



Equity Advisory Group – Equity Lens Session

Meeting Date: 03/20/2024
 Time: 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm
 Location: Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

Facilitator	Present	EAG Member	Member Organizations
Amber Lenhart	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clyde Abrahamson	Spokane Indian Housing Authority
Avista Team Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Margee Chambers	Spokane Clean Air
Kelly Dengel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Connie Kliewer	NEWESD101
Ana Matthews	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clair Trapp	Rural Resources
Dan Blazquez	<input type="checkbox"/>	David Tietz	Salem Arms Community Housing
Amanda Ghering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	KJ January	Spectrum
Kristine Meyer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	William von Bracht	Othello, school English as 2nd language
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michele Bennington	Community member at large
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brook Beeler	Department of Ecology Eastern Region
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jupiter McGee	Sunrise Spokane Affiliation (youth led) (Facebook)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vanessa Strong	Spokane Public Library
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tami Dillion	Providence
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Latrice Williams	Community Member/ WA state board of Equity
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cindy Kimmet	Takesa Village
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carmen Groom	SNAP
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rowena Pineda	Reimagine Spokane & Asian Pacific Islander Coalition
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jean Kindem	Aging & Long-Term Care of Eastern Washington
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Karen Boone	Red Cross
		Guests	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Joshua Dennis	WUTC

Agenda

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EAG Equity Lens Session Meeting Notes

I. Welcome & Introductions

Overview of Meeting: Rules and Intent

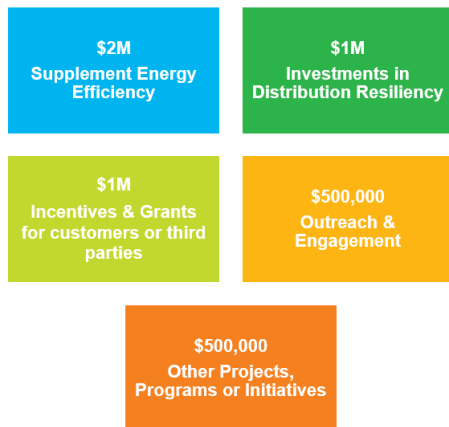
II. Partner Share

- **Avista:** Avista’s upcoming in person EAG meeting to discuss CBIs is scheduled for April 16, 2024, from 8:30-3:00, we also have a public participation meeting on March 26, 2024, that we encourage you all to attend discussing energy resiliency.
- **Guest:** The Utilities and Transportation Commission named Denise Williams as the new Equity Director, effective March 1. Williams will be joining in some capacity potentially in the future.

III. NCIF Review

Brief Refresher – Ana Matthews and Kristine Meyer

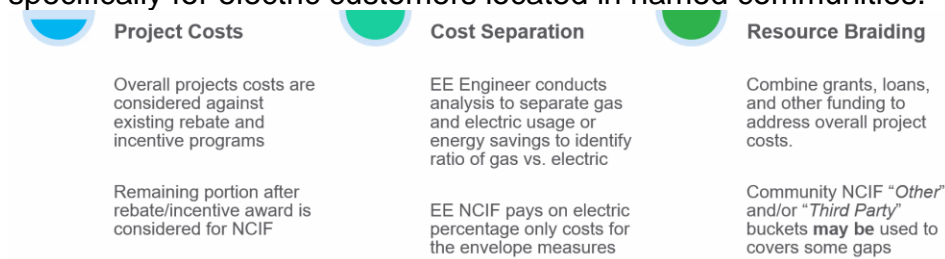
- Kristine shared the NCIF fund is made up of approximately \$5M broken into 5 buckets, \$2 of which is energy efficiency and the other is for community development. She reviewed the 4 buckets of factors we review when prioritizing projects based on conversations with the EAG.



Factors for NCIF Consideration

Equity	Customer Benefit Indicators	Implementation Plan Specific Actions	Equity Advisory Group Initiatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability • Access to Clean Energy • Community Development • Energy Security • Environmental • Public Health <p><i>Equity lens requires unique consideration for each proposed project</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Participation in Company Programs (2) Number of households with a High Energy Burden (>8%) (3) Reduction in disconnections (4) Availability of Methods/Modes of Outreach and Communication (5) Transportation Electrification (6) Named Community Clean Energy Investments in Named Communities (7) Energy Availability (8) Energy Generation Location (9) Outdoor Air Quality (10) Greenhouse Gas Emissions (11) Employee Diversity (12) Supplier Diversity (13) Indoor Air Quality <p>and Non-Energy Benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Identified Project • Multifamily Building Split Incentive • Health & Safety for manufactured and mobile home • Single Family Weatherization • Community Energy Assistance • Small Business Energy Assistance 	<p>Energy Efficiency in Named Communities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Improved awareness and energy efficiency for Spokane Tribe, multi-family and manufactured homes (2) Increased Tree Canopy (3) Increased access to products and appliances (4) Increased awareness and engagement in EE programs (5) Matching funds for EE grant applications (6) Improved EE for those without stable housing

