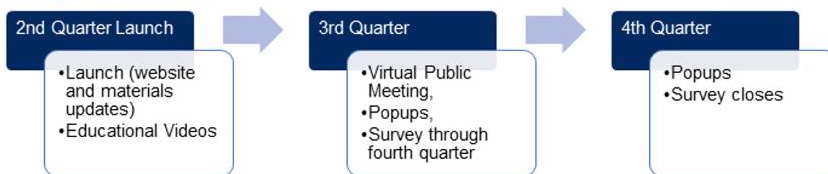
Outreach Goals

- Establish early and continuous public participation opportunities that provide timely information to all interested parties.
- Provide multiple methods for public input to gain an understanding of the values and needs of residents.
- Provide reasonable public access to information to enhance the public's knowledge and ability to participate.
- Promote an open, inclusive, and transparent public involvement process by providing clear and consistent information that is easy to understand and disseminated in multiple formats based on audience needs.
- Implement measures for seeking input from and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved Named Communities, such as low-income, minority, disabled, and non-English speaking individuals.

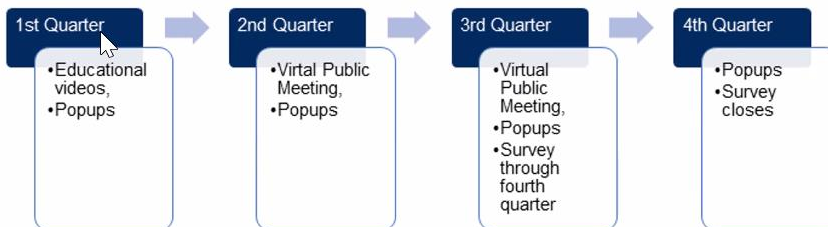


We would like to review their input with you to see what resonates with you. The following actions plan were suggested by P3, to help develop an effective communication and outreach plan.

2023 Timeline



2024 Timeline



Here are the communication methods P3 suggested

Virtual Public Meetings

- Provide education on CEIP Implementation
- 1 – 1.25 hr. duration
- Live language interpretation
- Advertise
 - email, customer service line message, social media, bill inserts, newsletters, digital & printed flyers
- Recorded & posted to website
- *Alternative*
 - Prerecorded, language subtitles, view at customer's leisure
 - 15 – 20 minutes

Popup Events

- Existing community events
- Community partner organization sponsored events
- At least one event per quarter
- Printed and translated materials
- Surveys, program applications, and lightbulbs

What would your preference be for learning about our CEIP?

Member: I like when there are engagement opportunities, two-way communications.

Member: I watch some long videos others would find boring 😞 but also, I'm opting to be in this group so that also says a lot.

Member: would the video be on CEIP or general utility information?

Company: CEIP related, funds being spent in the named community investment fund, etc., things related to clean energy.

Member: People are more willing to listen to how things will impact them, so the public meetings will be more engaging face to face or virtual, not a video.

Member: If you are going to have the meeting like we are having here, I like that approach, I don't know that everyone would engage, but if there was a video coupled with it afterward that is complimentary of the message you are trying to share.

We plan on surveying our customers annually to ensure they feel heard and how we can continue to engage them.

Below is a list of items suggested by P3 that we continue to investigate.

Educational Videos	Project Webpage	Social Media	Survey Video	Direct Outreach	Phone Tree Messaging	Media Kit
Series of short educational videos Easy to digest manner / 8 th grade reading level or less Promoted via email & social media Videos will be subtitled utilizing the top 5 requested languages	Updates, announcements, survey links, meeting summaries, opportunities for public participation	Basic information about CEIP Implementation Opportunities to participate Surveys	1 minute video to advertise CEIP customer survey Overview of project How to obtain a copy of the survey Advertised via website, social media, and media kit	Phone & email outreach to community partners Community connection Target underrepresented populations Broaden the reach of outreach activities Creation of a script to ensure language is consistent	Pre-recorded messages while customers on hold Entice participation in online survey	Developed for the survey Distributed to Avista Staff, community partners, stakeholders and others to help in the promotion of engagement opportunities Press Releases, flyers, graphics & presentation slides, newsletter, and social media

What else should we be focusing on when discussing CEIP with our customers?

Member: I think all three are important, measuring our success, our targets, and our initiatives.

Member: To me, I want to know how the CEIP impacts me as a customer directly. And then follow that up with the initiatives and how that impacts the customers and the environment around them.

We are having a public participation meeting April 11th, virtually, at noon and at 5pm. Email invitations will be going out to all electric Washington customers including a special invite for all advisory group members.

Wrap Up

Thank you all for your wonderful ideas, please feel free to send us any additional ideas. In May we will discuss wildfire impacts and initiatives and in April we will continue discussing our project initiatives Ana shared with us today.

Reminder of upcoming meetings on April 19th and 21st