

2024-25 ACSI Annual Recommendations

Summary of Recommendation	Status	County's Role
ENERGY		
1. Advocate for curbing rate increases and to protecting residential and small commercial customers from costs and risks associated with meeting growing tech sector electricity demands.	Ongoing - Regulatory: UM 2211/rate case public comments - Legislative: FAIR support	Advocacy
2. Support local non-profit organization efforts to secure resources and funding to create educational and capacity building opportunities that support community involvement in energy decision-making spaces.	Ongoing - Energy Justice cohort: co-facilitation and MMT funding	Create/fund program Advocacy
3. Advocate for, and pursue, investments that increase energy systems reliability and resilience, with a focus on energy poverty and jobs, consistent with the County's just energy transition goal.	Ongoing - Regulatory: High-level engagement in distribution-system planning, PAC's community-befitting resources program - CBRE Fund applications	Advocacy, Create/fund program
3.a. Engage on grid reliability and transmission conversations in policy-making spaces.	Not yet in progress	Advocacy
3.b. Continue to advocate to protect and advance measures that decentralize the grid, such as community-based renewable energy infrastructure deployment, net energy metering, and energy storage.	Ongoing - Regulatory: Utility planning processes with a focus on community benefits	Advocacy
3.c. Continue to engage in the State's Solar for All program while prioritizing EJ.	Initial conversation about aligning with Wx prog	Create/fund program
3.d. Pursue grant opportunities including capacity to apply and implement grants.	Ongoing - Lots of 2024 applications. Federal funding landscape has shifted considerably	Create/fund program

<p>4. Pursue community health and resilience, with a focus on vulnerable communities.</p>	<p>Ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health Department working on climate health resilience strategy, heat island strategy, and increasing access to AC through OHP and other pathways. Comm Health Worker training on climate risks/resilience. 	<p>Create/fund program, Advocacy</p>
<p>4.a. Share comprehensive energy assistance program information through all County programs that interact with the general public (e.g. clinics, libraries, social work, 211, Wx etc.)</p>	<p>Not yet in progress</p>	<p>Create/fund program</p>
<p>4.b. Direct OS to develop a mechanism to enhance coordination and resources for landlords with the goal of supporting landlords in maximizing EJ benefits to their tenants.</p>	<p>Not yet in progress</p>	<p>Create/fund program</p>
<p>4.c. The County should continue to: 1) support the development of resilience hubs and expand the system of shelters that people have access to across Multnomah County during power outages and excessive heat/smoke days; and 2) work to address gaps, including capacity at buildings, vehicles that can transport people, finding staff to work at shelters, and volunteer training.</p>	<p>Limited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial work to support shelter sites pursuing PCEF and other resilience funding. Partnering with communities to identify potential resilience hub sites. 	<p>Advocacy</p>
<p>4.d. Increase efforts to proactively inform community members about strategies and resources to stay safe during severe weather events, and allocate greater resources to coordinate with, and support, programs that distribute goods like air conditioners and air filters, especially outside Portland.</p>	<p>Ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health Department working on climate health resilience strategy, heat island strategy, and increasing access to AC through OHP and other pathways. Comm Health Worker training on climate risks/resilience. 	<p>Create/fund program, Advocacy</p>
<p>4.e. Leverage resources by coordinating with Portland Clean Energy Fund staff on information and workforce development projects that align with the County's Climate Justice Plan and Environmental Justice</p>	<p>Limited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OS applied but did not receive PCEF grant for resilience investments at essential community 	<p>Create/fund program, Advocacy</p>

Resolution goals, and that benefit residents in East County communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - serving sites. - Looking to support community partner resilience grant apps. 	
4.f. Work with other providers to better understand how many households have been served by air conditioning, ductless heat pumps, air filters and other household resilience measures to understand the additional need and how different entities, including the County, can coordinate to better serve EJ communities.	Not yet in progress	Create/fund program
4.g. Advocate for more resilient transit services during severe weather events.	Not yet in progress	Advocacy
5. Request that gas and electric utilities present to Multnomah County progress on their decarbonization efforts in 2025.	Not yet in progress. OS could tie with 100x50 Resolution report.	Advocacy
AIR QUALITY		
1.a. Support and partner with Change is in the Air Program (CAP) and Oregon DEQ's Community Air Action Planning (CAAP) and other efforts to collect community-based data on indoor and outdoor air quality and to create a community-owned dashboard on local air quality.	<p>Ongoing / facing challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DEQ project, with Neighbors for Clean Air as lead community partner is ongoing - EPA funding for Blueprint project was terminated by EPA, awaiting appeal 	Governance/Third Space
1.b. Continue implementing the Wood Burning Restriction Rules, and expand distribution mechanisms for the notices so that they appear within commonly-used information sources like weather apps and other resources that the community accesses to seek information on current conditions.	<p>Facing Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CDC funding terminations fund all or part of outreach position - Issue has diminished political salience 	Create/fund program
2.a. Explore existing model language from other jurisdictions to inform the development of clean air standards for household appliances in the County's role as the local public health authority, in alignment with air quality recommendations from the 2024 Letter.	<p>No Progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This issue is included in the CJP Draft as a priority strategy. 	County Policy