- Ana spoke about the need and options for how to support dual fuel projects as the NCIF is designed specifically for electric customers located in named communities.



Issue/Situation: No established funding source for gas efficiency improvements

- We continue to receive applications for organizations seeking NCIF funding to replace end of life gas heating systems, specifically gas boilers, how do we hand that from a company persecutive and there are not guidelines around how to use the NCIF to replace a gas system with an electric system. How can we support these individuals with these conversions.

- **Discussion:**
 - Avista is currently exploring whether NCIF can be used for new electric systems for gas heating that are no longer operational (*End-of-Life*)
 - Preliminary consideration points
 - Replacement for heating/cooling system
 - Customer driven.
 - Avista may provide technical guidance for energy savings.
 - Consider service impacts for electric and gas.
 - Efficiency Upgrades
- **Member:** From an air quality standpoint, converting is great because there are reduced emissions,
- **Guest:** HB 1589 just passed and working through that now and would defer to the advisory group's decision.
- **Member:** How does the customer know there is a possibility of getting assistance from Avista? If someone has a heat pump that goes out, how would they know they can call and get info or assistance?
- **Company:** Through NCIF, we would have an organization come to us and request to do a program that helps individuals and then we would partner with the organization for helping people, it is not meant for specific individuals. We do have weatherization programs for individuals through partners like SNAP etc., for income qualified customers. Awareness would come from the third party partner the customer is speaking with.

Discussion:

- How to treat for-profit organizations?
 - Benefit for NC
 - NCIF Considerations
 - Equitability considerations include emphasis for underserved populations with verified need.
- Case study – request to replace all heating and cooling units in a skilled nursing facility.
 - For-profit organization where the initial Avista site specific incentive covered 50% of the costs.
 - Units are not individually metered.
- NCIF Guideline: *NCIF awards are determined through a competitive grant application process. Avista will give priority consideration to applications submitted by non-profit (501(c)(3)) organizations that serve Avista's electric customers residing within Named Communities.*
- **Member:** My thought is that they cannot use those funds unless there is a guarantee they will pass those savings to the residents of the living facility. If they cannot give that guarantee, then it is not appropriate to use the funds.
- **Member:** Isn't there a matrix with a weighted average? Add some point value to the for-profit, they would get a 0 for that organization and a non-profit would receive 5 points etc., so you can help justify the decision.,
- **Member:** I like Margee's idea of factoring it into a rubric as it is more objective. This is a great case study.
- **Member:** I think we have an issue if you don't offer it to them because how do you determine whether they will or won't use for the clients. Is there an ultimatum?
- **Company:** We give priority to the non-profit but still consider for-profit entities. We ask how they would benefit the residents, if one said we will lower their cost and the other says they will experience comfort with the new units, which proposal would you go with?

- **Member:** The one with the savings would win because they also are receiving the benefits of comfort. How competitive do you expect this to be? Are there times you would say no even if there was not a competition for funds?
- **Company:** Larger more sophisticated companies are submitting applications and less sophisticated for-profit orgs are submitting less applications. This is the second from this organization, we put this one on hold to review with you and hopefully increase the distribution and diversity and variety to other organizations.
- **Member:** Is there a way that non-profits are being notified (by Avista or other organizations) of the possibility of getting funds? So, we can increase those applications over the larger for-profits?
- **Company:** Yes, we (Avista) reached out to many organizations in our communities, approx. 260 organizations mostly in person meetings and through other communications.
- **Member:** Is there a way to shift the expectations on the applications on ensuring the benefit is passed on to the community?
- **Company:** Yes, we are finding ways to show how entities have used the grant money to share the intent of the fund. Monthly story telling through social media, newsletters, and bill inserts etc.
- **Facilitator:** I have seen more and more grant opportunities prioritize funding for businesses of a certain size (e.g., less than 100 employees) or applicants who are or authentically partner with "by and for" organizations or other BIPOC-owned businesses, for example. Could you encourage or require partnerships with actual named communities?
- **Member:** I am wondering if at the end of the day you need to update the rubric and add more clarifiers and point distributors and include, "Have they already received grant funding?"
- **Company:** Yeah, we do include that and assess all those during the review process.
- **Member:** Like suggestion from facilitator.

