

**Equity Advisory Group –
Equity Lens Session**

Meeting Date: April 19, 2023
 Time: 4:30pm – 6:00pm
 Location: Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

Facilitator: Amber Lenhart	EAG Members:
Avista: Tamara Bradley Annette Brandon Kim Boynton Amanda Ghering Ana Matthews	Jean Kindem Brook Beeler Jupiter Claire Trapp Cindy Kimmet Clyde Abrahamson KJ January
	Guests:

Agenda

- I. Welcome & Introductions
 - Overview of Meeting: Rules and Intent
- II. Partner Share
- III. CEIP Condition #38
- IV. Equity Refresher
- V. Energy Justice
- VI. Your Support Team and Next Meeting

Facilitator

Amber Lenhart

 Amber Lenhart
 Kim Boynton
 Amber Lenhart
 Annette Brandon
 Amber Lenhart

Meeting Notes

Welcome & Introductions

Introductions, Meeting Rules/Intent, and review of today’s agenda. We have a new member tonight, Jean Kindem, Welcome Jean.

Partner Share

Member: There is a program called senior assistance fund of WA, it provides things for people who need to have a certain amount of money to apply for housing and things that would make their housing more homely, like pots, pans, dishes, bedding etc., I will provide an email to someone at the Company, to Tamara, so others can learn more.

Company: Aging and Long-Term Care is doing wonderful things.

Member: My organization, Party for Socialism and Liberation, will be holding a May Day event, there will be food, at Riverfront Park, from 1-4, there will be music, I will email Tamara the specifics so we can share the information.

Member: I am hosting and event in the month of May either the 18th or 25th, this will be out kickoff event for our 699 KW solar installs for our residential project of 120 homes. This should be at the two rivers resort and marina, speakers will be there from the department of energy, the state, the tribal council, and myself.

Company: We did have a virtual public participation meeting around our CEIP and focus on low-income energy assistance, one meeting at noon with about 72 participants and another at 5pm which was not as well attended, but we are going to have another large meeting June 27th and we will make sure you receive the invite. We will also be filing our Public Participation Plan on May 1, so we will share that will you once it is filed.

CEIP Condition No. 38

Condition 38 directs:

“Avista must choose at least two of its current CBIs which it will track for at least five subsets of named communities, at a granularity to be determined by agreement with Staff, stakeholders, and the Company’s Equity Advisory Group. Avista will incorporate relevant updates in its 2023 Biennial CEIP update.”

We reviewed our 14 CBIs and which ones would be the best do dig into for named communities, so we started the following process

Process for selecting CBIs and subset criteria

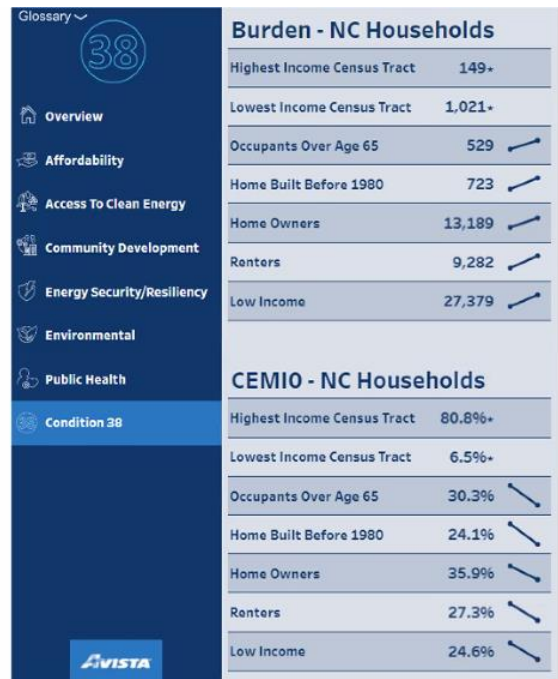
1. Determine which CBIs lend themselves to further sub-categorization
2. Brainstorm possible sub-categories
3. Review internally
4. Identify data sources for sub-categories
5. Develop new metrics

