



Climate Equity TWG Meeting #1 Summary

March 27, 2018

11:30 AM-1:30 PM

1400 S. Flores - Main Conference Room

Introductions

- Doug Melnick, Chief Sustainability Officer, introduced representatives from the City of San Antonio's Office of Sustainability, CPS Energy, UTSA, and Navigant Consulting. Eloisa Portillo-Morales from the Office of Sustainability and Nils Frenkel from Navigant served as facilitators for the meeting. Attendees from the technical working group introduced themselves.

Review of Process & Timeline

- Due to the short timeline, the group might have to meet more often than once a quarter. Meeting frequency will be determined after all technical working groups have met.
- The goal is to have a Paris-compliant GHG target by June 29, 2018 and a draft climate action and adaptation plan by the end of the year.
- Liaisons from the Steering Committee (SC) will be selected by the Mayor to help with communication between the Technical Working Group (TWG) and SC. Encourage the cross-pollination of ideas.
- TWG helps bring perspective of the community but also helps with engagement by communicating to respective organizations or companies about SA Climate Ready. TWG helps amplify the message and process.
- Equity is not just the responsibility of the Climate Equity TWG but a shared responsibility across TWGs and SC. The process should be transparent and fair and engage the most vulnerable communities. Be cognizant that climate impacts differ across demographic groups and understand vulnerabilities that exist in the community. Identify solutions that do not exacerbate equity issues.

SA Climate Ready Vision + Priorities Activity & Feedback Review

- Vision
 - Make a commitment beyond the planning process and go back to re-engage with communities that are most impacted (follow City of Seattle's approach); need a plan that is not static and is accountable, transparent, and keeps adjusting to meet the needs of the community
 - Have a strong foundation so everyone is on the same playing field and then ensure that everyone is headed in the same direction; we all play a part in helping move together in that direction
 - Break down the conversation to the community level and help make vulnerable communities climate-ready; make the CAAP attainable to the most vulnerable
 - Need more education, public outreach, and expand current programs to cover those in need and those who do not qualify under certain circumstances (e.g. Homes with foundation damage do not qualify for CPS weatherization programs, so they continue to be energy and water inefficient. These homeowners are overburdened with high energy and water usage costs.)
 - Ensure the underrepresented are present at all levels of policy-making, which entails using inclusive language, going door-to-door, reaching out through social media, and continuing town hall events in different parts of the community
 - Need education at all levels and to everyone, especially to higher GHG emitters. As is the case internationally, if you look at different parts of the population, not everyone contributes GHG emissions at the same rate.
 - Enact zoning changes so individuals have an opportunity to grow and sell food; help with outreach in communicating the tools people can use to increase their household income

- Consider individuals and families who are “stuck in the middle” and do not qualify for weatherization programs because they are not considered “low-income” but also cannot afford out-of-pocket upgrades to their home
- Need a property tax cap because of new development increasing tax brackets which pushes out residents who cannot afford to live in their neighborhoods anymore
- Equity is an on-going effort; continue to check-in with those most impacted communities
- A community where all residents are Climate Ready
- **Priorities**
 - Focus on health and giving people the best quality of life; addressing food waste and hunger; more community gardens; a more walkable city with multi-modal transportation options, increased public outreach and education
 - Visually being able to see the change; throughout the implementation phase, ensure equity is part of that process. There is a difference between equality and equity, and equity is difficult to see.
 - Promote the idea that people will not be ostracized for doing “good” and address the fear factor in some communities who are afraid to speak up because they are afraid of the backlash or not being heard. (e.g. some homeowners do not show up to residential weatherization meetings because they are afraid that once their homes are weatherized, the value of the home will go up and drive them out.)
 - Listen to as many people as possible before making recommendations and be open to everything that is happening in the community
 - Focus on recycling, composting, renewable energy, conservation efforts, transportation; look at the assets we have and identify the positive things; build and expand upon them, so they are accessible to all
 - Community engagement and education about climate change and how it affects individuals on a personal level; get them to engage and participate in the process
 - Find trusted community leaders and engage people there in their neighborhoods to spread the news; make the goals understandable and communicate in plain terms
 - Need to connect communities and help connect issues that are happening across communities
 - Communications and messaging should be different for different audiences
 - Partner with community health workers since they work and live in the communities we are wanting to engage

2014 GHG Inventory Overview & 2016 GHG Inventory Update

- UTSA and Navigant are working on the 2016 data.
- **Comments:**
 - CPS is the largest GHG emitter, but CPS does not just serve San Antonio.
 - Need to address methane and future GHG emissions
 - Need to hold TCEQ accountable when they fine corporations for the toxins they produce and release into the community; usually the corporations do not pay the fine
 - Need to understand pollution sources

GHG Mitigation Strategies: Best Practices

- Reviewed City of Portland and City of LA’s equity approach.
- TWG to continue to review best practice documents shared in the Google Drive.

Future Meeting Schedule & Next Steps

- Need to develop a shared vision and definition of climate equity for the group and understand how to apply it to this process and the CAAP.
- The City’s Chief Equity Officer has a playbook that can be fine-tuned for the TWG’s view of Climate Equity.
- Office of Sustainability will have an Equity Fellow in the summer to assess where engagement is lacking. He/she will also identify 3-5 demographic focus areas and ensure that those communities are engaged

- Next meeting will include reviewing the draft equity framework for the CAAP and understanding how to incorporate it into the process
- 4th Mondays in the evening (5-7 PM) generally works for everyone.

Additional Comments

- Would like Facebook Live link to watch the meeting later.
- This TWG should tour the most vulnerable parts of town to see it firsthand and change your frame of mind.
- Encourage mutual learning and respect that people are experts of their own lives.
- Understand how cities like Portland and Seattle compare to San Antonio regarding equity issues.
- We need to include language in the plan that says that the plan will be reviewed later for amendments or updates. This plan will be a living document and will be evaluated on an annual basis.
- TWG can help with community engagement through being at town hall events and using the Meeting-in-the-Box toolkit that is online on the SA Climate Ready website to help with surveying Vision & Priorities. (<http://saclimateready.org/get-involved/>)
- Make sure to go to the southside of San Antonio and follow the Parks Department engagement strategy.
- Engagement strategy will include participating with CPS's engagement team and their outreach events, working with student volunteers and leading train-the-trainer opportunities, and going into neighborhoods.
- Volunteers sign up through the SA Climate Ready website at <http://saclimateready.org/get-involved/>.
- Understand that not all engagement is the same, and it might take more resources and funding to reach out to communities that are the most vulnerable. It is not just about the numbers but giving those who are underrepresented the most decision-making power.

Public Comment

- Utility rates are also increasing, adding more burden to residents. Fixed fees are going up disproportionately for residential customers and not commercial customers. CPS and SAWS are expanding their programs and improving water efficiency measures, respectively, but the rates are the problem. Even though they contribute to the City's income, they need to find a way to support reduction of GHG emissions and water usage and then shift that cost to other rate payers, not just residential customers.
- Is there any possibility of persuading City Council in the mid-budget adjustment to allocate more funding to help build more trust in the neighborhood and get more people on board?
- Make sure to align and collaborate with the Mayor's Housing Task Force and similar efforts.
- Multiple peer-reviewed papers say that we need to be at zero carbon in 32 years. This is a massive effort for the survival of our civic system and human existence. A recent news release reports that an estimated 50-700 million people will be in mass migration in 32 years due to climate change.

