



**Equity Advisory Group –
Equity Lens Session**

Meeting Date:	Friday, November 22, 2024
Time:	07:30am
Location:	Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

<i>Facilitator</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>EAG Member</i>	<i>Member Organizations</i>
Amber Lenhart	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clyde Abrahamson	Spokane Indian Housing Authority
<i>Avista Team Member</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Margee Chambers	Spokane Clean Air
Tamara Bradley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Connie Kliewer	NEWESD101
Dan Blazquez	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clair Trapp	Rural Resources
Amanda Ghering	<input type="checkbox"/>	David Tietz	Salem Arms Community Housing
Kelly Dengel	<input type="checkbox"/>	KJ January	Spectrum
Annette Brandon	<input type="checkbox"/>	William von Bracht	Othello, school English as 2nd language
Tamara Gradley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michele Bennington	Community member at large
Ariana Barrey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Brook Beeler	Department of Ecology Eastern Region
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jupiter McGee	Sunrise Spokane Affiliation (youth led) (Facebook)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vanessa Strong	Spokane Public Library
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tami Dillion	Skills'kin
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cindy Kimmet	Takesa Village
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carmen Groom	SNAP
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rowena Pineda	Reimagine Spokane & Asian Pacific Islander Coalition
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jean Kindem	Aging & Long-Term Care of Eastern Washington
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Karen Boone	Red Cross
		Guests	
		Alex. Evans	DH
		Ruben Escobedo	DH
		Joshua Dennis	Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission

Agenda

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EAG Equity Lens Session Meeting Notes

I. Welcome & Introductions

Overview of Meeting: Rules and Intent

II. Partner Share

Partner Shares

- Upcoming relevant community events or opportunities
- Pressing issues facing our community or a need someone might be able to address
- Challenges your organization is facing (especially around equity)



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- Spokane Regional Domestic Violence Coalition will be showing Elf at the Garland Theater.
- Please consider volunteering to help with the 2025 Homeless Connect
This event is Thursday, January 23rd from 10am to 3pm at the Spokane Convention Center located at 334 W Spokane Falls Blvd, Spokane, WA 99201.
This extraordinary event expects as many as 1,500 attendees and takes many volunteers to help.
<https://signup.com/go/fpntoxn>
[2025 Spokane Homeless Connect](#)
- [Events - Spokane Public Library](#)

III. Meaningful Public Engagement – 2025 Public Participation Plan

AVISTA

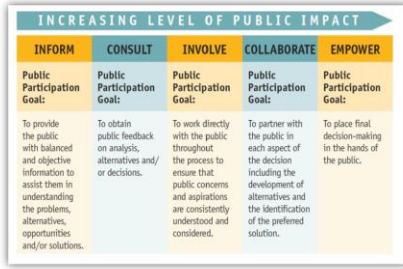
Meaningful Public Engagement: 2025 Public Participation Plan

Dan Blazquez

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From the 2023 Public Participation Plan



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2025 PPP Attributes

- Due May 1, 2025
- Includes update regarding public participation from the past 2 years.
- Includes activities and actions for the next 2 years.
- Will integrate input from DH
- Will be reviewed with EAG and other advisory groups prior to filing

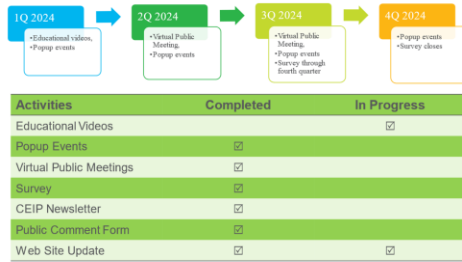


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Avista PPP Timeline

2024 Timeline as Proposed in 2023 PPP Filing



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DH Communications

- Alex. Evans (she/her)
 - Associate Vice President
- Ruben Escobedo (he/him)
 - Account Manager

