

# CLIMATE JUSTICE PLAN

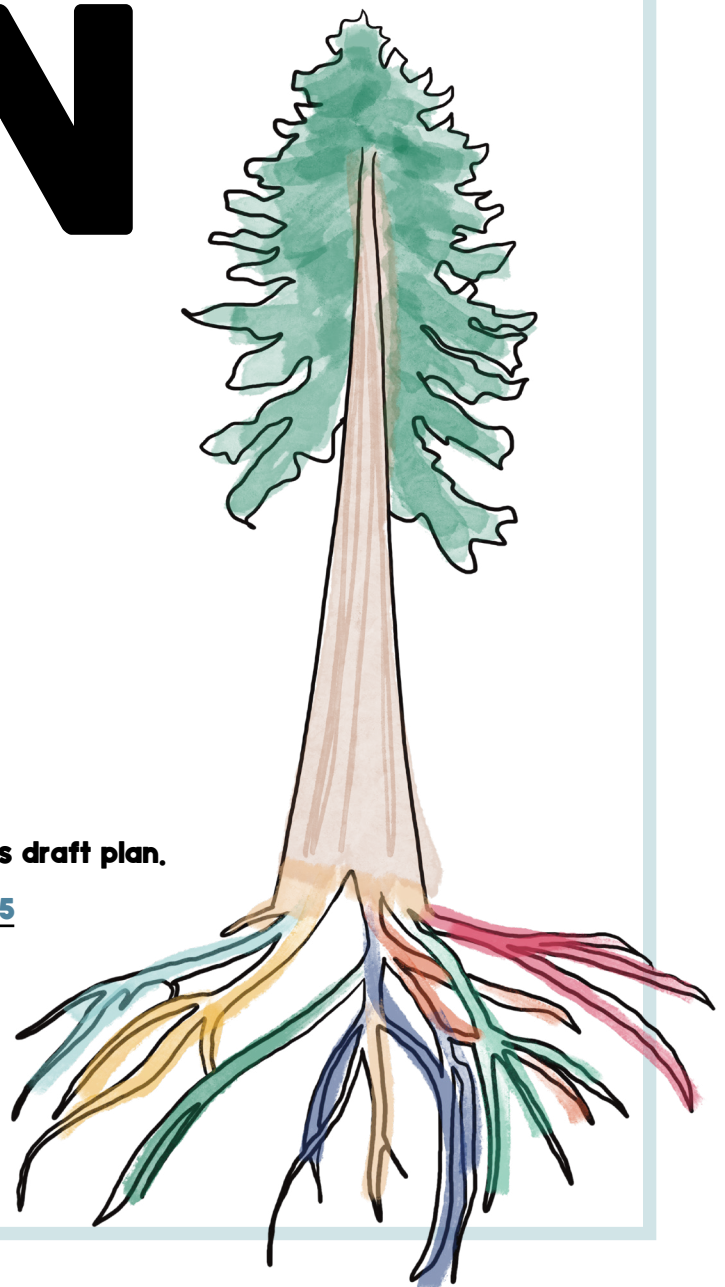
## COMMUNITY DISCUSSION DRAFT

We value your feedback on what is written in this draft plan.

Share your thoughts with us: [rebrand.ly/CJP2025](https://rebrand.ly/CJP2025)



Office of Sustainability



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Image description: A group of youth participants of Clean Air Camp, offered by Neighbors for Clean Air, pose for a picture with Multnomah County staff. Earlier, the group strategized valuable ideas, actions, and priorities for the Climate Justice Plan.

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# Acknowledgements

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Image description: A hand-drawn group of 13 hands gesturing with a thumbs up.

# Executive Summary

The Climate Justice Plan is rooted in a vision of a just, carbon-free future for everyone in Multnomah County. The plan emerged from deep engagement with frontline community members and organizations. This engagement began with Climate Justice by Design through which the concept of a “third space” planning process emerged. Third space refers to a transformative environment where government and community co-created solutions. This space empowered diverse voices, fostered trust, and facilitated long-term relationships, demanding adaptability and a shared commitment to building a stronger community. Using this process, staff and community members developed a vision and values document, the Climate Justice Framework<sup>2</sup>. Finally, developing the Plan involved a steering committee and hundreds of conversations with frontline community members to understand people’s lived experience with climate change. This process led to the creation of 12 big picture goals.

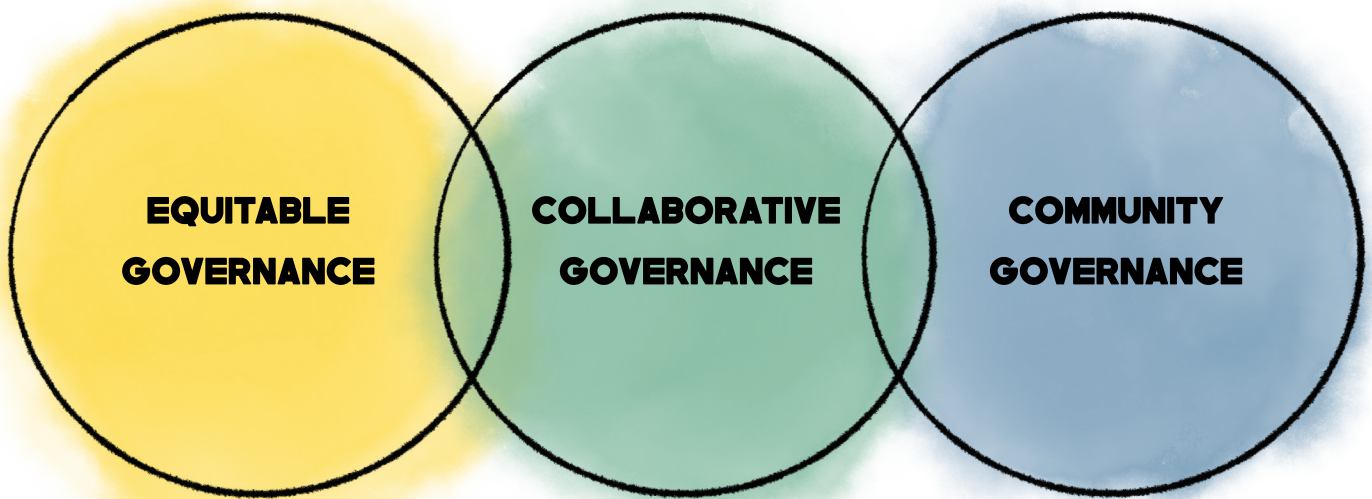


Image description: A group picture of the Climate Justice Plan Steering Committee members and some Multnomah County staff.

**WE ENVISION A MULTNOMAH COUNTY COMMUNITY** *where...*

# CLIMATE JUSTICE IS POSSIBLE

The plan envisions a Multnomah County where climate justice is possible, and a community where:

- Every community member has the opportunity to contribute to climate justice in Multnomah County.
- Every community member has access to wealth-building opportunities and green jobs.
- Every community member has access to affordable, reliable, and safe transit, biking, and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Every community member has access to nutritious, culturally-specific food and can participate in traditional food practices.
- Every community member has access to affordable clean energy.
- Every community member is safe from the risks posed by fossil fuels and energy infrastructure.
- Every community member has access to clean water that supports their needs and all living systems.
- Every community member breathes clean and healthy air.
- Every community member is resilient to extreme weather events and other climate threats.
- Every community member has safe, healthy, and affordable housing.
- Every community member is surrounded by and connected to nature, parks, and green infrastructure.
- Every community member has access to the resources and underlying conditions that promote health and well being.

Each goal has associated strategies that are meant to move the community closer toward the goals in the plan. Progress will be measured using a variety of metrics associated with each goal, and will be reported on regularly. In addition, the Plan updates Multnomah County's carbon dioxide emissions targets in line with the latest science.

Creating a justice-centered plan and implementation strategies necessitates building social connections that strengthen our sense of community. As we continue to strategize and build the community we want to live in, we must be thoughtful about increasing our collective capacity to engage in this work.<sup>3</sup> To that end, the Plan is structured to be more than a to-do list for the government. To transform our community, we need an upswell of ongoing community engagement and participation. The plan envisions the government and the community working together for a clean and just future for ourselves, our children, and our children's children. This plan articulates a shared belief that climate justice is possible.

# Introduction

The Climate Justice Plan (CJP) starts with the premise and the belief that a better world is possible: a world in which everyone in our community has what they need to thrive, people are safe from the threats of climate change and we have avoided climate catastrophe by rapidly eliminating fossil fuel use. We envision a community that embraces and celebrates cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity, and that works diligently to eliminate any discrimination based on race, gender, age, sexual orientation, or other forms of identity-based discrimination; where all individuals feel safe, valued, and respected. We dream of universal access to clean air and water, abundant clean energy and housing, and nearby parks and natural areas where both people and wildlife can co-exist.

This plan is about working together to bring this version of the shared world we all deserve into reality. We can and will meet our challenges today and build a better future for ourselves, our children, and our children's children.

Collaboration is at the core of this plan. The CJP was developed over several years, with



Image description: Members of the Climate Justice Plan Steering Committee sit at tables and discuss what should become a part of the Climate Justice Plan.

community members and staff from Multnomah County, the Coalition of Communities of Color and the City of Portland working together to first design a collaborative process and then use that process to develop this plan. Each step of the plan's development has centered and shared power with frontline community members, along with community members who work for community-based organizations representing frontline groups.

**FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES: MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITIES INCLUDE THOSE IMPACTED FIRST, WORST, AND MOST BY CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS ROOT CAUSES, WHICH INCLUDE WHITE SUPREMACY, PATRIARCHY, AND COLONIZATION. THESE COMMUNITIES ARE EMBEDDED IN LEGACY STRUGGLES AGAINST SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICES EXACERBATED BY EXTRACTIVE AND POLLUTIVE INDUSTRIES THAT HAVE BEEN PURPOSELY AND SYSTEMATICALLY SITUATED ADJACENT TO OR WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITIES. THIS DISPROPORTIONATE EXPOSURE TO CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE RESULTS IN ACUTE AND CHRONIC IMPACTS TO HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH. FRONTLINE ORGANIZATIONS ARE THOSE CREATED BY AND FOR FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES, AND ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO A BASE OF FRONTLINE COMMUNITY MEMBERS.**

One of the key principles of the planning process was a shared understanding of expertise. County, City, and organizational staff showed up as both experts and members of this community, and community members showed up as both technical experts and experts in the lived experience of those facing the worst impacts of climate change. The process relied on a consensus approach in which decisions are made together and ideas are refined until everyone feels that the decision is right. This approach required meaningful dialogue and iteration, essential to the creation of a plan that will move the community toward climate justice in a meaningful way.

**“POWER WITHOUT LOVE IS RECKLESS AND ABUSIVE, AND LOVE WITHOUT POWER IS SENTIMENTAL AND ANEMIC. POWER AT ITS BEST IS LOVE IMPLEMENTING THE DEMANDS OF JUSTICE, AND JUSTICE AT ITS BEST IS POWER CORRECTING EVERYTHING THAT STANDS AGAINST LOVE.” - DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

In addition to cooperative decision making, environmental justice is also a core value. Environmental justice was defined by [Multnomah County Resolution 2018-108](#) and reads in part:

“Environmental Justice” is the equal protection from and equitable distribution of environmental and health hazards, burdens, and benefits.

- “Environmental Justice” is intrinsically reliant on meaningful public participation in decisions that affect the environment in which people live, work, learn, practice spirituality, and play.
- “Environmental Justice” necessitates that frontline communities receive additional consideration in environmental decision-making due to historical exclusions that have resulted in disparate negative impacts, including but not limited to decreased air quality, access to green space, access to transit, and access to the renewable energy economy.

Our pursuit of climate justice will result in a community that benefits from:

- Stable, thriving families and communities
- Improved air quality, water quality, and access to green spaces and healthy homes
- New green jobs and support for sustainable economic development
- Enhanced ability to adapt and respond to climate-related disasters



Image description: Two people are planting a tree, a person is walking with a dog, and a person is riding a bike. This illustration originally appeared as the cover art of *Cultivating Justice in a Changing Climate: A collection of stories and art rooted in Multnomah County's communities of color*, Multnomah County's environmental justice zine. Artist: Jax Ko.



# The Climate Crisis

## Global Emissions and Temperature Thresholds

The science on climate change is clear: The continued combustion of fossil fuels and their resulting greenhouse gas emissions have put our planet on a path to massive disruption, the effects of which are already being felt in Multnomah County and around the world. Eliminating the use of fossil fuels will limit the severity of these impacts, but will not stop the changes that have already been set in motion. A 2023 report from the United Nations warns that, even if we successfully reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the risk of extreme weather events remains “high to very high.”<sup>4</sup> According to the report, from 2011 to 2020, global surface temperatures reached 1.1 degrees Celsius above the temperature baseline established from 1850 to 1900. The current emissions reductions trajectory projects a 1.5 degrees Celsius temperature increase by the first half of the 2030s, a threshold that climate science has long been clear will have profound impacts on every facet of the world. At this rate, the possibility of keeping the temperature rise under 2 degrees Celsius by the end of the 21st century is very low. Temperature increases beyond 2 degrees Celsius poses risks that are beyond our ability to manage.

Every two years, scientists in Oregon study how climate change will affect the state and present their findings to the Oregon State Legislature in the Oregon Climate Assessment report. In the latest version, released Jan. 8, 2025, the assessment shows that since 1895, Oregon’s temperature has gone up by an average of 1.2 degrees Celsius per century. If we don’t dramatically lower global GHG emissions, Oregon’s average annual temperature is expected to increase by 2.8 degrees Celsius by 2074, and 4.2 degrees Celsius by 2100 from pre-industrial levels.

## The Impacts of Climate Change in Multnomah County

The effects of climate change are extensive and span from physical damage to property and ecosystems, financial losses, and significant threats to community health, including heightened risks of injury and disease. In some cases, climate change-related risks lead to premature mortality. Furthermore, there are intangible effects stemming from the distress of witnessing the deterioration of familiar landscapes and anxiety about the future.

But these impacts are not distributed equitably — and a major injustice of climate change lies in the fact that those who have contributed to the problem the least are harmed the most. In general, the level of GHG emissions track closely to the level of income, with the highest income households and countries contributing a disproportionately large share of emissions.<sup>5</sup> Climate justice implementation, mitigation and adaptation strategies that aren’t carefully and intentionally considered can end up benefiting and prioritizing those who are already shielded from the impacts of climate change because of access to resources. This dynamic has been observed both globally, as highlighted by the International Panel on Climate Change reports, and in Multnomah County, where frontline communities experience unfair and disproportionate harm due to climate change.

## Observed and Projected Climate Impacts in Multnomah County

Multnomah County has already experienced significant impacts from climate change, and projections indicate these impacts will intensify in the future. Based on the Sixth Oregon Climate Assessment, annual average temperature has increased and is projected to continue to increase significantly. Precipitation patterns are projected to change, with increases in winter and decreases in summer. Extreme temperatures, including heat waves, are expected to become more frequent and intense. Drought conditions are likely to increase, particularly snow droughts, and wildfire risk is increasing due to increased aridity and extreme fire weather.

Extreme heat is the leading cause of weather-related deaths in Oregon and in the United States.<sup>6</sup> It can cause heatstroke, exacerbate chronic health conditions, and increase hospitalizations. Oregon has had its hottest years in state history in the last five years, exposing Oregonians to the many risks associated with extreme heat.

Specific demographics — including older adults, young children, individuals who work outdoors, pregnant individuals, people experiencing homelessness, and those with chronic health conditions — are disproportionately susceptible to heat-related illnesses. Data from housing surveys in the Multnomah County Health Department 2023 Environmental Justice Snapshot<sup>7</sup> revealed that Black and Indigenous households have a lower rate of access to air conditioning compared to other racial and ethnic groups.

In addition to extreme heat, Multnomah County has witnessed other severe climate-related events. Climate change has increased water temperatures which are leading to more harmful algal blooms (HABs). Consistent HABs have encumbered the Willamette River<sup>8</sup>, impacting recreational activities and increasing the exposure to health risks. The blooms occur most often during the summer months, but can also be seen earlier in the year.

Wildfires are also projected to increase with climate change and can result in significant increases of erosion in forested watersheds. In 2023, the Camp Creek Fire took place in Multnomah County and this was the first significant fire in the Bull Run Watershed since it became the City of Portland's main water supply in 1895. While the city's drinking water remained safe, the fire served as a stark reminder of potential vulnerabilities. Furthermore, electricity outages may become more common as extreme weather events, driven by climate change, impact aging power infrastructure in Multnomah County. The largest power outage in Oregon history took place in February of 2021, which disrupted essential services, and worsened existing vulnerabilities and health risks.

The unjust exposure to climate hazards extends in many cases from the fundamental issue of fossil fuel pollution. Urban residents who live close to major roadways experience an unfair share of health risks resulting from the combustion of fossil fuels, despite their higher likelihood of utilizing lower-polluting modes of transportation. And, chronic exposure to air pollution is exacerbated by exposure to increasing levels of wildfire smoke that are now common because of climate change.