2.b. Publish guidance for health care workers about the connection between asthma and indoor combustion , ¹ as well as resources to finance appliance upgrades.	No Progress	Create/fund program
2.c. Advocate for local building codes requiring improved ventilation systems and air filtration standards in rental properties and public buildings, prioritizing vulnerable populations.	Limited: - OS Continues to engage through Zero Coalition	Advocacy
2.d., Develop a report on the Board’s consideration and any progress on these items by December 2026.	Not yet in progress	Develop
3. In its preparedness plans, we recommend that the County’s Office of Emergency Management should include the ability to respond to toxic release events, i.e. from train derailment or the CEI Hub.	Limited: - Included as part of natural hazards mitigation and ongoing work at the Legislature to fund more study of the issue.	Advocacy Create fund program
CLIMATE		
1. Multnomah County should continue to prioritize action on increasing access to high-efficiency heat pumps for air and water heating because they deliver both climate and air quality benefits, especially as a replacement for gas or wood burning heating elements.	Facing Challenges: - Wood stove replacement program in place, but no funding beyond FY 2025 - State funding uncertain	Create/fund program, Advocate
1.a. Leverage Energy Trust, Earth Advantage, PCEF and federal Inflation Reduction Act funding streams by fully funding permanent positions for Woodburning Exchange programs.	Limited: - FTE funding expires at end of FY 2025 - MultCo ineligible for PCEF funding to support staff. - Other grant funding for FTE limited	Create/fund program
1.b. Allocate flexible, one-time-only funds to help ensure that all participants in woodburning change out programs can be served.	Limited: - No current plans to use one time only funds, budget in process	Create/fund program

¹ See American Medical Association, *House of Delegate: Report of Reference Committee D, Resolution 439*, <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/a22-refcmte-d-report-annotated.pdf>.

1.c. Address funding gaps to allow greater access to heat pumps through leveraging grants and general budget allocation. Explore microlending opportunities for residential contractors and households similar to the Seeds for the Sol program that serves other Oregon Communities.	No progress	Create/fund program, County Policy
2. Explore how Multnomah County can encourage cleaner heating equipment in new construction, especially in the context of the state focus on housing development.	No progress, included strategy in CJP	Create/fund program
3. Consider advocating for an Environmental Rights Amendment ballot referral in the legislature.	Currently being developed	Advocacy
4. Support local climate resilience by making sure that County initiatives, including many identified in this letter, support BIPOC entrepreneurs developing climate-focused businesses, such as clean tech startups or sustainability consulting services, home energy retrofits, creating local jobs and solutions.	Ongoing	County Policy

Actual Language from Annual Letter:

Energy

1. Advocate for regulatory decisions and legislative solutions to curb rate increases and to protect residential and small commercial customers from costs and risks associated with meeting growing tech sector electricity demands. Solutions for exploration could include limits on how often utilities can seek rate increases, mandatory multiyear ratemaking, interruptible-load tariffs or the expansion of direct access for new large loads in addition to community-identified solutions that may emerge from the Climate Justice Planning process.
2. Support local non-profit organization efforts to secure resources and funding to create educational and capacity building opportunities that support community involvement in energy decision-making spaces.
3. Advocate for, and pursue, investments that increase energy systems reliability and resilience, with a focus on energy poverty and jobs, consistent with the County’s just energy transition goal.

- a. Engage on grid reliability and transmission conversations in policy-making spaces.
 - b. Continue to advocate to protect and advance measures that decentralize the grid, such as community-based renewable energy infrastructure deployment, net energy metering, and energy storage.
 - c. Continue to engage in the State's [Solar for All](#) program planning process with an eye to ensuring that historically-excluded communities, like renters and households experiencing low-income, receive the benefits of solar such as lower electric bills and energy ownership.
 - d. Provide strong directives to pursue potential grants and funding for grant writing support. Prioritize grant opportunities with funding in the Office of Sustainability's budget for grant writing support and clear direction to departments to capitalize on available grants.
4. Pursue community health and resilience, with a focus on vulnerable communities.
- a. Share comprehensive energy assistance program information through all County programs that interact with the general public (e.g. clinics, libraries, social work).
 - i. 211info to access utility assistance programs
 - ii. County weatherization and change-out programs
 - iii. Other community-based programs such as Care for When It's Cold, and Help for When It's Hot
 - iv. Mutual aid and loan resources for repairing pipes and other critical home repairs after severe storms; [Individual development account programs](#)²
 - b. Direct the Office of Sustainability to develop a mechanism to enhance coordination and resources for landlords with the goal of supporting landlords in maximizing environmental justice benefits to their tenants. For example, this mechanism could include updating and maintaining [County information resources for landlords](#), such as information about energy and weatherization retrofit resources, indoor air quality, etc.
 - c. The County should continue to support the development of resilience hubs and expand the system of shelters that people have access to across Multnomah County during power outages and excessive heat/smoke days. The need for shelter exceeded forecasts in 2024. The County should continue to work to address gaps, including capacity at buildings, vehicles that can transport people, finding staff to work at shelters, and volunteer training.