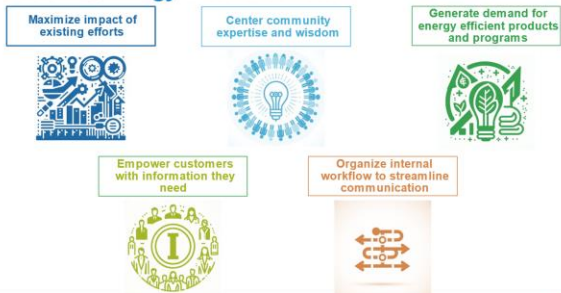


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- DH stands for Desautel Hege
- Started in Spokane 28 years ago
- Social Change marketing is their primary focus.
- Better Health Together campaign as an example.

2025 PPP Strategy Considerations



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- These are the five key elements of the recommendations from DH

Research

GOALS:

- Gain a better understanding of existing community engagement programs through the lens of priority audiences and stakeholders.
- Help identify strengths and opportunities for expansion based on community engagement best practices within and outside the energy industry.
- Build more subject matter expertise and understanding to create a more cogent action plan.
- Ensure focus is on areas of the plan with potential for greatest impact to audiences and customers.

ACTIVITIES :

- Held two strategy sessions with Avista's social impact, communications, regulatory, leadership teams and NCIF.
- Conducted insight interviews with Avista team members and key community leaders/stakeholders.
- Engaged the EAG through a partner survey to understand their experience with Avista's community engagement efforts.
- Completed landscape research of other equity-centered, community engagement clean energy programs of similar/peer organizations.
- Reviewed existing community engagement, outreach and communications materials.

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- Discovery research began with understanding best practices in the industry.
- Facilitated inside interviews with stakeholders.
- Sent EAG a partner survey, looked at other applicable research.

1. Maximize impact of existing efforts

• Need:

- Refine and complete the highest -leverage tactics outlined in the 2023 PPP to ensure we reach all named communities in culturally responsive and accessible ways.

• Solution:

- Continue regular cadence of ongoing efforts, improve usability and design of Avista's CETA webpage, prioritize creating educational videos and support language access across all communications.

• How:

- Avista will continue to convene community meetings and provide communications in priority languages, when possible, as well as develop a series of informational videos on a range of topics.

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- This focuses on executing on existing Avista initiatives included in the 2023 Public Participation Plan.
- DH: Thoughts and reflections from members: What are you thinking about as far as thoughts or efforts from the 2023 PPP.

2. Center community expertise and wisdom

- **Need:**
 - Relationships with community – particularly named communities – that build trust and foster meaningful engagement with Avista
- **Solution:**
 - Grow and deepen relationships with five community –based organizations serving named communities in Avista’s Washington service area throughout 2025.
- **How:**
 - Avista will work with the EAG to define priority organizations, then reach out to organization leadership to discuss partnership and invite participation on the EAG. Avista will listen and respond to the needs and desires of community organizations, planning communication and engagements that are most meaningful.

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- This is a central component of the 2025 PPP proposal.
- The research indicated a need for a deeper and more meaningful relationship with (particularly) Named Communities.
- This is a way to identify how the community wants to be involved.
- This would allow Avista to learn specifically what the community wants.
- Co-Creation of materials is also an opportunity such as posters created by members of the community.
- Community would be more able to explain what they want to aspire to and assure that their concerns are being heard.
- **Participant:** This seems really well thought out and I look forward to having the conversation around identifying the partners. A-typical and unique organizations could be an opportunity.
- **DH:** This would potentially be the beginning of increasing partnerships
- **Participant:** How do we figure out who to partner with? What would be the criteria for selection.
- **DH:** Research would be a component and understanding the metrics. Numbers tell a piece of the story but not everything. Thinking broadly of some of the organizations under consideration.