**WE KNOW FROM RESEARCH ON THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH THAT THE CONDITIONS IN PEOPLE’S ENVIRONMENTS PLAY A HUGE ROLE IN HEALTH OUTCOMES AND RISKS. WHERE WE LIVE, WORK, PLAY, AND LEARN INFLUENCES OUR HEALTH. INCOME, ACCESS TO EDUCATION, ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS FOOD, AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT ALSO SHAPE OUR HEALTH. STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH HAVE A GREATER INFLUENCE ON HEALTH THAN GENETIC FACTORS, ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE, AND LIFESTYLE CHOICES. RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH CAN IMPACT UP TO 90% OF A PERSON’S HEALTH. THIS REVEALS HOW SOCIOECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS, INCLUDING THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SIGNIFICANTLY SHAPE HEALTH OUTCOMES AND QUALITY OF LIFE. THEREFORE, ADDRESSING CLIMATE JUSTICE IS LINKED TO IMPROVING SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH AND ENSURING EQUITABLE HEALTH OUTCOMES.**

### Social Determinants of Health

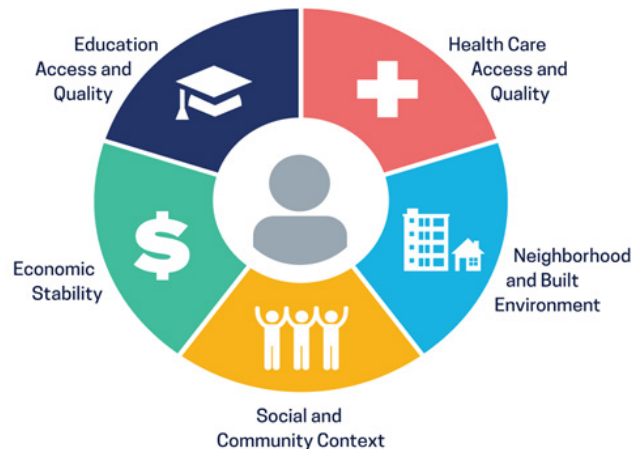
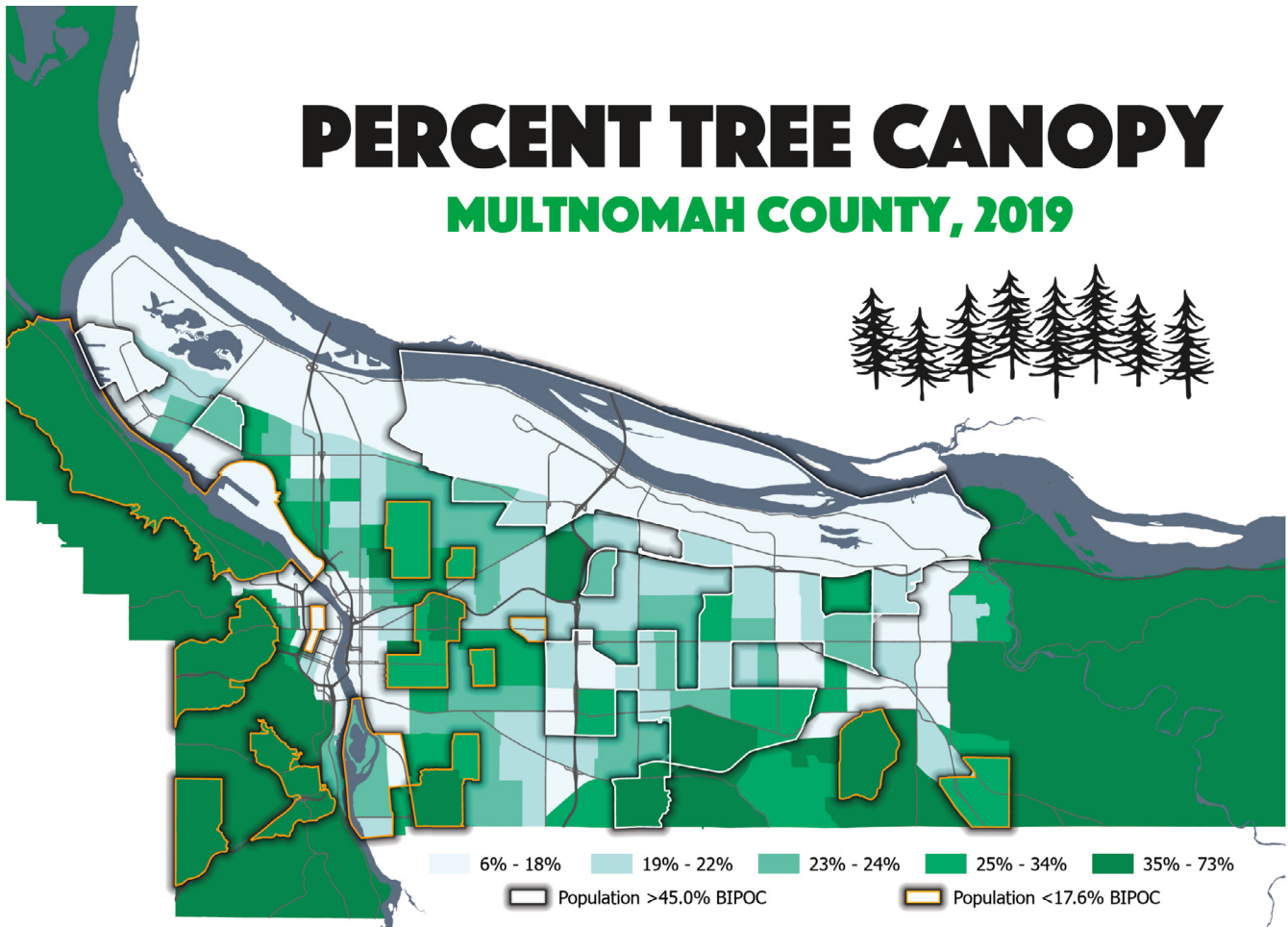


Image description: Social Determinants of Health. Five sections surround an icon depicting a person. The sections read “Education access and quality,” “Economic stability,” “Social and community context,” “Neighborhood and built environment,” and “Health care access and quality.”

Solutions to these hazards focused on individuals formulated without a climate justice lens risk leaving some people behind. Individuals and households with limited resources to obtain new, clean technologies will continue to be burdened by exposure to fossil fuel pollution and climate hazards, while wealthier households have the means to transition to new electric equipment that powers their homes, vehicles, and workplaces, while also having adaptive capacity to install air filters, leave during times of acute climate threats, work from home, thus limiting exposure to climate risk from their daily lives. Everyone should have the capacity to limit climate risks and benefit from new technologies like solar panels and heat pumps that can increase resilience, decrease emissions, and also reduce daily costs.

# PERCENT TREE CANOPY

## MULTNOMAH COUNTY, 2019



### WHAT DOES THIS SHOW?

In Multnomah County, average tree canopy cover is significantly greater in areas home to primarily white people than in areas primarily home to BIPOC. Tree canopy cover in the areas home to the largest share of BIPOC is also significantly lower than the county average.

“ I’m new to the city. The trees don’t really help. It’s hard to build community and to be able to drive out to someone else’s house for a few weeks while I wait for the heat wave to pass. I don’t even have a car. Or, emergency funds to book a hotel that has AC and accepts pets. ”

➤ **NORTHWEST DISTRICT RESIDENT**

“ Trees provide a lot of shade for the houses and cars. However, I’ve seen a lot of trees being cut down to build more buildings/lots. This makes the area even warmer when it is a heat wave. ”

➤ **POWELLHURST-GILBERT RESIDENT**

Image description: A map of Multnomah County entitled, “Percent Tree Canopy, Multnomah County, 2019,” shows that average tree canopy cover is significantly greater in areas home to primarily white people than in areas primarily home to BIPOC. This image originally appeared as the cover art of Cultivating Justice in a Changing Climate: A collection of stories and art rooted in Multnomah County’s communities of color, Multnomah County’s environmental justice zine.

## **Trends in Climate and Health Data**

The Multnomah County Health Department, in coordination with Washington and Clackamas counties, publishes an annual report tracking the health impacts of the climate crisis in the region across a dozen indicators. The most recent [Regional Climate and Health Monitoring Report](#) illustrates how climate change affects the physical and mental health of the tri-county area's residents, notably in relation to extreme heat, extreme weather events, and air quality:

### **EXTREME HEAT**

The region experienced a record-setting heat dome in the summer of 2021, resulting in 94 deaths — this is significantly higher than the one heat-related death the region had typically seen each year. Emergency department visits during the summer of 2021 more than doubled compared to the average number of visits in previous years (2016-2019), while there was also a sharp increase in heat-related hospitalizations.

### **EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS**

Since 2014, 236 people in the region have died due to extreme weather events. While most of these deaths were due to extreme heat, 84 people died because of exposure to extreme cold, which is a growing concern.

### **AIR QUALITY**

More people visited the emergency department for air quality-related respiratory illness than for any of the other health indicators included in the report. Visits to the emergency room also include illness related to pollen allergies, which are worsened by poor air quality and experienced over longer durations because changes to weather patterns impact the length of pollen seasons.<sup>9</sup> The wildfire smoke events in 2018 and 2020 led to increased emergency room visits for air quality-related illnesses.

### **VECTOR-BORNE DISEASE**

The report tracks cases of Lyme disease and West Nile virus. Lyme disease cases peaked in 2017, but the data indicates that most cases were contracted outside the region. Very few cases of West Nile virus have been documented in the region since 2012.

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE**

The report includes data on salmonellosis, campylobacteriosis, and tuberculosis. There were fewer cases of these diseases in 2020, likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **MENTAL HEALTH**

The report explores the mental health impacts of climate change through Google Trends data and interviews with community responders. The interviews highlighted a lack of access to mental health services, systemic trauma, and compounding factors like the COVID-19 pandemic. Google Trends data showed an increased search volume for trauma-related terms after the 2021 heat dome event.

The report also emphasizes the importance of addressing health inequities and supporting mental health in the face of climate change.

## How Climate Justice Strategies Benefit Health Justice

The Climate Justice Plan directly addresses public health concerns by emphasizing that climate change disproportionately impacts frontline communities, leading to significant health inequities. Strategies outlined in the plan, such as reducing air pollution through clean energy transition<sup>10</sup> and implementing extreme weather resilience measures, are designed to mitigate environmental hazards that contribute to increased morbidity and mortality, particularly among vulnerable populations. Many of the strategies in the Climate Justice Plan can reduce healthcare costs by focusing on preventative measures, while also reducing the strain on emergency services and hospitals during extreme weather events. By focusing on equitable access to resources like clean air, affordable energy, and safe housing, the Plan aims to improve social determinants of health, fostering community cohesion and ensuring that everyone, regardless of socioeconomic status, can experience better health outcomes and reduced risk from climate-related threats.

The just transition framework, focused on a fair and equitable shift to a low-carbon economy, is intrinsically linked to public health, and it addresses the social and economic inequalities that disproportionately affect frontline communities. The healthcare and public health sector, professionals, and practitioners' involvement is crucial for ensuring that the transition benefits everyone, not just some, and avoids exacerbating existing health disparities.



Image description: Staff from Bienestar are smiling as they hand out cooling kits to residents during extreme heat in Multnomah County.

## Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Multnomah County and the Impact of Co-pollution

Emissions in Multnomah County have been tracked since 1990 thanks to the partnership with, and leadership of, colleagues at the City of Portland. The 2015 Climate Action Plan (2015 CAP) established clear goals for community-wide emissions that were based on the best scientific understanding of climate change at that time: 40% below 1990 levels by 2030, and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

Greenhouse gas emissions in Multnomah County peaked in 2000 and have decreased since. Total emissions in Multnomah County in 2022<sup>11</sup> were 21% below 1990 baseline levels and 30% below 2000 peak emissions. These are significant reductions and are a little over halfway to meeting the 2030 goal under the 2015 CAP. Emissions on a per capita basis are 43% below 1990 levels, showing substantial reductions despite population and economic growth during that period. Three of the four primary sectors responsible for emissions have shown significant reductions: single-family residential, industrial, and commercial. We have also seen smaller reductions in transportation, the largest single emissions sector.

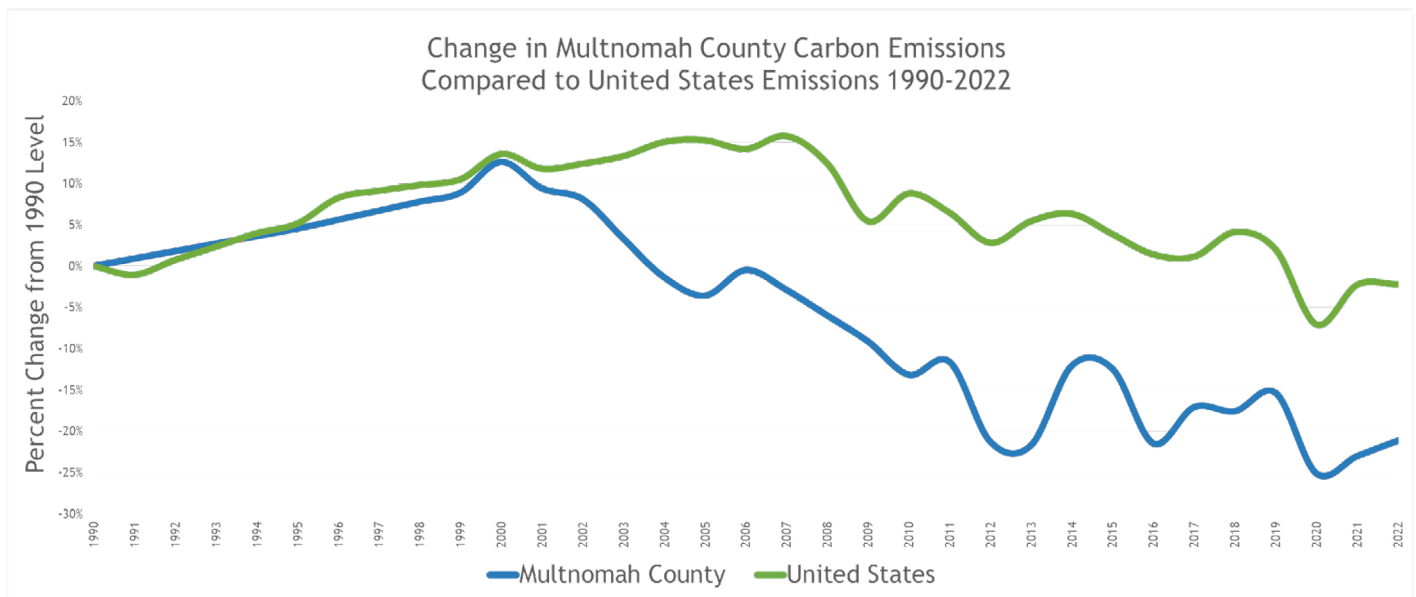


Image description: A graph with two lines show the percentage change in Multnomah County carbon emissions compared to United States emissions from 1990-2022. Carbon emissions trends in Multnomah County have been significantly below U.S. trends in most years since 2022. Despite Portland's steeper emissions reductions, the data shows how much broader national economic conditions, such as the 2008 Great Recession, and the recession that followed the COVID-19 pandemic influence emissions at the local level.

The combustion of fossil fuels in vehicles and homes also presents a major public health threat. Multnomah County residents breathe the dirtiest air in the state and face the highest risk of pollution-related cancer due in large part to the amount of cars, trucks, and trains in this region.<sup>12</sup> The transportation sector, currently powered almost entirely by fossil fuels, represents 41% of Multnomah County's greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>13</sup> As a result, decarbonizing transportation is a critical strategy for improving both the climate and public health.

### Multnomah County Carbon Emissions by Sector (2022)

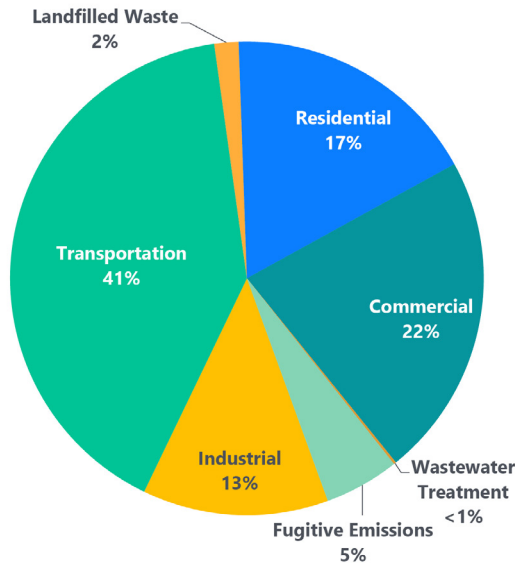


Image description: A pie chart entitled “Multnomah County Carbon Emissions by Sector, 2022,” shows the following sectors with their share of emissions: Transportation 41%, Industrial 13%, Fugitive Emissions 5%, Wastewater Treatment <1%, Commercial 22%, Residential 17%, and Landfilled Waste 2%. Emissions by sector remained consistent from 2021 to 2022. At 41% the transportation sector is the single largest source of emissions, followed by emissions from residential and commercial buildings combined at 39%.

Average global temperatures between 2006 and 2015 were already 0.87 degrees Celsius over preindustrial averages, and emissions have only continued to rise since. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)<sup>14</sup> states that maintaining global temperatures at or below 1.5 degrees C would require a global peak in emissions in 2025, followed by a reduction of 43% from the peak by 2030, 60% by 2035, and net-zero emissions by 2050. While the planet is very likely to move well beyond those thresholds, every ton of emissions reduction matters to minimize harm.

Similarly, the Oregon Global Warming Commission has recommended the state’s reductions be 45% below statewide 1990 emissions levels by 2030, 70% below by 2040, and 95% below by 2050.