Discussion:

Assurance for equitable distribution of NCIF awards throughout Avista's Service Territory
 Guideline: *Aiming for 30% of NCIF awards to be in rural communities outside of Spokane, is this enough?*

- **Member:** When you came up with your 30% did you think about the population, so 30% is rural or how did you come up with the percent?
- **Company:** Yes, we went by electric meter count, so 30% of our meter count is outside of the urban area.
- **Member:** I like that you use the consistent data by using meter count.
- **Member:** Working with aging and long term care, we see that there is a number of organizations or people who live outside of the Spokane metro area that have very low incomes and a lot of our funding goes towards making sure there is adequate food and services, is there any way to determine what the income levels are outside of the metro area that you can use when determining your 30%?
- **Company:** Yes, we do have that data and we do look at that proportionally when looking at all counties.

Reviewed the NCIF prioritization matrix developed by the EAG.

EAG Energy Efficiency NCIF Prioritization

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 did not hit the \$5 million threshold last year, but we hope to get much closer in 2024, here is a list of our program fundings.

2023 Commitments & Funding

Energy Efficiency	Community & Resilience	Combined
Spokane Tribe audits	Martin Luther King Community Center solar assessment	Online application
Lincoln County Fairgrounds lighting	Medical equipment and air conditioning for customers with power dependency pilot	Martin Luther King Community Center HVAC retro-commissioning report, lighting, and windows
Malden homes weatherization	Kids Making Sense – Spokane Clean Air	Kettle Falls Community Chest facility renovation
KW Energy Duct Sealing for manufactured and mobile home in Stevens, Ferry and Pend Oreille counties	Outreach for public and program participation	
Walnut Corners affordable housing PTAC replacement		
Pine Villa affordable housing Phase 1 renovation (windows, insulation and doors)		
the Supper Club new refrigerator and freezer		
Health & Safety for Manufactured Homes in Spokane County		

2023	
Energy Efficiency	\$ 1,034,165
Resiliency	\$ 30,476
Customer & 3rd Party	\$ 35,386
Outreach	\$ 63,297
Other	\$ 218,805
NCIF Total	\$ 1,382,129

2024 Projects currently in the queue

Energy Efficiency \$4M available funds		Community & Resiliency \$3M available funds	Combined
Residential Homes	Workforce Development	Resiliency	Church window upgrades
Affordable housing window replacement	Community Action Agency Workforce Development Training	MLK Community Center	Corner Laundry for unhoused individuals
SNAP Pine Villa 2 nd and 3 rd Phases		Town of Malden Solar	Affordable housing with onsite social services
Buildings	Health & Safety for Manufactured Homes	Community Projects	
Nonprofit energy efficiency upgrades Education Building	KW Energy duct sealing	City of Spokane Parks & Recreation: Tree Plotter software subscription	
Spokane Tribe EE Measures		SNAP air conditioner distribution	
Rural School District lighting	Programs	Workforce Development	
	Multi-Family – deep retrofits in NC	Christ Kitchen	
	Insulation for All	Workforce and non-profit career development for unhoused	

- **Member:** I think you should include reaching out to school as they can open as emergency centers etc., and they would benefit from EE.
- **Member:** I am impressed with everything you have been doing and want to throw in that I actually have a rescue dog from the Malden fire.

You will continue to see presentations pertaining to NCIF projects and in May we will discuss tree canopy.

IV. Your Support Team and Next Meeting

- Next scheduled meeting will be in person at Avista’s Mission campus on April 16, 2024.
- Please sign up for our quarterly newsletter if you have not already and we hope to see you all in April.

V. Additional Resources

<i>Resource Link</i>	<i>Description</i>
Washington's Clean Energy Future	Avista page for CETA related activities
Clean Energy Transformation Act	Clean Energy Transformation Act - Washington State Department of Commerce
Chapter 19.405 RCW	Laws and Regulations: Revised Code of Washington Investor-owned utilities
Chapter 480-100 WAC	Laws and Regulations: Washington Administrative Code Investor-owned utilities
WA Energy Strategy	Washington State Energy Strategy
CETA Overview	CETA overview and interim assessment