3. Enhance customer education about green energy

- **Need:**
 - Community members currently have a limited understanding of the significance of green energy, demand generation and how it personally impacts them.
- **Solution:**
 - Enhance customer education about green energy with a focus on reaching named communities.
- **How:**
 - Through community feedback, Avista will identify gaps in existing communication materials and initiatives related to clean energy and develop materials that are culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate for named communities.

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- This focuses on green energy programs. Community said that some messaging never reached them. Education and complexity of Avista’s content has been a barrier as well.
- Prioritization of in person engagement was also mentioned in research.

4. Empower customers with information they need

- **Need:**
 - Community conversations showed that named communities have low awareness of both future programs changes and current program offerings from Avista.
- **Solution:**
 - Develop a customer impact plan that proactively identifies programs and services likely to affect customers that educates, informs and engages through preferred communications channels.
- **How:**
 - Define customer impact milestones, identify programs and services to mitigate changes and impacts, and ensure the plan is accessible and relevant to diverse communities.

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- Feedback from community members is that many customers did not know about the programs or upcoming changes.
- Infographics and videos would be a recommendation and in person contacts as well as developing content with the involvement of community.
- **DH:** Are there any questions
- **Participant:** This sounds like a good plan as it is not uncommon for people to hear that people only hear about Avista when the bill comes.

5. Organize internal workflow

- **Need:**
 - A strong internal structure to improve teamwork and communication across departments involved in community engagement.
- **Solution:**
 - Implement an internal framework that supports community engagement by clarifying roles, establishing a regular meeting schedule and providing ongoing training.
- **How:**
 - Enhance departmental collaboration by streamlining meetings, implementing new tools and tracking systems, and allocate staff resources effectively to support community engagement efforts.

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- This is about organizing internal workflow and engagement.
- Collecting community feedback as well as Avista tracking external engagements or contacts.
- **Participant:** I think you're hitting the mark!
- **DH:** Advisory groups will see in the draft specific actions, and it will be helpful for Advisory Groups to provide feedback.

Q&A

2025 PPP Strategy Considerations

- Maximize impact of existing efforts
- Center community expertise and wisdom
- Generate demand for energy efficient products and programs
- Empower customers with information they need
- Organize internal workflow to streamline communication

- What do you want to see in a Public Participation Plan?
- What are your Public Participation priorities?

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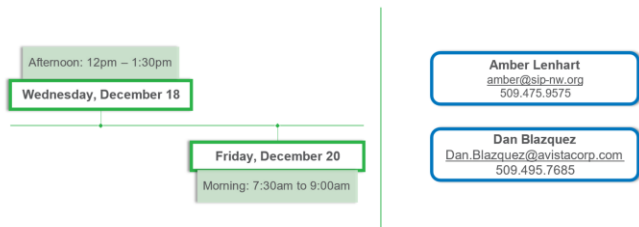


- **Participant:** Reaching people where they are at is important.
- **Participant:** In person would be ideal but having other modalities would be important.

- **Participant:** One of the challenges will be meeting people where they are at. People do not have the bandwidth.
- **Participant:** People do not have the time or energy to go to special events.
- **Avista:** Do you think that we have the right elements.
- **Participant:** Most people have their children going to schools. Maybe one way to interact with the school community would be to engage with school events. Classroom presentations, after school or evening events to teach people about programs.
- **Participant:** Going to a senior center might be good.
- **Participant:** There is a Meals-on-Wheels program to which Avista could include literature. Spokane also has neighbor councils.
- **Participant:** Libraries are also in every community: Lunar New Year, Plant sales, book swaps, and Tacos and Tequila were big events.
- **Avista:** Tagging on to those thoughts: Meals on wheels, Avista has many volunteers. Regarding schools: when kids go from Elementary schools to high school they have an open event. School Open houses.
- **Participant:** Many schools also have Science nights.

IV. Your Support Team and Next Meeting

Next EAG Equity Lens Session Meetings



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- **Avista:** Participants can always reach out directly with more comments, ideas, and/or feedback.

V. Additional Resources

Resource Link	Description
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