The City of Portland, Multnomah County’s close partner in climate action, has adopted an emissions reduction goal of 50% below 1990 levels by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050.<sup>15</sup>

Under this Climate Justice Plan, Multnomah County adopts the goal of reducing community-wide carbon emissions to 50% below 1990 levels by

2030, and achieving net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions levels by 2050. In addition, the County maintains its commitment to 100% renewable energy and other goals adopted by the Board of County Commissioners since the adoption of the 2015 Climate Action Plan, including:

- A commitment to achieving 100% clean and renewable sources of energy by 2050<sup>16</sup>
- A commitment to ensuring that at least 2% of community-wide energy needs are met via community-based renewable energy infrastructure<sup>17</sup>
- A commitment to eliminating the use of fossil fuels in all Multnomah County operations<sup>18</sup>

While these goals are ambitious, we believe that these targets align with the scientific imperative to rapidly reduce emissions and with the County’s vision for ensuring that our community can thrive.

These emissions reduction goals will guide decision-making and help prioritize resources during the implementation of the plan, but will also be considered within the context of the other goals and values that drive this work. These carbon emissions reduction goals pertain to scope one and two emissions and exclude emissions from the consumption of goods and services that are produced outside of Multnomah County.



# Cumulative emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and future non-CO<sub>2</sub> radiative forcing determine the probability of limiting warming to 1.5°C

## a) Observed global temperature change and modeled responses to stylized anthropogenic emission and forcing pathways

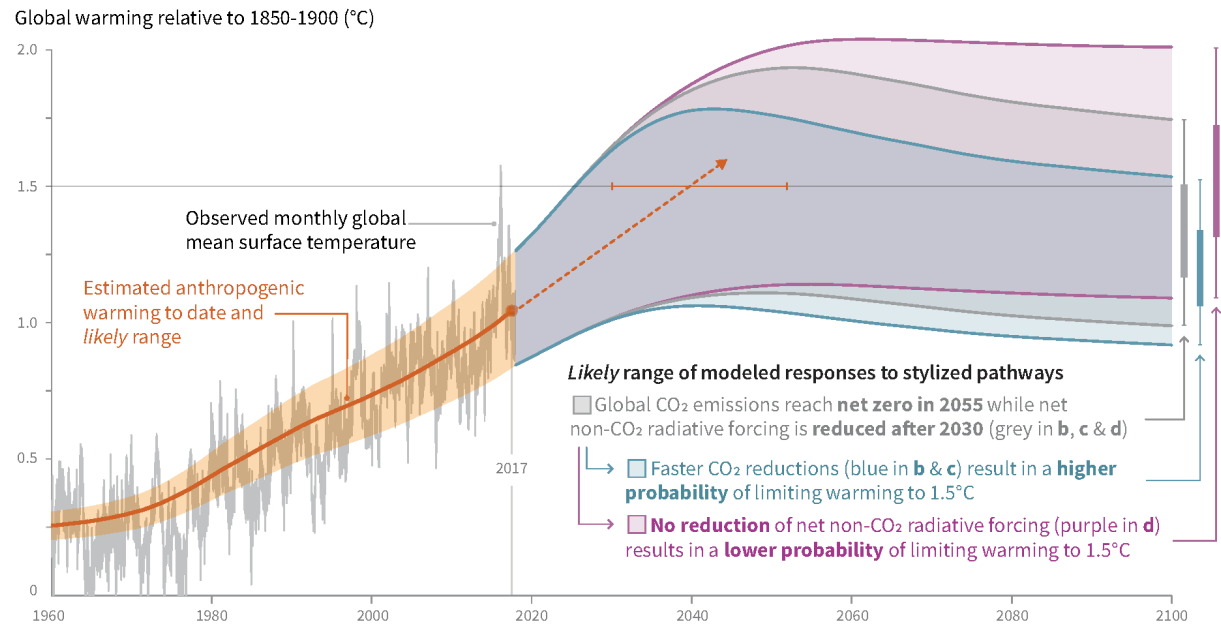


Image description: A graph shows the probability of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celcius.

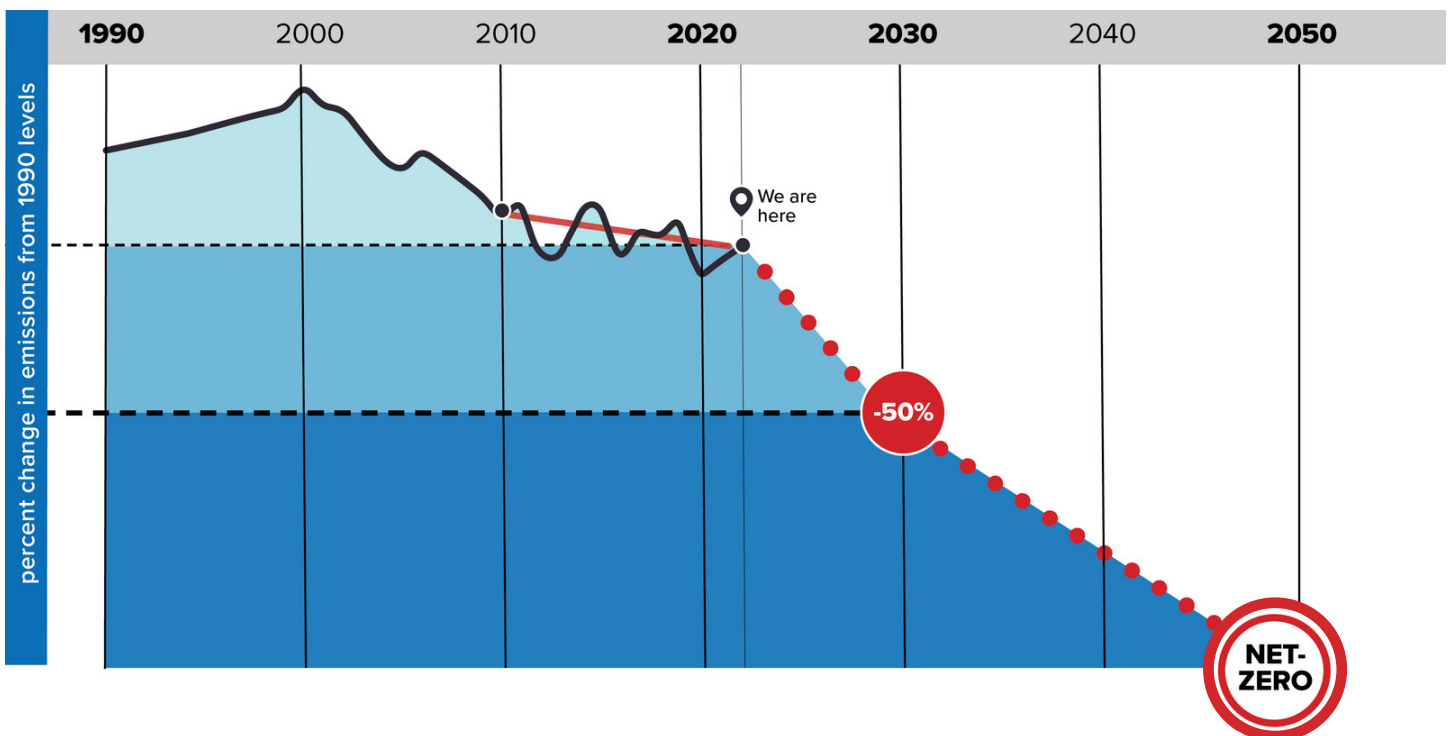


Image description: A graph shows the percentage change in emissions from 1990 levels in Multnomah County through 2022, with greenhouse gas reduction targets through 2050. Image credit: City of Portland.

Fortunately, the County is not alone in this fight to reduce emissions. The City of Portland and the City of Gresham, the first- and fourth-largest cities in Oregon, respectively, are strong local partners in this work. In addition, the State of Oregon, through the Governor, state Legislature, and its agencies, has already enacted significant policies and programs that support collective reduction in carbon emissions. These include:

- The Clean Fuels Program (2012 to current), which will reduce the carbon intensity of transportation fuels in Oregon by 37% below a 2015 baseline by 2035
- HB 2021 (2021), which requires Oregon’s largest electric utilities to fully decarbonize their electricity supply by 2040
- The Climate Protection Program (2024), which requires a declining cap on emissions from fossil fuel use in Oregon at 50% below baseline by 2035 and 90% by 2050.

Collectively, these and other state and national programs will help Multnomah County achieve its local emissions reductions goals. However, the County must work to ensure that each of these programs also responds to the current needs of our communities, while supporting their efforts to protect themselves in the face of growing climate impacts. Accordingly, the County is also committed to the environmental justice concept of “no false solutions”. This means that the County will not support climate solutions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions but result in additional harm to frontline communities.

The ever-growing impacts of the climate crisis, and the time pressure to achieve meaningful reductions, along with the economic hardships many communities face today, require that we pursue strategies that address all of these fronts simultaneously. The strategies in the Climate Justice Plan reflect this approach.

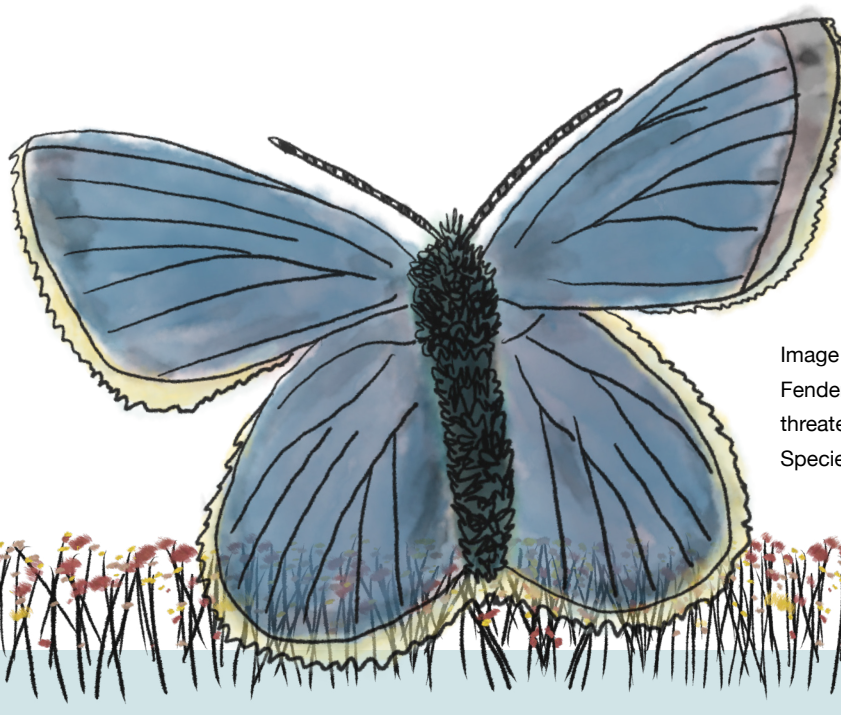


Image description: A hand-drawn Fender's blue butterfly, considered threatened under the Endangered Species Act, stretches its wings.

## Path to the Climate Justice Plan

Traditional government planning often excludes the communities most impacted by the climate crisis and relies on data that frequently fails to fully reflect their needs. Historically insular and conducted behind closed doors, public planning processes have not only excluded, but also tokenized and marginalized, impacted communities while also subjecting them to the status quo determined by the interests of those with power and resources. Climate justice planning recognizes that frontline communities, experiencing the worst impacts, are the experts on how to address their needs. Their lived experience fuels the most effective strategies and innovative solutions.

In traditional top-down planning, community engagement can be seen as a box to check; it does not prioritize activating sustained community leadership or building authentic long-term partnerships. Community members and community organizations are often expected to volunteer and are typically not compensated for their time filling out surveys or participating in open houses and focus groups, which is a burden for working households with limited time and income. Solutions are rarely developed collaboratively through this conventional planning approach, which fails to draw from the wisdom of frontline communities. Emphasis and authority are given to quantitative data over qualitative data and personal stories.

Climate justice planning work builds upon the recognition that with or without the partnership of government, communities have long been working to address and act on environmental injustices. As a result, the Climate Justice Plan aims to expand upon authentic and equitable partnerships between Multnomah County, the residents we serve, and community-based organizations.



Image description: Multnomah County staff and participants from The Ethiopian and Eritrean Cultural and Resource Center (EECRC) gather after a community workshop about the Climate Justice Plan. Participants shared the strengths of their community, and the importance of caring for the environment, resilience, and gratitude.

## Background: 2015 Climate Action Plan

The 2015 Multnomah County/City of Portland Climate Action Plan (2015 CAP) was the last climate action plan adopted by the Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners. When adopted, this Climate Justice Plan will replace the 2015 CAP. Though it was adopted 10 years ago, the 2015 CAP was innovative in many ways, including its consideration of equity metrics and resilience strategies, and by providing sector-by-sector greenhouse gas reduction actions. But the 2015 CAP was also a reflection of traditional government planning.

The 2015 CAP sought to address equity concerns by organizing an Equity Working Group made up of representatives from several frontline organizations and County and City staff. At the time, this approach was thought to be an innovative and community-responsive model, which included compensation for the frontline organizations' participation, a focus on building relationships and capacity, and the establishment of community priorities ahead of government goals.

However, through post-project participant surveys, the County and City learned that participants experienced this effort largely as a tokenizing experience due to the power imbalances between the CAP Equity Working Group and a larger, more powerful CAP Steering Committee consisting of representation from mostly mainstream, dominant culture organizations. Further, without a concerted effort to continue investing in the approach after the 2015 CAP's adoption, the relationships forged during the project went unmaintained, and the frontline organizations pivoted to focus instead on community-based organizing efforts. These missteps and other missed opportunities revealed the need for a new model of community-centered, deeply collaborative, accountable, and sustained planning.

## Phase 1: Developing a New Model

### CLIMATE JUSTICE BY DESIGN

In 2020, Multnomah County, the City of Portland, and several frontline community partners came together to contemplate a new model of community-centered collaboration. With support and thought leadership from consultants Kapwa and studio b:ask, the idea of Climate Justice by Design (CJxD) was formed. CJxD was based on the idea that climate change and social injustice are symptoms of the same problem; that our economy and political systems were intentionally designed to exploit human and natural capital for the generation of power and wealth. The premise of CJxD was simple: if systems can be designed for exploitation, then a new system can also be for justice. Over two years, CJxD provided a space of mutual learning, relationship development and capacity building. While participants considered CJxD a valuable experience, it was recognized that a more formal, co-creative planning process to develop was needed in order to chart a clear path to advancing climate justice goals.



## COMMUNITY CLIMATE JUSTICE VISION

In 2022, Multnomah County and the Coalition of Communities of Color came together to develop a frontline community centered vision of climate justice that would serve as the foundation for a shared Multnomah County government and community climate justice plan. Funding from the Urban Sustainability Directors Network Partners for Places grant fund and Meyer Memorial Trust was secured to support community participation in the process. An Executive Committee made up of community leaders and representatives from community-based organizations and local government was formed to guide the development of a climate justice vision. The Executive Committee looked to two key community frameworks to guide the next steps: The National Association for Climate Resilience Planners' (NACRP) "Vision, Power, Solutions Framework" (See Appendix D); and the Movement Strategy Center's "The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership" (See Appendix E).

To ensure the effort moved at the speed of trust, the Executive Committee started by establishing a foundation of shared values and tools to ensure co-creation and power sharing in decision-making. This approach to decision-making included giving each organization (or individual for those not affiliated with an organization) a single vote in decisions, creating parity between government and community partners. The Executive Committee relied on a simple voting methodology to surface concerns and allow for any of the organizations to express reservations about an issue if they had significant disagreements.

## CLIMATE JUSTICE EARTH DAY CONVENING

Inspired by the NACRP's "Vision, Power, Solutions Framework", the Executive Committee organized a climate justice focused Earth Day event in April 2023.



Image description: A group of participants of the Climate Justice Earth Day Convening engages in conversation. An interpreter helped to support the discussion, as well as translated materials.



Image description: Attendees at the Climate Justice Convening add sticky notes to a projected image of a tree, symbolizing the foundational values for a just and sustainable future.

The convening brought together over 60 individuals and organizations from frontline communities. The day was divided into sessions focusing on each of these components: developing a shared vision, building power, and identifying solutions. Following an introduction to community-driven planning, participants engaged in a visualization exercise adapted from the NACRP toolkit.

**“COMMUNITY DATA IS EVIDENCE GENERATED BY COMMUNITIES ABOUT THEIR EVERYDAY LIVES. IT IS A REFLECTION OF COMMUNITY-CENTRIC FORMS OF KNOWING, BEING, DOING, AND DREAMING. COMMUNITY DATA CAN BE NUMBERS, WORDS, ART, MUSIC, SOUND, AND MAPS. IT ENCOMPASSES THE MULTIPLE AND DIVERSE WAYS THAT COMMUNITIES SHARE, EXPRESS, AND ARTICULATE THEIR LIVED EXPERIENCES AND DESIRES. COMMUNITY DATA REQUIRES THE SYSTEMATIC COLLECTION, INTERPRETATION, AND USE OF INFORMATION THAT IS PRODUCED ON THE TERMS OF COMMUNITY; IT PROVIDES CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT HUMAN EXPERIENCES – PAST, PRESENT, AND THE DESIRED FUTURE.” FROM INTRODUCING COMMUNITY DATA, FALL 2024, COALITION OF COMMUNITIES OF COLOR’S RESEARCH JUSTICE INSTITUTE**

Guided by a dynamic community facilitator, participants imagined what they hoped the world would be like in 100 years. They wrote their values on sticky notes and placed them under an image of a tree, symbolizing the foundational values necessary for a just and sustainable future. Participants then envisioned their ideal future, writing their aspirations on leaf-shaped sticky notes and placing them on the branches of the tree. This exercise fostered a shared vision of a future that included housing for all, free transit, and communities of care, guided by values of justice, cooperation, love, and liberation.