CBI
(1) Participation in Company Programs
(2) Number of households with a High Energy Burden (>6%)
(3) Availability of Methods/Modes of Outreach and Communication
(4) Transportation Electrification
(5) Named Community Clean Energy
(6) 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
(14) Residential Arrearages and Disconnections for Nonpayment

Through a lot of internal review, we landed on energy burden and CEMIO

Condition #38 subsets

1. Highest Income Named Community Census Tract
2. Lowest Income Named Community Census Tract
3. Named Community households identified with occupants over Age 65*
4. Named Community households identified with homes built before 1980*
5. Named Community households with identified Home Owners*
6. Named Community households with identified Renters*
7. Named Community households calculated as Low Income



CEMIO means the customers experiencing an outage greater than 0 times a year. And we looked at the information above within each of the 2 CBIs, CEMIO and High Energy Burden. Remember CBI stands for Customer Benefit Indicator - Avista has 14 CBIs in our Clean Energy Implementation Plan. Our CBIs help us measure our transition to a cleaner future and ensure equitable benefits are being received by all customers. Named Communities are made of two populations - Highly Impacted Communities and Vulnerable Populations

That was a lot of information, are there any questions?

Member: Do you have a map that goes with the income Census Tracts? and the % CEMIO?

Company: Yes, we do have a map, not sure how to share that here, but there are a total of 138 census tracts in our service territory and 61 of them make up named communities, so 40% of our customers are in Named Communities.

Do you have any concerns with the CBIs we selected? Is there anything you think should be there that is not?

Facilitator: The categories, do they feel like they make sense, or would you do others?

Company: When we developed the CEIP, the WAC said we had to identify Named Communities vs all customers. They did not think we were digging deep enough into the named communities, and they did not want us to miss pockets, so this is our way of digging deeper.

Company: We tried to keep these categories useful and large enough that the data is measurable. There was a lot of thought that went into this data, and we want to make sure we are hitting the mark with these additional metrics.

Member: I think that makes a lot of sense

Member: Is there a certain time of year where you see the most outages?

Company: winter outages are a concern such as outages like Ice Storm, the Windstorm of 2017, but we do get summer outages, usually smaller outages.

Company: We also have a lot of outage measurements that we are required to report to the Commission and the public. Wood pole maintenance, system level outages etc.,

Facilitator: Please send emails for questions to Kim, we are running short on time, if we have time at the end we can come back around to additional questions.

If you have questions or want to talk about data kim.boynton@avistacorp.com

[Equity Refresher](#)

Recognizing that we all have different ideas and perspectives on equity and what it means to each of us.

Member: Equity is about making sure people have equal access, not everyone gets the same slice of the pie but that everyone has the same access to get the piece of pie.

Member: Equity to me means fairness, like what the previous member was saying, everyone should have access to the pie and that everyone should have heat, have access to things that will provide them access to heat.

Member: Fairness is one that really strikes with me and that we ensure different parts of the community are accessed for input.

Member: I am a bible reader and there is one scripture that I like it really identifies equity in my mind and it from 2nd Corinthians

Member: Equal fairness for everybody and I like what everyone said

Member: for me the word is reparations, not just money, it means access to health care that has been denied, housing, redlining, level the playing field to some degree so we can get to equality.

Member: I like was KJ said, the word that comes to mind is liberation

Definition:

equity [ek-wi-tee] [SHOW IPA](#)  

[See synonyms for equity on Thesaurus.com](#)

 Elementary Level

noun, plural eq·ui·ties.

- 1 the quality of being fair or impartial; **fairness**; **impartiality**:
the equity of Solomon.
- 2 something that is fair and just:
The concepts and principles of health equities and inequities are important to society as a whole.
- 3 the policy or practice of accounting for the differences in each individual's starting point when pursuing a goal or achievement, and working to remove barriers to equal opportunity, as by providing support based on the unique needs of individual students or employees.: Compare **equality** (*def. 1*).

It is an ongoing active process, accounting for differences in each individual starting point. We are all starting at different starting points in life and that needs to be accounted for.

Equity means getting rid of the barriers people face along the way. Making a place safe and accessible for all.

EQUALITY:
Everyone gets the same—regardless if it's needed or right for them.



EQUITY:
Everyone gets what they need—understanding the barriers, circumstances, and conditions.