² Oregon IDA Initiative, *About the Oregon Individual Development Account Initiative*, <https://oregonidainitiative.org/overview/>.

- i. The County should continue to grow its capacity to connect the community to non-county resources that support community members during severe weather events and other disasters.
 - d. Increase efforts to proactively inform community members about strategies and resources to stay safe during severe weather events, and allocate greater resources to coordinate with, and support, programs that distribute goods like air conditioners and air filters, especially outside Portland.
 - e. Leverage resources by coordinating with Portland Clean Energy Fund staff on information and workforce development projects that align with the County's Climate Justice Plan and Environmental Justice Resolution goals, and that benefit residents in East County communities. This action is critical given how many frontline community members have been displaced to East County.
 - f. Work with other providers to better understand how many households have been served by air conditioning, ductless heat pumps, air filters and other household resilience measures to understand the additional need and how different entities, including the County, can coordinate to better serve EJ communities.
 - g. Advocate for more resilient transit services during severe weather events.
5. Request that utilities present to Multnomah County progress on their decarbonization efforts in 2025. Oregon House Bill 2021 requires Portland General Electric and Pacific Power to achieve an 80% reduction in the GHG emissions associated with serving Oregon customers by 2030, 90% by 2035, and 100% by 2040. However, both utilities have recently scaled back their plans to pursue new renewable resources in the near-term, and neither utility has an acknowledged, long-term Clean Energy Plan. In addition, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality has reestablished the Climate Protection Program, which requires a 90% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel use by 2050.

Air Quality

1. We recommend that the County take the following actions on outdoor air quality:
 - a. Support and partner with Change is in the Air Program (CAP) and Oregon DEQ's Community Air Action Planning (CAAP) and other efforts to collect community-based data on indoor and outdoor air quality and to create a community-owned dashboard on local air quality.
 - b. Continue implementing the Wood Burning Restriction Rules, and expand distribution mechanisms for the notices so that they appear within

commonly-used information sources like weather apps and other resources that the community accesses to seek information on current conditions.

2. We also recommend that the County continue efforts to ensure healthy indoor air quality by taking the following actions:
 - a. Explore existing model language from other jurisdictions to inform the development of clean air standards for household appliances in the County's role as the local public health authority, in alignment with air quality recommendations from the [2024 Letter](#).
 - b. Publish guidance for health care workers about [the connection between asthma and indoor combustion](#),³ as well as resources to finance appliance upgrades.
 - c. Advocate for local building codes requiring improved ventilation systems and air filtration standards in rental properties and public buildings, prioritizing vulnerable populations.
 - d. Develop a report on the Board's consideration and any progress on these items by December 2026.
3. In its preparedness plans, we recommend that the County's Office of Emergency Management should include the ability to respond to toxic release events, i.e. from train derailment or the CEI Hub.

Climate

1. Multnomah County should continue to prioritize action on increasing access to high-efficiency heat pumps for air and water heating because they deliver both climate and air quality benefits, especially as a replacement for gas or wood burning heating elements.
 - a. Leverage Energy Trust, Earth Advantage, PCEF and federal Inflation Reduction Act funding streams by fully funding permanent positions for Woodburning Exchange programs.
 - b. Allocate flexible, one-time-only funds to help ensure that all participants in woodburning change out programs can be served.
 - c. Address funding gaps to allow greater access to heat pumps through leveraging grants and general budget allocation. The County should explore microlending opportunities for residential contractors and households similar to the [Seeds for the Sol program](#) that serves other Oregon Communities.

³ See American Medical Association, *House of Delegate: Report of Reference Committee D, Resolution 439*, <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/a22-refcmte-d-report-annotated.pdf>.

2. Explore how Multnomah County can encourage cleaner heating equipment in new construction, especially in the context of the state focus on housing development.
3. Consider advocating for an [Environmental Rights Amendment](#) ballot referral in the legislature.
4. Support local climate resilience by making sure that County initiatives, including many identified in this letter, support BIPOC entrepreneurs developing climate-focused businesses, such as clean tech startups or sustainability consulting services, home energy retrofits, creating local jobs and solutions.