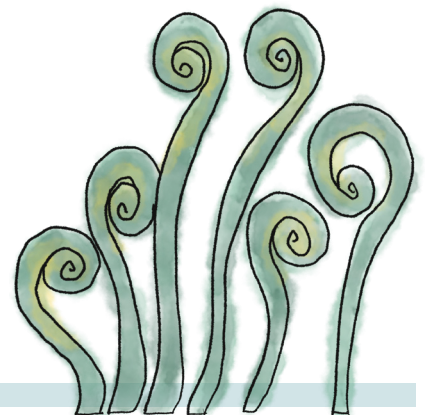
The group then identified the conditions for building community power (represented by the roots), short-term actions (represented by seeds) and long-term strategies (represented by the trunk of the tree) to move toward this envisioned future. By the end of the day, the tree — bare before the convening — was transformed into a vibrant representation of the community’s collective vision and a roadmap for achieving this version of the future.

The insights gathered at the Earth Convening were then analyzed by Executive Committee members.

## **The Climate Justice Framework and Environmental Justice Zine**

In July 2023, the Executive Committee marked a significant milestone with the adoption of the Climate Justice Framework<sup>19</sup> which was the culmination of two years of deep collaboration, and included the significant data gathered at the Earth Day Convening. The Framework set the foundation of vision, values, and process for the Climate Justice Plan. These values include:

- Community Care
- Coexistence
- Lifting Voices
- Connection
- Meeting Basic Needs
- Liberation
- Justice: Health, Racial, Economic
- Healthy Environment and Clean Air
- Solidarity
- Housing for All



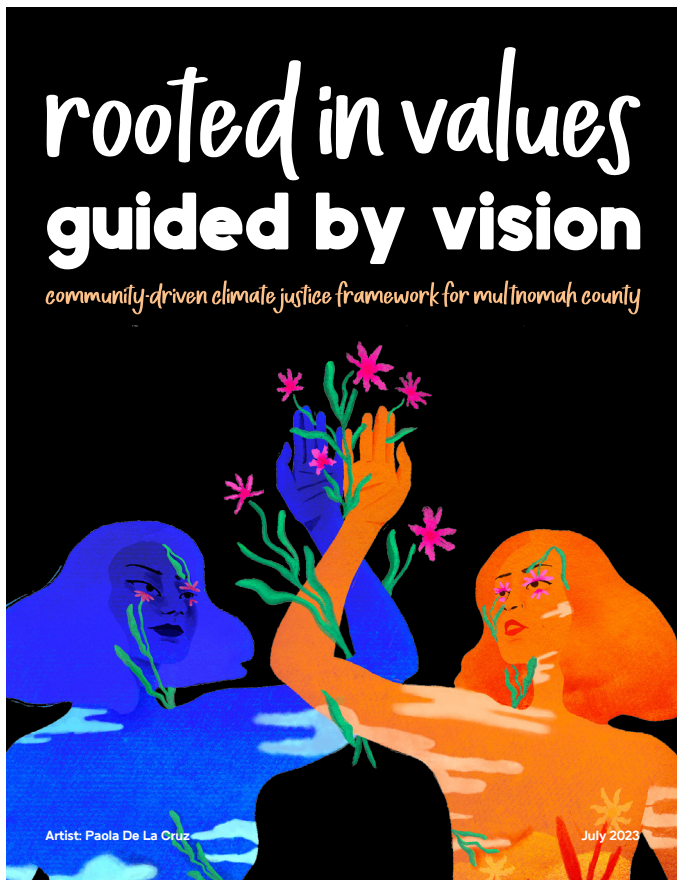


Image description: The cover art from Rooted in Values, Guided by Vision, Community-driven climate justice framework for Multnomah County. This document is also known as the Climate Justice Framework.

Also released in July 2023, The Environmental Justice Indicators Storytelling Zine (EJ Zine)<sup>20</sup> complements and accompanies the framework by providing a snapshot in time of how our communities experience environmental justice. The EJ Zine demonstrates how dominant-system quantitative data can be paired with community data, storytelling, and art to create a more comprehensive, insightful, and accessible picture of community well-being.

The EJ Zine and CJP Framework provide a foundation for shifting the concept of a CJP from a bureaucratic document to a living document that reflects the goals and aspirations of frontline communities. They serve as an effective roadmap for achieving our vision. Planning should not be viewed as an exclusive process for the privileged few who possess technical knowledge and understand jargon (Rooted in Values, Guided in Vision, 2023).



Image description: People sit around a table, talking, during the Climate Justice Framework and Environmental Justice Zine Launch party.



Image description: People sit around a table, smiling, during the Climate Justice Framework and Environmental Justice Zine Launch party.

## Phase 2: Steering Committee

Comprising members of 13 community-based organizations representing and serving frontline communities, the Climate Justice Plan Steering Committee brought a wealth of expertise, wisdom, and lived experience to their charge of co-creating the CJP based on the Climate Justice Framework. Its members, many of whom are Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color, and span in age from youth to elders, were actively engaged in advocating for energy equity, social justice, and environmental health within their communities. This diverse group ensured that the CJP prioritized the needs of frontline communities.

Working in close partnership with staff from Multnomah County and the City of Portland, the Steering Committee provided invaluable leadership and strategic vision by:

- Informing plan development: Committee members used their expertise and knowledge to identify strategies and projects that prioritized the needs of frontline communities.
- Aligning organizational priorities: Committee members considered how their respective organizations and the communities they serve aligned with the CJP's priorities and strategies.
- Fostering leadership development: The Steering Committee intentionally included members outside traditional executive leadership roles to foster leadership and strategic planning skills within each organization.

This collaborative space for advocates and organizers generated new and transformative solutions; developed ways for community members to be involved in the implementation and communication of the plan; and shared lessons learned that are necessary for

developing the Plan and achieving climate justice in Multnomah County. Committee members advanced a focus on ensuring the Plan is specific and actionable, with clear metrics to track progress. Members also pushed community engagement and ensuring that all voices are heard as major priorities. The Steering Committee also grappled with the role of Multnomah County as a local government and how the Plan could influence other jurisdictions. City of Portland staff partnered closely with Multnomah County to support Steering Committee members and ensure alignment between local government planning efforts.

The Steering Committee members represented the following organizations:

- APANO
- Coalition of Communities of Color
- Community Energy Project
- Multnomah County Youth Commission
- Portland NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Committee
- Neighbors for Clean Air
- NW Energy Coalition
- Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility
- Rahab's Sisters
- Self Enhancement, Inc.
- Unite Oregon
- Verde





Staff members represented the following departments/bureaus:

- Multnomah County Office of Sustainability
- Multnomah County Health Department / Healthy Homes and Communities Team
- City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

### **APPROACH TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Community-driven climate justice planning centers communities most impacted by climate change as experts who possess the deepest understanding of the challenges and hold the most creative and innovative solutions.

Recognizing the critical importance of a community-led planning process, the Steering Committee guided staff through the work of developing an inclusive engagement plan. This plan involved identifying and connecting with community partners who have traditionally been underrepresented in this type of work.

The Steering Committee employed several key principles during this effort:

- Break cycles of perpetual advocacy: Many communities find themselves constantly advocating for basic needs, diverting energy and resources from long-term solutions. True community leadership can empower communities to move beyond reactive advocacy and to actively shaping their own futures.
- Build trust and equity: By centering community voices and empowering them to lead, governments and the communities they serve can build stronger, more equitable relationships with each other.
- Develop more effective and just solutions: When communities have genuine ownership over the planning process, the resulting solutions are more likely to be effective, equitable, and sustainable.

Through a series of workshops and collaborative gatherings, the Steering Committee and staff prioritized outreach to youth, immigrant and refugee communities, and residents of East Multnomah County. These efforts resulted in valuable connections with over 120 community members who provided invaluable input.

In December 2024, the Steering Committee and project staff showcased the progress of the Climate Justice Plan. Anchored by 12 universal goals, the open house event offered an opportunity for community partners to share valuable feedback, exchange ideas, and build vital connections.

Based on the feedback from the open house, and significant contributions by each of the Steering Committee members, County staff developed the initial draft of this Climate Justice Plan. After further review and refinement by Steering Committee members and staff, the Steering Committee voted to move the draft CJP forward for public comment. We are eager to share this culmination of this journey with a wider audience, and look forward to hearing additional insights from across the community that will inform the final version of the Climate Justice Plan. The final version will be considered by the CJP Steering Committee, and if approved, will be provided to the County Board of Commissioners for their consideration.



Image description: Community members and Multnomah County staff make connections with each other and give feedback to staff at the Climate Justice Plan Open House.

## About the Plan: Ideas Into Action

The Climate Justice Plan provides a shared vision of a climate-stable future in which pressing social and environmental priorities have been addressed, and a roadmap for building it. The strategies will inevitably evolve, but our goals will remain fixed and focused on ensuring a better future for everyone. The plan envisions ongoing collaboration between government and community, emphasizing populations most impacted by the climate crisis as the way to make our home better for everyone.

The climate crisis presents challenges that have historically not been issues in the Pacific Northwest, like extreme heat, new vector-borne diseases, and the potential for urban conflagrations.<sup>21</sup> Climate-related extremes also stretch public resources and make addressing existing challenges more difficult and more urgent. Existing challenges like income inequality, discrimination based on income, race, age, gender, and sexual orientation, and other systemic injustices are becoming more acute. While many of the impacts of a changed climate are already here, the global community's ability to eliminate fossil fuel use can still alter our trajectory for the better.

At the local level, we must concurrently eliminate fossil fuel use while adapting to a warming planet and climate-changed weather patterns. The benefits of acting on both of these fronts will make huge positive impacts on our community. For example, since most local air pollution comes from burning fossil fuels, eliminating fossil fuel use will substantially improve air quality, dramatically lowering nitrogen oxide, ozone, fine particulate matter and benzene concentrations.<sup>22,23</sup> And when it comes to protecting people from extreme heat, heat pumps can cleanly and efficiently heat and cool homes while simultaneously eliminating

fossil fuel use for heating, cutting energy consumption, and lowering energy costs.

Making the shift to a more sustainable and just future, however, is not something the government can do alone. In a democratic system, it takes the whole community to make major and lasting changes. This Climate Justice Plan is not just for the Multnomah County government — it's a participatory roadmap for everyone who calls Multnomah County home.

And while our destination is fixed, the path ahead will be made by our individual, and more importantly our collective, actions. Some changes rely on things we do as individuals, like getting to know our neighbors and looking out for one another in times of crisis. Others will require us to make decisions at the ballot box or to support elected leaders' efforts by showing up and making our voices heard. But positive change is possible.



Image description: A child plants vegetable in the soil.

This plan is for all of us who live, learn, work, play and pray in beautiful, resilient Multnomah County. The work laid out ahead of us in this plan is vast, but we are committed to meeting this critical moment facing the future of our planet to find meaning, joy, and community.

The Climate Justice Plan is meant to be used as an organizing tool and a work plan that provokes and drives both government and community action.

For Multnomah County, the CJP can guide policy development and resource allocation. Many strategies in the Plan will be implemented by Multnomah County. Other state and local agencies will also need to act on several strategies to help ensure a climate-just future.

Community-based organizations are invited to use the goals and strategies in the Plan as a platform for organizing. Depending on the strategy, this could take the form of working with County staff to develop new policies and programs, advocating County elected officials for certain changes, or co-organizing with the County to support larger actions at the state level or through ballot measures.

The Portland Clean Energy Fund (PCEF) and Preschool for All are examples of transformative programs that demonstrate the power of community organizing. PCEF was developed and supported by a coalition of community-based organizations and approved by voters, handing the task of implementation to the City of Portland. The Preschool for All measure was co-developed by Multnomah County elected leaders and community-based organizations

and approved by voters, and is now overseen and implemented by the County, with services provided by independent businesses.

Accelerating progress on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and implementing climate resilience strategies, while also maintaining a focus on justice, will require the support and buy-in of community. County staff and elected officials will need to intentionally seek opportunities to partner with the community. At the same time, community members will need to pursue solutions that fit their needs and circumstances, like local resilience networks that support neighbors in times of crisis. There is room at every level for individual, community, and government action to address the climate crisis, and this plan can bolster the infrastructure to coordinate that response.

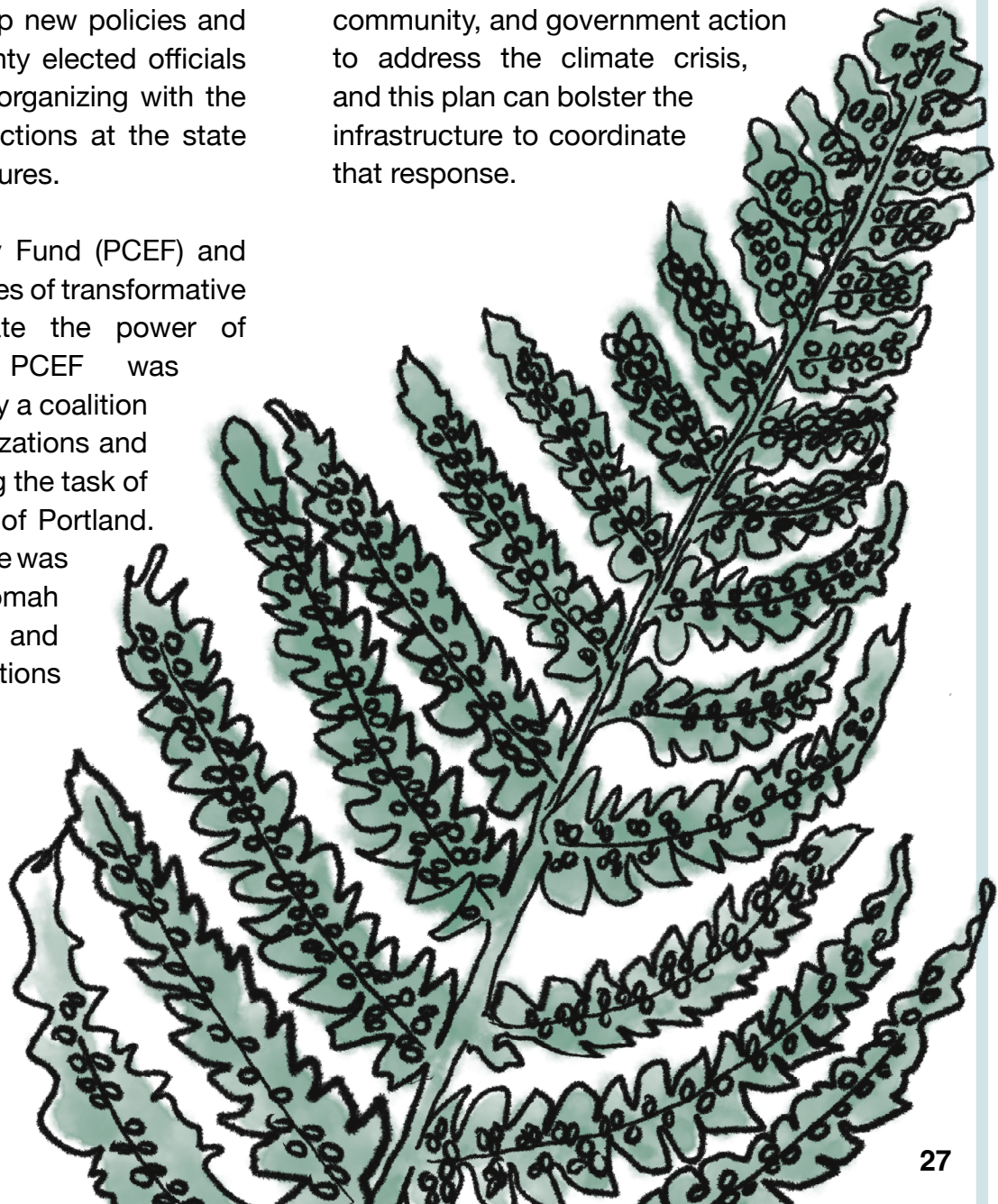


Image description: A drawing of the underside of a fern, which shows sori that contain spores. Once mature, the spores are released and dispersed. If they land in a suitable environment, they can grow into a new fern plant.

## Goals vs. Strategies

The Climate Justice Plan contains 12 universal goals that together create a guiding constellation of outcomes by which we can chart our course to a stable climate and a more just community. The goals are big-picture ideas we want everyone in our community to experience, and they frame a collective vision for climate justice.

Each goal lays out a facet of our collectively envisioned future state that will benefit everyone in our community. The goals are meant to be self-evidently good — even if achieving them can seem daunting and faraway — so that even partial progress will make the community stronger and healthier. In this way, these goals aim to reflect future states grounded in universal agreement.

All goals also list how progress toward the goal will be measured over time through multiple metrics — some of these metrics can help us understand overall trends, while others can tell us how certain groups are represented in the data and help track environmental justice indicators.

Each goal is also assigned supporting strategies; each strategy is meant to advance the community toward the overall goal. Strategies are primarily focused on communities who are presently kept furthest from the goal by systemic inequities and injustices. For example, neighborhoods with the most People of Color have fewer trees and are hotter in the summer, while neighborhoods that are predominantly white stay cooler because of robust tree cover.<sup>24</sup> Our strategies, then, should focus limited resources on expanded tree planting in low-tree canopy residential neighborhoods, which would result in the best return on investment and the fastest progress toward tree canopy goals over time.<sup>25</sup>

Strategies may also overlap across goals. Increasing the trees canopy, for example, can provide more shade and reduce urban heat islands, but they also increase wildlife habitats and improve air quality. Each strategy appears only once, associated with one specific goal, even though it may support multiple goals.