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Equity is around us all the time even if we do not notice or look for it.
Providing support based on unique needs

EQUALITY:
Everyone gets the same – regardless if it's needed or right for them.



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Energy Justice

We are not here to change your point of view on equity, we want to share the justice lens with you and how it fits into equity. Justice is addressing the cause of the inequity. Just treatment of all members of society about specified public issues, including equitable distribution of resources and participation in decision making.

Energy Justice =

Energy justice is the integration of justice principles, fairness, and social equity into energy systems and energy system transition (including clean energy transition). Focus on ensuring equity in energy systems from production through consumption

- Built upon the traditions of environmental justice and climate change movements.
 - Environmental justice focused on civil rights, social, inclusion
 - Climate Justice focus on social, racial, environmental
- Key Concerns are:
 - Access, Distribution of harms, Fairness of decision making, Informed participation
- Considers human element:
 - Is fair in how people and communities are treated in energy decision making;
 - equitably shares both the benefits and burdens involved with production and consumption of energy services.
- Incorporates racial, economic and social justice aspects
 - Safe, reliable, accessible energy for all individuals



(Sovacool and Dworkin 2014; Sovacool et al. 2017; Bouzarovski and Simcock 2017; Heffron and McCauley 2017).



How has energy justice evolved?

1970's – 1980's Environmental Justice

1970
1980

- Roots in Civil Rights Movement
- Inclusion in Decision Making,
- Public Health, Remediation of Harm
- Public Health, Social Justice – concerned with the distribution of benefits or reduction of harms
- Anti-Racism, Environmental Racism

1990's and 2000 - Climate Justice

1990
2000

- Inclusion to decision making
- Shaping policy efforts to avert disproportionate climate harms
- Connection of Social, Racial and Environmental issues
- Consideration for those who are most adversely affected

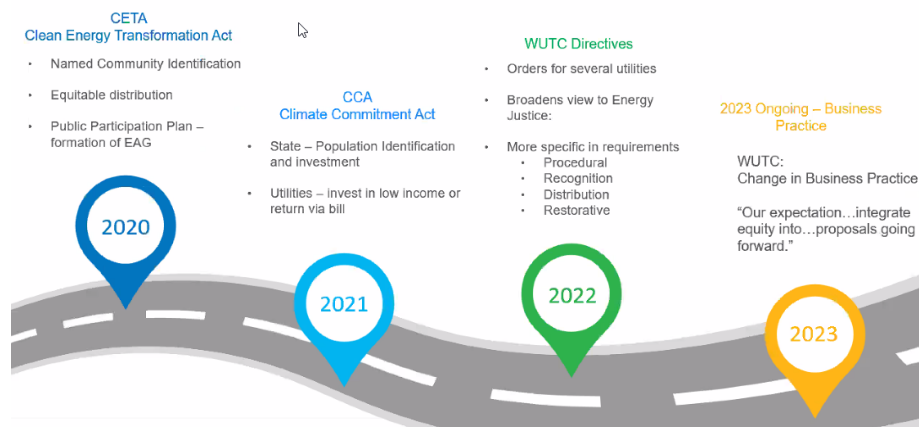
2000's forward – Energy Justice

2000+

- Same focus areas as Environmental and Climate Justice
- Human Centered
- Equitable
- Fairness in Energy Systems

How did we get to energy justice within our utility guidance from the Commission?





Evolution of Energy Justice For Utilities



We will dig into procedural, recognition, distribution, and restorative justice. We will be looking at our policies deeper and ensure that the programs we implement are not

inadvertently impacting our customers disproportionately. We are ensuring all companywide initiatives take this into account.

Member: Ecology has completed one piece of that work from the Climate Commitment Act. We've identified 16 communities across the state that are overburdened (health, social and economic inequities) AND face high levels of air pollution. Learn more: <https://ecology.wa.gov/Air-Climate/Climate-Commitment-Act/Overburdened-communities>

	Procedural Justice	Who is at the table and what voice do they have in planning, decision making, and implementation? Ensures proceedings that are fair, equitable and inclusive.
	Recognition Justice	Who is vulnerable, who is privileged and how? Understanding historical and ongoing inequalities. Who is impacted and where? Do current policies routinely benefit one group vs. another?
	Distributional Justice	Who bears the brunt of the burdens and who benefits and how? Ensures Named Communities do not receive inordinate share of burdens or denied access to benefits
	Restorative	How can we rectify past injustices caused by the energy system and prevent future harm?