Strategies also identify which government bodies can take action to implement the strategy, as no one government body or agency can fully address the effects of the climate crisis. Some strategies recognize that community-based organizations, other nonprofits, and individuals also play a vital implementation role. For example, immediately following a disaster, it's often neighbors helping neighbors that makes the most immediate and tangible difference.

We also recognize that inequalities exist in our community, many of which are the results of systemic issues that have disadvantaged certain groups of people, sometimes for decades or centuries. These systemic inequalities, often enforced by the government through laws or practices, will not be solved without deliberate, intersectional approaches. We cannot achieve climate justice for everyone without being intentional about solving systemic injustices caused by racism and other forms of identity-based discrimination.

To address the fact that certain groups may be further from a goal than others, each strategy is designed to eliminate inequities between groups. For example, if we want clean air for everyone, who is exposed to the worst air quality today and why? If we want everyone to be protected from climate-fueled extreme weather like heat waves, who is at most risk and why? The answers to these questions inform the plan's strategies and clarify how resources should be prioritized for those furthest from the goal today.

The CJP asserts that supporting groups furthest from the goal moves the entire community faster and further toward the type of community we want for our future — a concept known as targeted universalism. This concept is rooted in the truth that when the people who face the most adversity in our community have what they need to thrive, everyone in our community is better off. One simple example of this is ensuring sidewalks have curb ramps to allow people who rely on mobility devices to move around to safely cross the street. The ramps are essential for wheelchair users, but also greatly benefit families pushing strollers.

### Planning Horizon

The goals of the Climate Justice Plan are meant to guide County actions through 2030 and beyond. The strategies will be implemented over the next one to five years, depending on the scope of the specific strategy and the political, community and budget conditions in which it is being put into practice. The Plan proposes regular reporting on greenhouse gas emissions and goal metrics. In addition, the included strategies will need to be periodically refreshed, and future Boards of Commissioners will need to assess and reaffirm the goals and strategies. Staff must continue to work and engage meaningfully with frontline community members to ensure strategies are implemented, effective, and that they remain relevant to

the communities most impacted by climate change and environmental injustice. See “Implementation” for more information.

### Metrics

Each goal is assigned outcome metrics meant to be broad indicators that measure progress over time. Measuring the direction and pace of progress for each goal is an important way to remain accountable to the community.

No goal is one-dimensional, so each has more than one metric by which to track its progress. Some metrics can be measured using scientific instruments (e.g., air quality) or by compiling data (e.g., greenhouse gas emissions). Other metrics require dialogue with community members about their lived experiences and perceptions. All these data gathering methods are important, and best practices of justice centered work calls on governments and other institutions to incorporate community data in metrics.

Metrics to ensure frontline communities are benefiting from actions will also be measured over time. These efforts will build on the release of the 2023 [Multnomah County Environmental Justice Snapshot](#) and related [EJ Zine](#), as well as other community led initiatives that collect community data.

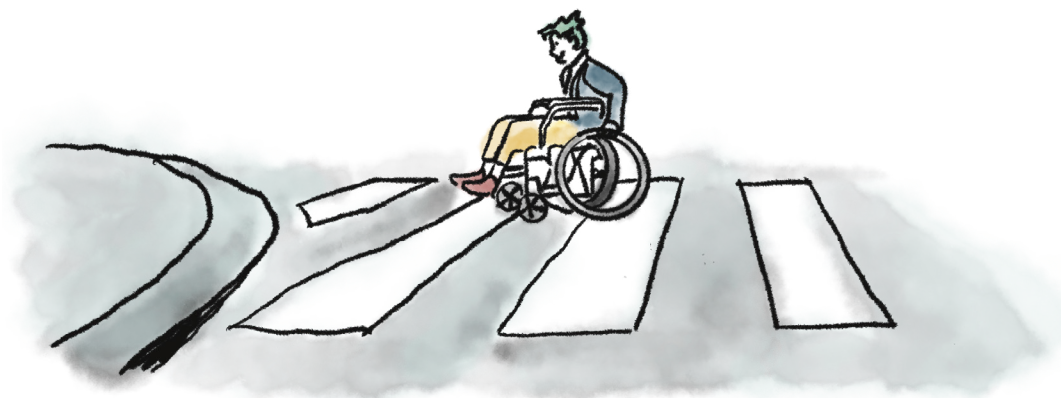


Image description: A person using a wheelchair is crossing the street, moving toward a ramp up to the sidewalk.

## Typology of Strategies

Some strategies will require changing the law or securing new funding. Other strategies can be carried out by the community or through partnerships between the community and the government, while still others will require a coordinated effort to build political consensus and ahead of a significant change.

Strategies in the Climate Justice Plan are broken out into six categories; some strategies may fall into multiple categories.

### TYPE OF STRATEGY

#### County policy

- Multnomah County is a Home Rule county and is able to implement laws that are not expressly preempted by federal or state law.
- The Board of County Commissioners is able to amend the County Code through a majority vote.
- Voters are also able to amend the County Charter through the Charter review process and referral to voters.
- Examples include: [Wood smoke curtailment ordinance](#), [Commercial building energy reporting](#), and [Building deconstruction requirements](#)

#### Create/fund programs

- The County Chair and Board of County Commissioners have wide discretion in how they allocate revenue raised by taxes and fees through the budget process.
- The County also has the power to increase certain taxes and fees, ask voters to increase certain taxes, or create new sources of revenue through a vote of the Board or by referral to voters.
- Programs can be implemented by County employees or contracted through private companies or non-profits.
- Examples include: [Clean Air Construction](#), [Wood Burning Exchange program](#)

#### Advocacy: local, state, or federal level

- Many authorities and powers are beyond the scope of Multnomah County's authority. In those cases, the County and our partners can advocate for other government bodies to implement new policies or develop programs.
- Advocacy is often done in coalition with other governments with the same priorities, or with community organizations, non-profits, and impacted individuals to amplify shared goals and drive systemic change.
- Examples include: [Cleaner Air Oregon](#) (DEQ), [Low-Income Utility Rates](#) (PUC)



## **Game changers**

- Game-changing initiatives often come from outside of government or through a partnership of outside advocates and government.
- This approach often involves innovative thinking and a willingness to challenge the status quo to achieve significant progress or transformation.
- These strategies refer to taking steps that exceed the existing powers or jurisdiction of an individual, organization, or government body, and often include a referral to voters to grant new authorities or revenues.
- Examples include: [Portland Clean Energy Fund](#), [Portland Charter Reform](#), [Preschool for All](#)

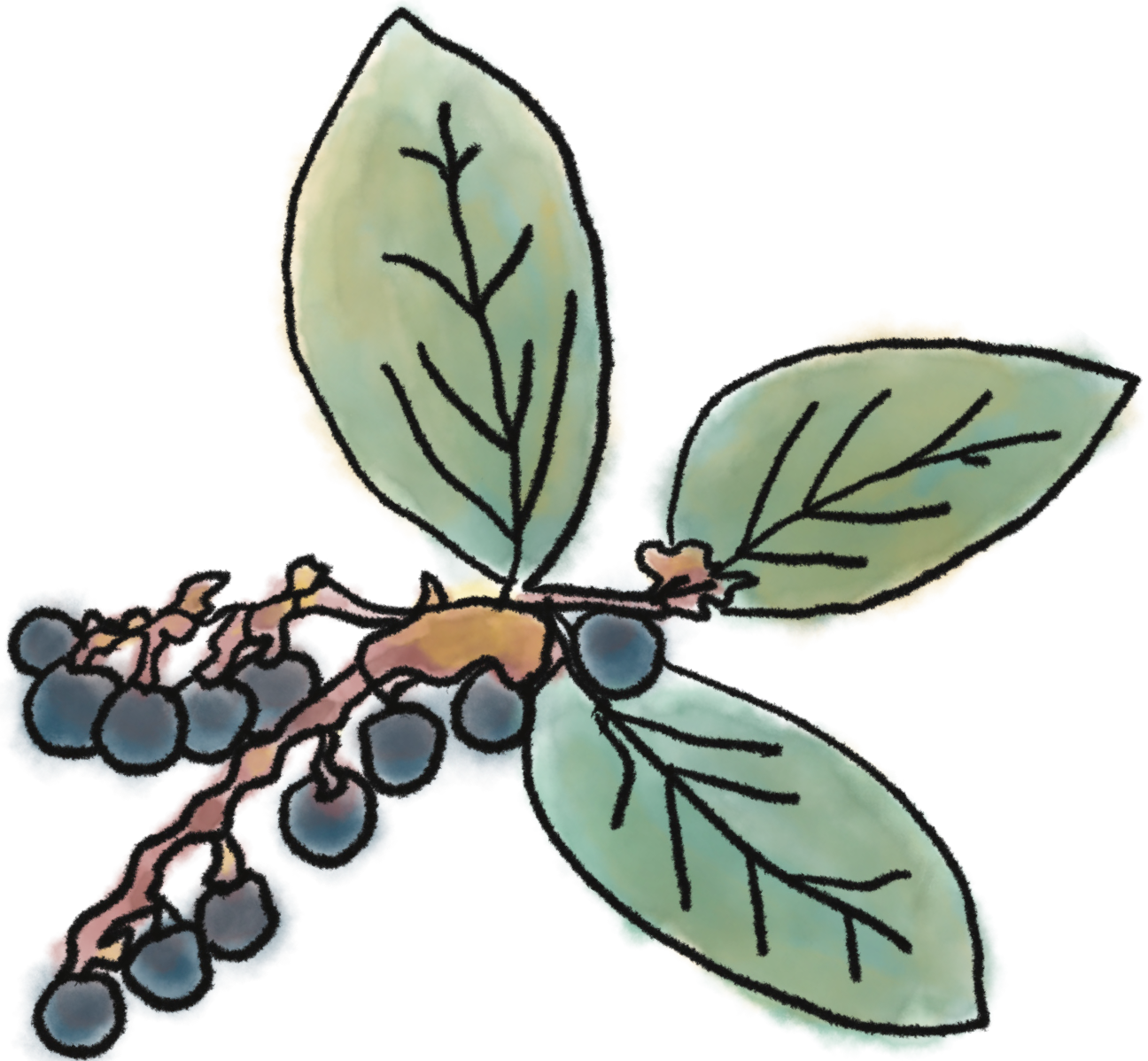
## **Governance/“Third Space”**

- These strategies emphasize the importance of building and enhancing social connections among community members as a means to improve the quality of life in neighborhoods and tackle various social issues.
- By creating a “shared space” or “third space” where community and government meet as peers to find shared priorities and strategies, new solutions to address the effects of the climate crisis that center the people and communities who experience systemically created disparities can emerge.
- Third spaces build and invest in community capacity.
- Strong social networks can lead to better community support, increased civic engagement, and a greater sense of belonging, all of which are essential for community revitalization and problem solving.
- Examples include: [MADE for Health Justice](#), [Climate Justice by Design](#) (CJxD)

## **Mutual Aid**

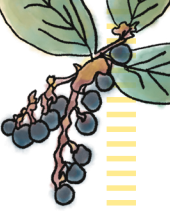
- Actions meant to support the common good among people that take place without government coordination or involvement.
- Mutual aid does not require a formal structure or nonprofit status, although groups sometimes evolve into nonprofit organizations.
- These initiatives foster a sense of solidarity and self-reliance within communities, addressing immediate needs and building stronger social networks.
- Examples include: [Neighborhood refrigerator pantries](#), [Community gardens](#)

# GOALS & STRATEGIES





# COMMUNITY GOAL



## EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER BREATHES CLEAN AND HEALTHY AIR.

### Description

Clean air is a fundamental right regardless of one's location or socioeconomic status. We all have to breathe, but do not always have a choice in the quality of the air we breathe. We are fiercely committed to tackling air pollution at its source, and to safeguarding healthy air for everyone, no matter who or where they are in our community.

This commitment includes reducing emissions from transportation, industry, wood burning, and other sources. Eliminating the use of fossil fuels will greatly improve air quality and in turn everyone's health.

### Why this matters

Air pollution has substantial health impacts that can lead to sickness and even early death. Multnomah County is the most urban county in the state and its residents are subject to high pollution exposure from fossil fuel combustion, industry, and even residential and commercial wood burning. These sources of pollution expose people to elevated levels of fine particulate matter (soot), nitrogen oxide, ozone, diesel particulate matter, and other air toxics. Smoke from wildfires, exacerbated by a heating climate, is also an emerging threat resulting in worsening air quality across the U.S. West after decades of improvements.

Air quality is an environmental justice issue.

Although air pollution affects everyone in Multnomah County, it puts communities of color at greater risk. Analysis has shown that Black and Latinx communities tend to live in areas with the highest concentrations of diesel particulate matter (a highly toxic soot from diesel engines) and residential wood smoke (which also produces soot and other pollutants).<sup>26,27</sup> In addition, pollution from fossil fueled home appliances like gas stoves also disproportionately impacts communities of color and low-income households.<sup>28</sup>

### How we measure impact

Air Quality Index (E) Think of the AQI as a yardstick that runs from 0 to 500. The higher the AQI value, the greater the level of air pollution and the greater the health concern. The desired outcome in Multnomah County is to have zero days over an AQI of 101, also known as "Orange days," which signal conditions unhealthy for sensitive groups (or worse). <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/aq/pages/aqi.aspx>

In addition to the AQI, measuring the impact of air quality on population health should be included to measure overall impact.

- Number of days that AQI reaches a "moderate level" in Multnomah County
- Proximity to Air Toxics Point Sources, EJ indicator<sup>29</sup>
- Diesel PM exposure, EJ indicator<sup>30</sup>

# EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER BREATHE CLEAN AND HEALTHY AIR.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Indirect source rule for major freight hubs

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Many trucks, trains and other mobile diesel-powered equipment converging on a single location day after day leads to disproportionate air pollution for nearby neighborhoods. Regulations can dramatically reduce this pollution by requiring modern lower-emission trucks. The legislature would need to instruct the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to develop, implement, and enforce this policy.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, Environmental Quality Commission

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Require pollution controls for wood-fired restaurants

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Using wood to cook is as old as humanity, but burning wood produces harmful pollution, including soot, nitrogen oxide and formaldehyde. Since restaurants operate five to seven days a week, a restaurant that uses wood for cooking creates significant localized air pollution. Filters, however, can capture that pollution. Multnomah County and its partners should study the impact of restaurant wood smoke, determine the impact of that pollution on public health, investigate potential technologies to address that pollution, and propose regulations that can be implemented at the state or local level.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, Environmental Quality Commission and/or Multnomah County

Image description: "Protect our air" is written on a handmade sign, surrounded by white clouds.



# EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER BREATHE CLEAN AND HEALTHY AIR.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Land-use air quality compatibility process / environmental justice zoning

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Oregon land use laws and development patterns often put industry and housing close together and can make environmental injustice worse. This is especially true in the case of unregulated pollution sources like warehouses. Creating a process to evaluate the environmental justice impacts of land use decisions will help address this issue by adding an analysis tool that currently does not exist. The legislature would need to pass a law that would require an environmental justice impact analysis of land use decisions, as well as funding for implementation and enforcement.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Nitrogen oxides (NOx) emissions standards for gas appliances

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

When a fossil fuel like methane is burned, it releases pollution like soot and nitrogen oxides. And even when they're not on, gas appliances can leak and expose people to benzene and other pollutants. Stoves that vent directly into a home are also a concern, particularly for smaller homes and homes without strong ventilation. Even appliances like furnaces and water heaters that vent outdoors add to outdoor pollution. Other states have used clean air laws to set emissions standards for home appliances to minimize the risk of pollution from gas appliances. The legislature would need to instruct the Department of Environmental Quality to develop this policy.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, Environmental Quality Commission



Image description: A person holds a cooking utensil and prepares food in a large, hot pot.

# EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER BREATHES CLEAN AND HEALTHY AIR.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Develop policies and support programs to increase distribution air filters to low income families and shelter spaces to mitigate smoke from forest fires

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Advocacy

### Additional context

While soot is a major concern due to smoke from forest fires and pollution from transportation and industry, air filters can help. Air filters in classrooms, homes, bedrooms, and shelter spaces, when used properly, can dramatically improve indoor air quality by reducing exposure to soot and other irritants like pollen and dust. However, they can be hard to acquire (especially larger ones for shelter spaces), expensive, and require upkeep. Multnomah County can secure funding to distribute filters to priority populations, especially people with pre-existing respiratory conditions, and help educate the public about the proper use and maintenance of air filters.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County



WE

Image description: Two stenciled signs, "Oregon's air is toxic" and "Clean air now!" are next to a drawing of fire, sitting atop a forest with rising smoke.

# COMMUNITY GOAL



## EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO CLIMATE JUSTICE IN MULTNOMAH COUNTY.

### Description

Climate change disproportionately impacts frontline communities, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) elders, youth, low-income individuals, immigrants, and refugees. Climate policymakers and planners have long strategically undervalued the experiences, expertise and voices of these communities. To equitably and effectively rectify environmental and social disparities, climate justice requires prioritizing frontline communities. Achieving climate justice requires targeted strategies that empowers everyone, especially those who have historically been left out, and provides them with the resources and opportunities to participate in decision-making and the implementation of climate solutions.

### Why this matters

Building trust with communities is essential for effective climate justice work. Strategies for bringing people into climate work must be intentionally inclusive and specific. They also

require an intersectional and critical approach to climate action that moves beyond siloed thinking and action by building and leveraging genuine coalitions and partnerships. We must embrace a long-term view on value creation by nurturing sustainable partnerships that will allow us to see long-term investments through. Building trust and supporting frontline communities to achieve their goals are essential. As we work towards climate justice, we must commit to being authentic, ethical and effective in our approach.

### How we measure impact

Increase in number of safe spaces to connect with community and address climate justice policies. Quantitative measurement of contributions made by community members through:

- Voter participation rates, including by race, age, and geography
- Demographic data on who is applying for and appointed to County advisory committees



Image description: A large group of people move through the street during a peaceful protest in Portland, holding a megaphone and protest signs.

# EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO CLIMATE JUSTICE IN MULTNOMAH COUNTY.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Reduce voting age to 16 for local elections

### Type of action

Game changer, Governance/Third space, Advocacy

### Additional context

Young people will need to live with the consequences of action or inaction on climate change, but have the least voice in our political system. During the 2023 Oregon Legislative Session - [HJR20](#) (amendment to the constitution to lower the voting age to 16 years old) was proposed but did not pass. In addition to state policy, local action at the County level can also be explored with the possibility of placing a local ballot measure to lower the voting age in Multnomah County. This change will require broad-based support for lowering the voting age through community engagement and education campaigns.

### Government organizations

County/City ballot in local elections, Oregon State Legislature

## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Develop a Climate Justice Plan tracking platform to increase transparency and accountability in development and implementation

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Advocacy, Governance/Third space

### Additional context

Data will be key to tracking the multi denominational goals in this plan. Developing a platform to track the progress of the CJP implementation, including goals, milestones and outcomes, is vital. Community data, collected by and for community benefit is also needed.

Community monitoring: Empower community members to monitor the progress of the CJP and provide feedback on its effectiveness

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Office of Sustainability

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Create a community data portal for open and continuous public forums. Support the development of a community-led data ecosystem.

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Advocacy, Mutual aid, Governance/Third space

### Additional context

Community data is an important source of information on the lived experience of community members. It can help fill the gaps left by overreliance on quantifiable data that might obscure inequities or miss important

information that help enhance service delivery, community resilience, and health.

- **Development:** Create a user-friendly online platform that provides access to data on climate-related issues, such as emissions, environmental justice indicators, energy burden and community demographics.
- **Community input:** Facilitate community input into the design and content of the data portal to ensure it meets their needs.
- **Data accessibility:** Make data easily accessible and understandable to a wide range of users, including community members, policymakers and researchers.
- **Community data:** Support the development of a community-led data ecosystem for community data. Integrate community data into County decision and policy making.

### **Government organizations**

Multnomah County's Office of Sustainability, Health Department, Department of County Assets Information Technology

### **TARGETED STRATEGY**

Fund pathways for climate education and action for students in public schools through the SUN School system or school districts

### **Type of action**

Create/fund program, Advocacy, Governance/Third space

### **Additional context**

In March 2022, the Portland Public School Board, after years of direct student and community action and leadership on climate justice, unanimously approved the Climate Crisis Response, Climate Justice and Sustainable Practices Policy. This action set PPS apart nationally as one of the first school districts to set ambitious targets around energy

# **EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO CLIMATE JUSTICE IN MULTNOMAH COUNTY.**

use, waste reduction, curriculum development, green schoolyards, student health, and climate justice and resiliency. Inspired by student activists this policy idea seeks to influence and leverage relationships with school districts to promote climate education for youth.

- **K-12 integration:** Incorporate climate change and climate justice concepts into existing curricula across various subjects, such as science, social studies and math.
- **Teacher professional development:** Provide teachers with professional development opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills in teaching climate change.
- **Curriculum resources:** Develop and distribute high-quality climate education resources, including lesson plans, activities and assessments.
- **SUN System integration:** Integrate climate education into the SUN School system to ensure equitable access for all students.
- **School district partnerships:** Collaborate with school districts to develop and implement climate education programs.
- **Community-based education:** Support community-based organizations that offer climate education programs for students.
- **Youth leadership development:** Provide opportunities for youth leadership

development and mentorship related to climate action.

- Mentorship programs: Pair experienced teachers with newer teachers to provide mentorship and support in teaching climate change.

### **Government organizations**

Multnomah County Board, Office of Sustainability, Department of County Human Services, Health Department, School Districts

## **TARGETED STRATEGY**

Expand funding and support for frontline communities to participate in climate justice planning

### **Type of action**

Create/fund program, Advocacy

### **Additional context**

Throughout the process of developing the CJP, community based organizations were compensated for their time and expertise. This is a bare minimum for equitable process and more can be done to ensure ongoing input from frontline community members and to help ensure marginalized voices are at the table.

- Investing in frontline communities: Support community-based organizations that empower BIPOC elders, youth, low-income individuals, immigrants and refugees to participate in climate decision-making.
- Culturally specific outreach: Provide more opportunities for immigrants and refugees to participate in climate justice involvement through culturally specific outreach programs.
- Indigenous engagement: Foster partnerships and provide climate education with Indigenous communities and people on reservations.

Image description: Two people work together to move a tray of planted vegetable starts. The foreground of the image includes lettuce plants.



- Rural Engagement: Foster partnerships in rural areas of Multnomah County.
- Flexible funding: Provide more flexible funding for community-based organizations to provide services to marginalized communities.
- Advocacy: Advocate for policy changes that support climate justice, such as increasing funding for climate education and community-based organizations.
- Environmental justice: Prioritize climate justice in all policy decisions and initiatives

### **Government organizations**

Multnomah County Board, Office of Sustainability, Health Department

**EVERY COMMUNITY  
MEMBER HAS THE  
OPPORTUNITY TO  
CONTRIBUTE TO  
CLIMATE JUSTICE IN  
MULTNOMAH COUNTY.**



# COMMUNITY GOAL



## EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE CLEAN ENERGY.

### Description

Ensuring that every community member has access to affordable clean energy is a cornerstone of climate justice. Energy is essential for survival and for a thriving life. However, historical and systemic injustices have limited equal access to energy, including the benefits of clean energy and new technologies.

Our energy systems are changing rapidly due in part to policies that address climate change and to new technologies. But without an explicit commitment to addressing injustices, a clean energy future could continue to leave many behind. A clean energy future in which people cannot afford their energy bills is neither just nor how our community defines success.

The clean energy transition can be a powerful tool for community empowerment, unlocking new job markets and fostering economic prosperity and wealth building. The many organizations and stakeholders engaged in this

transition must be intentional to ensure that these benefits accrue to frontline communities, and not only to actors that have traditionally benefited from the energy sector. Reduced pollution from clean energy sources will lead to better health outcomes for everyone.

Ultimately, prioritizing clean energy access builds long-term sustainability and should foster resilient communities prepared for the future.

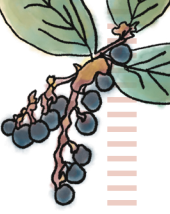
### Why this matters

Clean energy comes in many forms, including renewable energy from wind, solar, and other sources that do not emit greenhouse gas or other air pollutants. It also includes reducing energy use and managing how and when we use energy. A just transition to clean energy requires understanding and acknowledging the impacts that even clean sources can have on the natural environment, including the potential disturbance of ecosystems and impacts on indigenous cultural resources.



Image description: A hand-drawn row of houses and apartments in a variety of colors

# COMMUNITY GOAL



## EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE CLEAN ENERGY.

Beneficial electrification and distributed energy resources (DERs) are key to attaining a just clean energy future. Beneficial electrification means shifting from fossil fuels, like gasoline and methane (natural gas), to clean electricity in ways that reduces costs and emissions, and supports our energy system. Beneficial electrification can look like switching to an electric vehicle or retrofitting homes to electric appliances. Electricity-based technologies are inherently more efficient, help eliminate local air pollution, support local workforce opportunities, and can help build household and community resilience. DERs are local energy projects at the household or neighborhood scale. Prioritizing DERs can also further support local resilience and avoid some of the potential negative impacts of large-scale energy projects.

Today, 27% of households in Multnomah County experience energy burden, meaning they spend 6% or more of their household income on energy. For too many in our community, this means choosing between food or essential medicines and avoiding disconnection to keep their house at safe temperatures. In recent years, Oregon has worked to address this crisis, including by establishing its first bill discount program for low-income households. But programs that support low-income households are insufficiently resourced and/or subscribed to meet the full need of households under increasing and unprecedented pressure from rising energy costs. Indeed, the three energy utilities that serve Multnomah County have raised rates nearly 50% since 2021 due to utility

infrastructure investments, the need to respond to the impacts from climate change including wildfires, and volatile electricity and natural gas market prices.

These increases have likely contributed to a rise in the number of households experiencing energy burden in Multnomah County despite sustained efforts to address it, as well as to record levels of disconnections in 2024.

### How we measure impact

- Percentage of energy-burdened households
- Percentage of eligible households participating in low-income bill discount programs
- Disconnection rates
- Percentage of total energy use served by community-based sources
- Percentage of low-income customers accessing clean energy opportunities (i.e., community solar, rooftop solar, storage incentives, etc.) disaggregated by race and ethnicity

# EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE CLEAN ENERGY.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Limit rate increases, potentially by setting rate caps on energy prices with limits on increases that are in line with the cost of living and inflation or other appropriate protective strategies.

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Advocate at the state Legislature and Public Utility Commission for limits on utility rate increases for residential customers — whether through rate caps or other strategies — to ensure utilities are incentivized to limit their costs and do not shift risks to customers while meeting state policy and prioritizing community benefits.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, Public Utility Commission

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Expand community solar and other community-benefitting local projects on public buildings/land (publicly owned solar) and combine with battery storage wherever it is feasible.

### Type of action

Advocacy, Create/fund program

### Additional context

Develop a solar-feasibility map of public buildings/land and work with partners to develop projects whenever feasible. Ensure that solar and battery storage are developed as part of major County projects wherever feasible.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Enhance incentives for fuel switching and electrification.

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Advocate for changes to federal and state programs, as well as the Energy Trust of Oregon, to explicitly support the electrification of end uses, including fuel switching from methane (natural gas) to electric sources of heating and cooking.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, Public Utility Commission, other state agencies



Image description: Two kids stand in the shade of a building, adorned with solar panels.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Strengthen low-income customer policies, including the bill discount program, by increasing income limits and discount levels, as well as adopting additional disconnection protections and arrears management tools. Fundamentally change qualifications across energy programs, including determining eligibility using alternatives to income qualification.

### Type of action

Advocacy, Create/fund program

### Additional context

Advocate for stronger low-income customer policies (including bill discount program reforms), like changes to the qualification process, stronger disconnection protections, arrears forgiveness and management tools, and better funding for, and targeting of, energy conservation funds to support low-income customers.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, Public Utility Commission

**EVERY COMMUNITY  
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CLEAN ENERGY.**

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Support efforts by at-risk and energy burdened communities to influence decision-makers on energy rates and other energy-related policy issues.

### Type of action

Advocacy, Create fund/program, Governance/  
Third space

### Additional context

Work with community partners to expand existing efforts to build capacity of community-based organizations and grassroots advocates to understand advocacy channels and advocate for their priorities at the state level. These efforts include the Energy Justice Cohort that Multnomah County has co-facilitated for three years in collaboration with several energy and environmental justice partner organizations.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Office of Sustainability

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Expand the use of distributed energy resources, including energy storage, as a core energy security and resilience solution. Support the use of customer facing solutions that allow households to manage their energy demand, lowering costs and supporting the energy system.

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Collaborate partners with a shared commitment to energy justice to engage in utility energy planning and advocate for prioritizing community-based and distributed energy resources to meet existing and future energy needs.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Office of Sustainability

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Expand energy efficiency and weatherization efforts outside of areas served by PCEF.

### Type of action

Create fund/program

### Additional context

Pursue new sources of funding, including grants, that support expanding the number of people served by the County's Weatherization program. Align with, and leverage, efforts/funding that support healthy housing, aging in place, and other housing stabilization approaches.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Office of Sustainability, Department of County Human Services, Health Department

**EVERY COMMUNITY  
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## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Prohibit the use of rate payer money for lobbying, and help ensure that customer-funded energy related advertising/information is not "greenwashing".

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Advocate at the state Legislature, Public Utility Commission and other venues to prohibit utilities from using rate payer funds to lobby the legislature, regulators and other governmental agencies. Work with these and other entities to help ensure that customer-funded energy-related information from utilities provides fair consideration of an issue.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, Public Utility Commission, Department of Energy

# COMMUNITY GOAL



## EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER IS RESILIENT TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS AND OTHER CLIMATE THREATS.

### Description

Every individual is prepared and capable of withstanding and recovering from the impacts of extreme weather events and other climate-related challenges. This involves a combination of preparedness measures, strong infrastructure, effective emergency response systems, and a community-wide commitment to adaptation and sustainability.

### Why this matters

The 2020 wildfires and the 2021 Heat Dome that the Pacific Northwest experienced brought into sharp focus the grim realities of what global climate change is bringing to our region. People are not equally exposed to climate hazards, and those who contribute least to climate change are more often in harm's way. Climate disasters exacerbate existing vulnerabilities, which necessitates preparedness policies and practices that account for social, economic and health disparities.

We need all communities to be able to take an active role in reducing carbon emissions and building resilience to a changing climate, but not

all communities are positioned equally to do so. By addressing inequities in systems we manage and influence, we can create opportunities for more communities to participate actively in climate solutions and for everyone to benefit.

Ensuring every individual is prepared for climate challenges will save lives and strengthen our community in the face of increasing extreme weather events. By investing in preparedness, infrastructure and response systems, and fostering a culture of resilience, we create a safer, more sustainable future for all residents.

### How we measure impact

- Number excess deaths/illness related to extreme weather
- Burden of disease related to excess death/illness related to extreme heat (including demo/EJ attributes) (Quant/dom)
- Mental health data in the Tri-County Regional Climate Health and Monitoring Report
- Qualitative community data collected in partnership with Coalition of Communities of Color and other frontline CBOs articulating community perspectives on resilience

# EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER IS RESILIENT TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS AND OTHER CLIMATE THREATS.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Support advanced green building practices to enhance adaptation/resilience, greenhouse gas mitigation, energy affordability, as well as increase opportunities to innovate green building standards to improve protections to extreme weather events.

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Advocate at the state level to support advanced building codes, including codes that support or allow for local preference for implementation of building standards for housing that are more resilient to extreme weather.

### Government organizations

Oregon Department of Consumers and Business Services - Building Codes Division, Oregon State Legislature

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Improve access for residents to connect with other community members around emergency preparedness, including Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NETs), resilience workshops and culturally specific offerings

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Community organizing and support

### Additional context

Expand the number and reach of culturally specific resilience education opportunities and training, including leveraging a community health worker model and other popular education approaches. Support community-based organizations to lead and conduct their own programs. Incorporate these resources into social service and health education pathways.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Office of Emergency Management, City Emergency Departments, Department of County Human Services, Health Department



Image description: Multnomah County staff participate in an emergency simulation and have a conversation with each other around a table covered in maps.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Develop a strategy to establish resilience hubs in every neighborhood in Multnomah County (e.g., invest in churches and other trusted community spaces). Mandate solar panels and battery storage at resilience hubs in all neighborhoods.

### Type of action

Government/Third space

### Additional context

In coalition with a broad range of community-based organizations and local and state governments, conduct a comprehensive assessment of community needs, the ongoing resources needed to sustain resilience hubs, and initial ideas for suitable locations in each neighborhood, prioritizing frontline and at-risk communities. Work in coalition to advocate for sustained resources to develop and sustain a resilience hub network.

### Government organizations

Oregon Office of Emergency Management, Oregon Health Authority, Oregon State Legislature, Governor's Office, Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, County Department of County Humans Services, County Office of Emergency Management, Cities

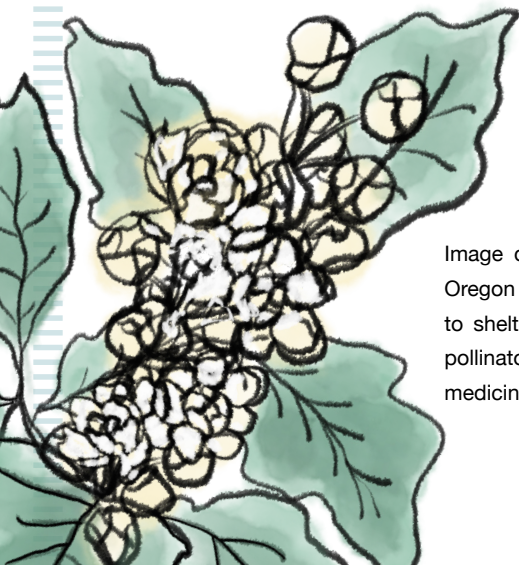


Image description: A drawing of Oregon grape. The plant is known to shelter and feed wildlife, help pollinators, and be prepared for medicinal uses.

# EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER IS RESILIENT TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS AND OTHER CLIMATE THREATS.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Invest in low-income weatherization and energy efficiency services, plus home repairs. Prioritize solar and battery storage for low-income households.