How can we as the utility make information more readily available, more transparent, and help ease of understanding. Customers feel they do not have advocates, we heard this during our public meeting last week, but there are customer advocates, and how can we share this information more broadly, so customers know they have a voice. The Attorney General's office is there to support customers and advocate for customers, here is their link: here is the link for Public Counsel <https://www.atg.wa.gov/public-input> here is the link for the Washington Utilities and Transmission Commission's comment form. <https://www.utc.wa.gov/consumers/submit-comment/public-comment-form>

Utilities need to make sure they are looking to see who they are not calling out in policies and programs as well, and it should be a normal question we ask every day.

Application – Focus on Fairness

Energy Justice and equity essentially is equal rights and equitable opportunities for all. It is FAIRNESS among all customers, **considering and adjusting for different starting points.**

Participation

- Meaningful participation by all, equity and diversity in opinions and leadership
- Fairness of process – transparency, consideration of social or economic factors which have limited participation
- Language barrier consideration

Program Focus

- energy affordability goals
- Access to programs
- Unintended consequences evaluation – not only who we include; but who isn't
- Equitable distribution of benefits
- Disconnections and access?

Program / Policy development

- Program Targeting, Engagement Process, Compensation for Engagement, Language Access
- Transparent process
- Coordinated development with advisory groups, customers, internal groups
- Increase economic benefits among our customers,
- create long-term solutions to climate change

Here are the steps that King County takes to ensure equitable access, it is a valuable process so here it is for you to add to your packet.

Equity Review Process Check List

Phase 1: Scope. Identify who will be affected.

- How will action impact low-income populations, communities of color, and limited-English speaking residents. (recognition justice)
- Identify the group of stakeholders including those who have historically not been/felt included or engaged – and their roles in decision-making. (procedural justice)

Phase 2: Assess equity and community context.

- Learn about affected communities' priorities and concerns
- Know which determinants of equity will be affected by your intended outcomes – both directly and indirectly.
- Know how your proposed course of action will affect known disparities within relevant determinants.

Phase 3: Analysis and decision process.

- Project or map out how key alternatives will affect community or employee priorities and concerns.
- Evaluate each alternative for who will be disproportionately burdened or benefit - now and in the future. How will alternative actions differ in improving or worsening current equity conditions?
- Identify appropriate tools to evaluate impact such as PRBs, CBIs, SQIs

Phase 4: Implement. Are you staying connected with communities and employees?

- Utilize Public Participation Partners Report.
- Consider output of HEAL act
- Measure and evaluate your intended outcomes in collaboration with affected communities.

Phase 5: Ongoing Learning. Listen, adjust, and co-learn with communities and employees.

- Evaluate whether your action appropriately responds to community priorities and concerns.
- Learn with the community to adjust your action as their priorities and concerns shift.
- Communicate progress to all stakeholders. Plan to include community feedback into future planning.



Member: This was very interesting tonight,

Member: It as very enlightening and I appreciate all the work you went through Annette to put this together, thank you.

Member: It was really nice this helps us to look at our goals as a group and refocus and take a look at what is equitable and fair in our own minds and from the utilities lens as well.

Facilitator: I have work for years to get organizations thinking about equity so to see it come full circle and companies are working on it is great.

Member: Will this be made available in a packet; I would like to share it with my organization.

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.

In May we are discussing wildfire and Amanda and Amber will be facilitating. On June 1st we are looking at hosting a meeting to go over Condition 23, would you prefer to keep our June sessions and still go June 1, or would you like to cancel our June meetings and only attend the June 1 meeting?

Member: This is just a one-time meeting, right? I will be gone in Oakland and not able to attend.

Company: This will be recorded and sent to all advisory groups after the fact in case.

Member: Good with one meeting to replace the sessions.

Company: We will send out an email poll as well for those were not able to attend.

Reminder of upcoming meetings on May 17th and 19th