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Advocacy

### Additional context

Investments in household energy efficiency, heating/cooling systems, and solar and battery storage are critical strategies for addressing energy burden and keeping households safe during extreme weather. Often, these investments cannot be made without first addressing basic, and sometimes significant, home repair needs. Funding home repairs themselves also promote health and stable housing options. Through a coalition of advocates, expand programs/funding for basic home repair and that expands access to solar and battery storage for low-income households and critical community facilities.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, State agencies, Multnomah County, Cities





Image description: A blue TriMet bus is ready to drive.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Increase access to air conditioning and air purifiers. Expand Cooling Portland and eligibility criteria for cooling through Oregon's section 1115 Medicaid waiver.

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Advocacy

### Additional context

Staying cool during a heat event is potentially lifesaving, particularly for vulnerable populations like older adults and children. Increase funding and eligibility for the Cooling Portland program to provide more residents with access to air conditioners, heat pumps and air purifiers, especially for those outside the City of Portland boundaries in Multnomah County.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, State agencies, Multnomah County, Cities

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Make transit fare-free for all travel options during a declared extreme weather emergency. Standardize and operationalize fareless rides during extreme weather events. Support infrastructure funding and training for operators to ensure continued operation during extreme weather events.

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

For many, public transit is a lifeline during an extreme weather event, and the price of a transit fare should not be a barrier to this resource. Work in coalition to advocate for clear and consistent policy regarding fareless rides on all public transit systems within Multnomah County during declared extreme weather events, such as heat waves, severe storms, flooding or air quality advisories. Support expansion of services capabilities during extreme weather events.

### Government organizations

TriMet

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# EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER IS RESILIENT TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS AND OTHER CLIMATE THREATS.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Prioritize resilience investments in neighborhoods with greater vulnerability and need.

### Type of action

County policy

### Additional context

Not every community faces the same risks when it comes to heat, including due to sensitivity, exposure, or adaptive capacity. The County and its partners have developed a Heat Vulnerability Index to help understand the places and people in the community who are likely to experience the worst impacts. Working with community-based organizations, the County will develop and implement a tiered response system in which emergency responses/services are allocated and prioritized based on the heat vulnerability level of the affected zone. This could range from general public health messaging for low-vulnerability areas and populations to proactive outreach to vulnerable populations, increased staffing for emergency medical services, opening of additional cooling centers, etc.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Plant trees or provide other shade options near bus stops, playgrounds, and other areas where people gather and need shade. Create areas in the urban environment for animal cooling.

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Advocacy

### Additional context

Tree shade provides a critical respite from heat, both localized and at the community scale, in areas that lack broad tree cover. Increase tree planting efforts and prioritize planting trees near bus stops, playgrounds and other public gathering areas to increase shade, enhance community well-being and mitigate the effects of urban heat islands. Include consideration of the importance of shade/cooling for animals and their habitats. Consider other shade options where trees aren't feasible. Advocate across governments and organizations with tree planting programs, and include advocacy for maintenance for newly planted and existing trees.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County, Cities



Image description: A black dog cools off in shallow water in a fountain at Peninsula Park.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Establish rental inspection program and maximum heat standards for multifamily rental apartments.

### Type of action

Governance/Third space, County policy, Create/fund program

### Additional context

Research has shown that heat waves and even periods of elevated heat can make indoor temperatures unhealthy, and even deadly, for households. These impacts can vary dramatically even across units in the same buildings. Renters often lack resources and options to protect themselves and their families. Landlords play a key role in ensuring the safety and well-being of their tenants. The County will work with partners to convene a coalition to establish maximum indoor temperature thresholds for rental units and to explore the development of a mandatory rental inspection program, including enforcement mechanisms. In addition, the County will expand existing tenant and landlord education efforts around unsafe living conditions, including the risk of heat.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, County Health Department, Oregon Health Authority, Oregon State Legislature, Cities



Image description: Multnomah County Community Health Workers dance in celebration as they reflect on their work during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic they found innovative ways to get critical, lifesaving information to their communities and advocated for people experiencing barriers to access health and safety resources.

**EVERY COMMUNITY  
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THREATS.**

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Public Health Officer communicates climate threats to healthcare providers (e.g., medications that are sensitive to heat, other disability justice issues)

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Heat can pose additional risks associated for people taking medications, as it can affect the efficacy of the medicine itself, while certain medications can cause individuals to experience a higher sensitivity to heat. The Public Health Officer and other public health staff will work to raise awareness of safe medication management practices to health providers and patients, particularly those with disabilities.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Health Department

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Evacuation plans and plans to accommodate an influx of climate migrants.

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Community organizing & support

### Additional context

Evacuation Planning:

- Develop and regularly update comprehensive evacuation plans that address various climate-related scenarios, including wildfires, floods and extreme heat events.
- Identify and prepare evacuation routes, transportation resources, and temporary shelter facilities to accommodate both residents and climate migrants.
- Implement robust communication and alert systems to provide timely and accurate information during evacuations.

Climate Migrant Support:

- Establish a dedicated task force or office to coordinate the reception and resettlement of climate migrants.
- Identify and secure suitable housing, employment and social services for climate migrants, collaborating with community organizations and faith-based groups.
- Develop culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate outreach and support programs to facilitate integration and address the unique needs of climate migrants.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, County Office of Emergency Management, County Department of County Human Services, City councils, Portland Bureau of Emergency Management, Oregon Office of Emergency Management, Healthcare providers, Schools and educational institutions

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Start a working group to understand urban conflagration risk and raise awareness on prevention.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

The devastating Los Angeles Fires in 2025, and previous urban wildfires in Oregon and elsewhere show that urban communities are vulnerable to rapid fire spread due to extreme weather brought on by climate change. A working groups should bring together experts to determine vulnerability, mitigation, and public education needed to address this looming threat.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County

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# EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER IS RESILIENT TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS AND OTHER CLIMATE THREATS.

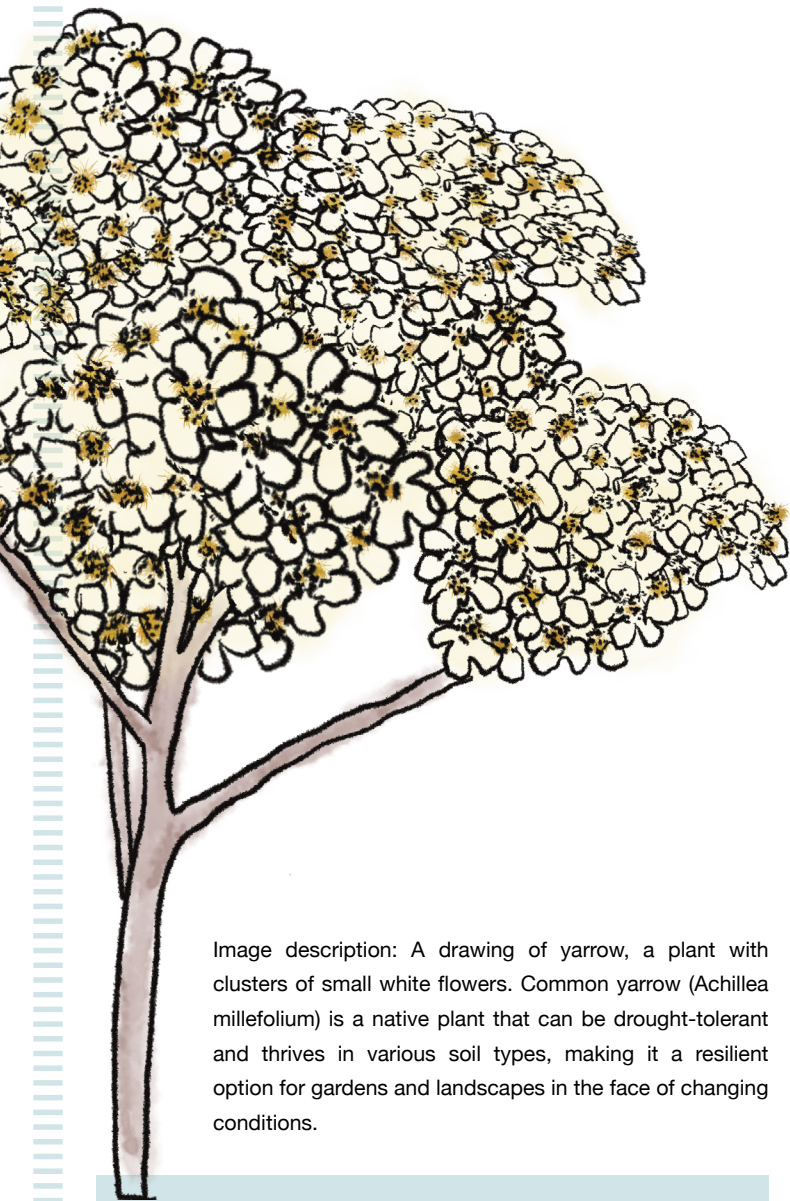


Image description: A drawing of yarrow, a plant with clusters of small white flowers. Common yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) is a native plant that can be drought-tolerant and thrives in various soil types, making it a resilient option for gardens and landscapes in the face of changing conditions.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Severe weather-related parametric insurance

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

This policy aims to leverage parametric insurance as a tool to ensure rapid financial relief and recovery for the County and its residents in the aftermath of qualifying weather events. Parametric insurance differs from traditional hazard insurance in several ways:

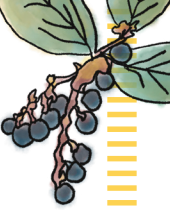
- **Payouts: Predetermined Amounts:** Payouts could be based on predetermined amounts associated with each trigger, reflecting the estimated financial impact of the extreme weather event on the County and its residents.
- **Tiered Structure:** Payouts may be structured in tiers based on the severity and duration of the extreme weather event, with higher payouts for more extreme and prolonged events.
- **Rapid Disbursement:** Payouts will be disbursed rapidly upon verification of the trigger, typically within days or weeks, to facilitate timely response and recovery efforts.

By embracing parametric insurance as a proactive risk management tool, the County aims to strengthen its resilience and ability to recover quickly from natural disasters.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services, Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, Multnomah County Office of Emergency Management, City councils, City emergency management departments

# COMMUNITY GOAL



## EVERY COMMUNITY HAS ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS, CULTURALLY SPECIFIC FOOD AND HAS THE ABILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN TRADITIONAL FOOD PRACTICES.

### Description

The foods we eat are inextricably linked with climate change. As temperatures warm, changes in climate patterns affect agricultural yields and supply chains, as well as the nutritional quality, prices, and stability of our food supply. In addition, industrial mono-crop agriculture itself is a major contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions.

Championing access to culturally relevant, nutritious food strengthens cultural identity and fosters community well-being. By valuing cultural traditions, we create a thriving community where everyone can access healthy, familiar food and connect with their heritage. Approaches like permaculture and others that focus on soil quality and stewardship create healthy food, healthy ecosystems, and can store carbon in the ground.

### Why this matters

Cultural food practices can help communities build resilience to climate change by promoting local food production, reducing reliance on global supply chains and fostering community connections. This means supporting the preservation of traditional food practices that honor the wisdom of Black, Indigenous and other

people of color who rely on natural resources for sustenance. It involves understanding how they obtain and prepare food, and ensuring these practices are respected and incorporated into solutions for a more resilient and just food system.

Access to culturally relevant food can contribute to food security, as well as food safety, especially for marginalized communities who may face barriers to accessing mainstream food systems. By supporting these practices, we can reduce our reliance on unsustainable food systems and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

### How we measure impact

- Increase in community gardens and food production spaces (number, capacity, geographic distribution)
- Household access to culturally relevant foods
- Health Department Food Vulnerability Indicator (Under development, TBD)

**EVERY COMMUNITY HAS ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS, CULTURALLY SPECIFIC FOOD AND HAS THE ABILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN TRADITIONAL FOOD PRACTICES.**

**TARGETED STRATEGY**

Provide outreach and education to expand equitable participation in community gardens and farms.

**Type of action**

Create/fund program, Advocacy

**Additional context**

Community gardens are places to cultivate community, skills and produce. Community gardens exist throughout the county on city-owned property, at churches and in schoolyards. People from all walks of life utilize community gardens, building and sharing their gardening skills, growing their favorite and culturally relevant produce, and sharing space. Community gardens are an important food security and sovereignty tool. While some people may be able to draw on decades of experience, or from a family tradition of food cultivation, many people may lack the skills, knowledge and tools necessary to successfully cultivate produce for themselves. Gardening will also become more difficult in the face of the climate crisis as hotter temperatures,

unpredictable fluctuations in weather and pests become more common. Outreach and training from skilled gardeners, especially culturally specific outreach and education, are becoming more important than ever and should be supported by the public. Expanding the Oregon State University Extension Service to include Multnomah County may be one way to expand access to education.

**Government organizations**

Multnomah County, Cities, Soil and water conservation districts, Oregon State University Extension Services

**TARGETED STRATEGY**

Expand community-owned gardens at housing developments, prioritizing affordable housing communities.

**Type of action**

Create/fund program, Community organizing & support

**Additional context**

Community gardens can sometimes be included on the grounds of new affordable housing developments or added to existing developments. Allocating space for community gardens is often balanced against other priorities and amenities like space for more units, or other amenities that the community prioritizes. One step could include assessing existing affordable housing to look for community-driven opportunities to expand access to gardens.

**Government organizations**

Home Forward, Portland Clean Energy Fund, Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners, Soil and water conservation districts

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Advocate for Indigenous control over state and local lands in Multnomah County, especially in usual and accustomed areas for food gathering like Sauvie Island.

### Type of action

Game changer

### Additional context

Indigenous communities have cultivated the land, stewarded fish and other wildlife, and gathered food, medicine and fiber, from these lands since time immemorial. Tribal governments and individuals are engaged in the continuous act of keeping vital traditional foodways, like cultivating wapato or gathering lamprey. Communities continue these practices to this very day. Advocating for the return of ancestral lands to Indigenous communities, especially in areas traditionally used for food gathering such as Sauvie Island, is a vital component of climate justice. Traditional ecological knowledge in land management and conservation practices is also emerging as vitally important in the face of a changing climate.

### Government organizations

State of Oregon, Multnomah County, City of Portland



Image description: A farmer carries a basket of freshly picked vegetables from the garden.

**EVERY COMMUNITY HAS ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS, CULTURALLY SPECIFIC FOOD AND HAS THE ABILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN TRADITIONAL FOOD PRACTICES.**

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Increase availability of land and farm incubators/collective farms and expand programs like [Community Reaps Our Produce and Shares \(CROPS\)](#).

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Multnomah County has rich and productive agricultural lands and even has an incubator farm in Troutdale, Oregon. But land is expensive, as is access to capital equipment like tractors. The County can help encourage new businesses, especially for historically marginalized populations like Black and Indigenous farmers, by buying more land and providing necessary infrastructure to operate as incubator sites for farming.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners, Office of Sustainability, Health Department



## TARGETED STRATEGY

Expand access to healthy foods by supporting new neighborhood grocery stores including small and diverse businesses, food pantries, community supported agriculture (CSA) and innovative approaches like mobile grocery stores.

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Community organizing & support

### Additional context

There is no single action that will address hunger and lack of access to health, culturally relevant foods. A sustained, coordinated approach across government and community partners is required to address these issues over time.

- Expand Access: Establish mobile grocery stores in areas with limited access to fresh, healthy food, including culturally preferred fruits and vegetables.
- Affordable Prices: Support farmers/food businesses that offer food access programs like SNAP, Double Up Food Bucks, and WIC/Senior FSNP in priority neighborhoods. Reduce and/or subsidize fees that farmers would otherwise need to pay (e.g., vending fees at farmers markets).
- Nutrition Education: Provide nutrition education and cooking demonstrations

**EVERY COMMUNITY HAS ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS, CULTURALLY SPECIFIC FOOD AND HAS THE ABILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN TRADITIONAL FOOD PRACTICES.**

to help residents make healthy food choices, including supporting newly arrived communities to maintain their healthy, culturally specific diets.

- Expand Community Supported Agriculture: Identify barriers and solutions to increase the number of farmers and support opportunities for food insecure families to take part in CSAs.
- Expand and sustain food pantries: Prioritize high quality food in high need communities, and leverage trusted institutions including SUN School programs.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Office of Sustainability, Health Department, Department of County Human Services, Oregon State University Extension Service, Soil and water conservation districts

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Education programs on reducing and eliminating pesticides

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Pesticides and herbicides are dangerous for humans, pets and wildlife. Even herbicides like glyphosate that were long assumed safe for household use have been shown to cause cancer. Limiting and, when possible, eliminating pesticides, fungicides and herbicides is vital for community health. Taking action on this issue could include educational programs to raise awareness about the risks of pesticide use and advocating for stricter regulations on pesticide use.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Office of Sustainability, Health Department, Metro, Oregon State University Extension Services, Oregon Department of Agriculture

# COMMUNITY GOAL



## EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER IS SAFE FROM THE RISKS POSED BY FOSSIL FUELS AND ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE.

### Description

Fossil fuels endanger the planet and disproportionately harm frontline communities by fueling climate change and accelerating the environmental degradation of ecosystems, among other harms. The infrastructure that supports the use of fossil fuels, from large tank farms that supply a region to a single gas pump fueling a car, is woven into the fabric of communities. These systems can pose significant risks to our communities every day, and particularly in the face of natural disasters. As the community transitions to cleaner sources of fuel, we will need to find solutions to the risks this legacy infrastructure imposes on our communities. At the same time, as we consider new technologies we must also be more thoughtful about any potential risks they may pose to our communities in the future.

### Why this matters

In addition to the risks that fossil fuel use poses to the health and well-being of individuals and the planet, the infrastructure supporting the fossil fuel economy poses a significant threat as well. Multnomah County is home to the Critical Energy Infrastructure (CEI) Hub along the Willamette River, north of downtown Portland. The CEI Hub stores 90% of the liquid fuels used in Oregon and is situated on soils that will liquefy during a major earthquake. The CEI Hub poses a grave threat to the community.

There are many examples of other fossil fuel infrastructure, both large and small, located throughout Multnomah County. Each of these poses a potential risk that must be better understood today, and each must be addressed as part of the transition to cleaner fuels. This includes the risk of trains passing through our communities carrying highly flammable fuels, and the methane (natural gas) meter and line at a house. Beyond the local level, the infrastructure used to extract, refine and distribute fossil fuels across the United States and around the world has, and will have, a profound impact on the communities around these facilities.

While the transition to clean energy will allow communities to remove or repurpose this legacy of fossil fuel infrastructure, communities must also be mindful of the potential harms to people, ecosystems, and cultural resources from new clean energy investments/developments. For example, renewable generation projects that eliminate greenhouse gas emissions but are built in sensitive ecosystems can cause environmental and ecological harm. Communities, and in particular frontline communities that have borne the brunt of legacy fossil fuel infrastructure, must be prioritized through justice-centered planning processes.

### How we measure impact

- Percent of households living in proximity to fossil fuel infrastructure by race, income, and other demographic measures
- Percent of gas meters with seismic shutoff

# EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER IS SAFE FROM THE RISKS POSED BY FOSSIL FUELS AND ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Lower DEQ regulatory threshold from 2M to 1M barrels for the Fuel Tank Seismic Stability Program.

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Advocate for the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to reduce its regulatory threshold for liquid fuels by engaging with DEQ leadership, the Environmental Quality Commission and the Oregon State Legislature in order to ensure that more fossil fuel infrastructure is covered under state regulation.

### Government organizations

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality / Environmental Quality Commission, Oregon State Legislature



Image description: People hold signs, “Multnomah County vs Big Oil,” and “Act now on climate emergency,” during a peaceful protest in Portland.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Support fossil fuel infrastructure engagement campaigns, including community-led community health/environmental justice research.

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Governance/Third space

### Additional context

Conduct a fossil fuel infrastructure education campaign (where/what sites generate emissions, co-pollutants, etc.) to grow community awareness of these issues. Fund community-led cumulative health risk studies focused on frontline communities near superfund sites and CEI Hub to inform future policy considerations.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Office of Sustainability, County Office of Emergency Management, County Health Department

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Advocate for regulatory oversight of hydrogen use, especially in homes.

### Type of action

Change law

### Additional context

Advocate for passage of legislation that establishes state oversight of hydrogen use, especially when used in people’s homes, in order to address the potential risks of hydrogen as a replacement for fossil methane gas.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Expand community involvement around land use/zoning reformation and strengthen the County's land use planning.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Work with interested stakeholders to consider innovative strategies like health overlay zones to advance climate justice beyond the County's limited land use authority, which applies only to areas of unincorporated Multnomah County.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Department of Human Services, Multnomah County Health Department

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Stop permitting new gas stations

### Type of action

Change law

### Additional context

Advocate for future prohibition on new gas station development within the Multnomah County cities to reduce the negative impacts of fossil fuels and to accelerate the transition to cleaner transportation technologies like electric vehicles. Include strategies for addressing contamination at the sites (brownfields) after closure.

### Government organizations

City of Portland, City of Gresham

## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Identify and pursue regulatory pathways to limit the growth of the 'natural' gas system

### Type of action

Change law

### Additional context

Advocate at the state level and explore legal pathways for limiting emissions from natural gas used for space and water heating by limiting new gas hookups in Multnomah County. Explore regulatory pathways for limiting losses from stranded assets, e.g. accelerated depreciation of existing assets, cost-benefit analysis of new investments in gas distribution vs electrification, etc.

### Government organizations

Oregon Building Codes Division, Multnomah County

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## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Seismically retrofit everything that holds or moves fossil fuels, including tanks in CEI Hub and gas meters at homes.

### Type of action

Change law, Create/fund program

### Additional context

Advocate for legislative and regulatory changes; develop and/or support programs that deliver seismic retrofits to protect the community from the risks that this infrastructure poses during and after a major earthquake.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, Oregon State Departments, Oregon Public Utility Commissions, Multnomah County

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Implement a hazardous material storage fee.

### Type of action

Change law, Create/fund program

### Additional context

Work with state and jurisdictional partners to explore and support development of a hazardous material storage fee to fund better emergency response capability, especially in areas close to hazardous material storage.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, Oregon Office of Emergency Management, Multnomah County Office of Emergency Management, Portland Bureau of Emergency Management

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Ensure financial responsibility for cleanup from CEI Hub facilities

### Type of action

Advocacy, Create/fund program

### Additional context

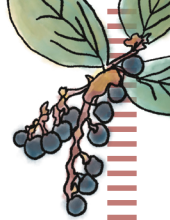
The CEI Hub was built on unstable soil subject to liquefaction and lateral spreading in an earthquake. A major Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake would result in profound impacts to surrounding communities and ecosystems. A financial assurance program will mandate that owners and operators at the CEI Hub take financial responsibility for any damages caused by the fossil fuels and hazardous materials stored there in case of a worst-case release due to an earthquake, ensuring taxpayers are not left financially responsible. Legislation is required to create the financial responsibility requirement and it can be implemented by state or local agencies.

### Government organizations

The state government, through the legislative process | Multnomah County or City of Portland Board or City Council could also legislate

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# COMMUNITY GOAL



## EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO THE RESOURCES AND UNDERLYING CONDITIONS THAT PROMOTE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.

### Description

Climate change exacerbates health inequities, disproportionately impacting at-risk communities. Our commitment is to universal access to the resources essential for health and well-being, regardless of background or location. This includes clean water, nutritious food, safe and healthy housing, quality healthcare, mental health support, and green spaces, utilizing technology to bridge gaps and address diverse climate-related health challenges.

### Why this matters

Climate change is happening in Multnomah County, threatening our access to clean air, clean water and healthy food. In the Portland region, communities of color and low-income communities already experience poorer health and disparities. Climate change will make health disparities worse and is considered a “risk multiplier,” which means it has the potential for worsening many other public health issues.

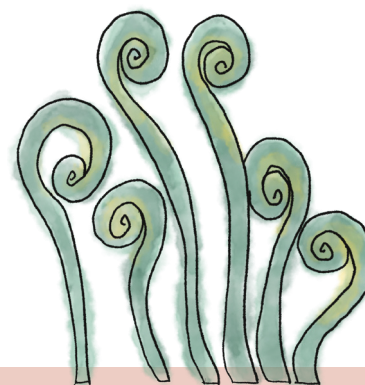
### How we measure impact

Public health accountability metrics are one way that Oregon’s public health system demonstrates and ensures it is improving health, eliminating inequities and effectively using public dollars through a modern public health

system. Tracking health outcomes based on extreme temperatures, air quality, harmful algal bloom advisories and vector-borne diseases are ways we can measure impact.

The [Regional Climate and Health Monitoring Report](#) provides data on 11 health indicators including heat-related illness, extreme weather-related deaths, air quality-related respiratory illness, pollen allergy-related emergency department visits, vector-borne diseases, communicable diseases, and mental health, spanning 2012-2022. The report also explores the differences in populations seeking urgent and emergency care due to extreme heat and air pollution, and highlights mental health impacts during acute climate events.

- Mental health service usage and stress levels in vulnerable communities
- Access to health care facilities, both quantitatively (number/distance) and qualitatively (community experiences)



**EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO THE RESOURCES AND UNDERLYING CONDITIONS THAT PROMOTE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.**

**TARGETED STRATEGY**

Increase funding, training, and support for those serving people experiencing homelessness.

**Type of action**

Create/fund program

**Additional context**

- Dedicated Climate and Homelessness Funds: funds to support houseless people relocations from climate-vulnerable areas and building of climate-resilient housing.
- Cross-Sector Collaboration Training: encourage training programs that promote collaboration between homelessness service providers, climate scientists and emergency management personnel.
- Enhanced Data Collection and Sharing: develop comprehensive data collection and sharing systems to track climate-related impacts on homelessness and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

**Government organizations**

Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners, Multnomah County Health Department

**TARGETED STRATEGY**

De-stigmatize mental health care, shifting narratives and culture around climate anxiety through “Climate Cafe’s,” healing circles and somatic work; incorporate culturally relevant practices and address climate-related traumas.

**Type of action**

Create/fund program

**Additional context**

Promote mental well-being and resilience in the face of climate change by destigmatizing mental health care, fostering community support, and providing culturally relevant and trauma-informed approaches to healing.

Launch a countywide public awareness campaign to normalize conversations about climate anxiety.

Fund the establishment of “climate cafe’s” and healing circles that provide opportunities for collective processing of climate-related grief, anxiety and trauma, as well as skill-building workshops on coping mechanisms, stress reduction and resilience. Integrate culturally relevant practices such as storytelling, traditional healing modalities and nature-based therapies.

**Government organizations**

Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners, Health Department

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Health literacy education campaign to access resources and preventative care.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Empower individuals and communities to make informed decisions about their health and well-being in the face of climate change by improving climate health literacy and facilitating access to resources and preventative care.

Comprehensive Climate Health Literacy Campaign:

- Explain the health impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events, air pollution, waterborne diseases and mental health effects.
- Simplify scientific information and terminology related to climate and health.
- Raise awareness about preventative measures, preparedness strategies and available resources.
- Promote community resilience and adaptation to climate change.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners, Multnomah County Health Department



Image description: A group of kids play badminton in a grassy area of a public park.

**EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO THE RESOURCES AND UNDERLYING CONDITIONS THAT PROMOTE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.**

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Support training of healthcare professionals about climate interventions and technology to support Medicaid patients.

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Support healthcare professionals serving Medicaid patients with the knowledge and skills to integrate climate change considerations into their practice, leverage relevant technologies and promote equitable access to climate-resilient healthcare.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners, Health Department



## TARGETED STRATEGY

Collaborate with healthcare institutions and coordinated care organizations to provide climate-smart technologies and support with other interventions.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Foster partnerships between healthcare institutions, coordinated care organizations (CCOs) and relevant stakeholders to implement climate-smart technologies and interventions, promoting health equity and resilience in the face of climate change.

**Collaborative Framework:** Establish a formal framework for collaboration between healthcare institutions, CCOs, public health agencies, environmental organizations and technology providers. Create a dedicated task force or advisory committee to guide the initiative and facilitate coordination.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners, Multnomah County Health Department



Image description: Two Community Health Workers pose for a selfie together in an outdoor area.

**EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO THE RESOURCES AND UNDERLYING CONDITIONS THAT PROMOTE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.**

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Prepare and retrofit hospitals to upgrade for climate emergencies, including air filters, batteries, and other technologies and resources.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Enhance the preparedness and resilience of hospitals and healthcare facilities to withstand and respond effectively to climate emergencies, ensuring the continuity of essential healthcare services and protecting the health and safety of patients, staff and communities.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners, Health Department

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Long-term distribution of PPE supplies to prevent disease.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Climate change is exacerbating existing health challenges and creating new threats, including the increased risk of respiratory illnesses from wildfire smoke, vector-borne diseases and waterborne illnesses due to flooding and contamination. This policy commits to establishing a sustainable and equitable system for long-term distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure adequate access for all residents, especially at-risk populations and frontline workers, in the face of these evolving challenges.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners, Multnomah County Health Department

**EVERY COMMUNITY  
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Image description: A drawing of the underside of a fern, which shows sori that contain spores. Once mature, the spores are released and dispersed. If they land in a suitable environment, they can grow into a new fern plant.

# COMMUNITY GOAL



## EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS SAFE, HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

### Description

Housing stability is foundational for health and well-being, and is the bedrock of thriving communities. Healthy and safe housing is even more crucial as our planet experiences climate disruptions, when our access to spaces that are temperature regulated can mean life or death.

Every member of our community needs access to housing that they can afford and keep them not just safe, but healthy. By promoting energy-efficient homes, we create havens from extreme heat and cold, protecting residents from the harshest effects of climate change. Families with stable housing also strengthen communities, making them better equipped to bounce back from weather disasters and build resilience. Additionally, focusing on transit-accessible housing reduces reliance on cars, lowering greenhouse gas emissions and contributing to a cleaner future for all.

### Why this matters

How we design, build and maintain our residential buildings is key to both fostering community resilience and stopping climate change itself. Residential buildings account for 16% of greenhouse gas emissions in Multnomah County (2021). Many low- and moderate-income households have only limited ability to improve the conditions of their housing, particularly if they are renters. This

is true for access to efficiency measures and new technologies like heat pumps, but also for basic maintenance like ensuring spaces are well ventilated and mold free. And for some, this means living through winters without a heat source due to costly repairs. For both repairs and new construction, it is critical that homes are designed with the health and well-being of the occupants as the highest priority.

Addressing houselessness and affordability is essential and should be recognized as a core climate resilience strategy. These issues are a priority for Multnomah County and its many partners seeking to address the housing crisis in the county. While other planning efforts guide this work more directly than the Climate Justice Plan, it is the hope that emphasizing the intersectional nature of the challenges brings additional energy and focus to the issue.

### How we measure impact

- Percentage of households that have access to air conditioning
- Household affordability report, broken down by demographic data
- Number of people living unsheltered

# EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS SAFE, HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Promote homeownership, financial literacy and access to home maintenance resources.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Based on an assessment of program needs, identify funding sources to expand the reach of existing programs.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County, HomeForward, City housing bureaus, Community-based organizations, Oregon Housing and Community Services



Image description: A tidy bedroom with two beds placed beneath a window, lamps, a colorful rug, and a longboard propped up against a dresser.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Increase funding for Individual Development Account (IDA) program savings, including in support of multigenerational housing.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Based on an assessment of program needs, identify funding sources to expand the reach of existing programs, including state budget/legislative pathways.

### Government organizations

Oregon Housing and Community Services, Multnomah County, HomeForward, City housing bureaus, Community-based organizations

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Develop more permanently affordable housing.

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Advocacy

### Additional context

Advocate for additional funding and regulatory changes to accelerate and increase the number of permanently affordable housing units in Multnomah County, while supporting compact communities by maintaining the urban growth boundary.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County, HomeForward, City housing bureaus, Metro, Community development corporations

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Fully fund rent assistance.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Based on an assessment of program needs, identify funding sources to expand the amount and reach of existing programs.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County, HomeForward, City housing bureaus, Metro, Community development corporations

## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Increase funding for culturally specific weatherization and home repair programs.

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Advocacy

### Additional context

Pursue funding to expand the reach of the County's low-income weatherization and home repair programs; partner with the state and local partners to leverage efforts and ensure that households with the greatest need are prioritized.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County, Oregon Housing and Community Services

**EVERY COMMUNITY  
MEMBER HAS SAFE,  
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HOUSING.**

## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Strengthen renter protections, including expanding beyond a solely complaints based system.

### Type of action

Game changer, Governance/Third space

### Additional context

Convene broad partnership to consider alternative approaches to renter protections that help promote household health and stability. Consider pathways such as mandatory rental inspection programs/standards and rental housing adjudication pathways that protect renters and property owners.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners

Image description: Solar panels collect energy from the sun on the roof of a multi-family housing building.



## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Promote sustainable building practices, including design that integrates housing into the environment. Support EV access through charging requirements.

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Advocate for building codes and design requirements at the state level that improve over time to address climate and livability goals. Explicitly consider public health in development, particularly housing. Advocate for the ability of local governments to use the state's Reach Codes as the local energy code. Strengthen existing state and local EV requirements.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County, City of Portland, City of Gresham, State agencies, Oregon State Legislature

**EVERY COMMUNITY  
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## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Prohibit industrial and toxic operations, including distribution centers and manufacturing facilities, from being developed near affordable housing and/or areas with disproportionately high BIPOC communities.

### Type of action

Advocacy, County Policy

### Additional context

Develop and pursue strategies, including local public health authority, that address siting and development conflicts between polluting facilities/operations and affordable housing communities.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Office of Sustainability, Health Department

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Support zoning and design reforms and incentives to increase density and social housing developments, including the Inner East Side for All Initiative. This includes neighborhoods that are designed to foster community by embedding community gardens, affordable small business spaces, etc.

### Type of action

Advocacy

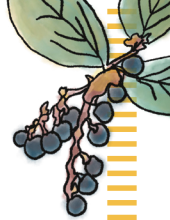
### Additional context

While Multnomah County has limited jurisdictional control of the design of urban areas, it can influence these predominantly city-level decisions through research, including the alignment of community design and public health, and can advocate for strengthened standards. It is also important to recognize the nexus of community development and transportation planning and funding, which are often decisions made at regional government Metro.

### Government organizations

City of Portland, City of Gresham and other City-level partners; Metro

# COMMUNITY GOAL



## EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER IS SURROUNDED BY AND CONNECTED TO NATURE, PARKS, AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE.

### Description

Connecting everyone to nature isn't just about recreation; it's about building healthy, resilient communities that thrive in a changing climate. Green spaces are powerful tools for climate action. Trees and open spaces act as nature's filtration system, cleaning our air and water. They combat the urban heat island effect, keeping our neighborhoods cooler. By ensuring everyone has access to nature, we empower communities to address climate change, foster connection to the natural world and create a more sustainable future for all.

### Why this matters

According to the 2023 [Multnomah County Environmental Justice Snapshot](#) report, average tree canopy cover is significantly greater in areas home to primarily white people compared to areas primarily home to communities of Black, Indigenous and other people of color. Tree canopy cover in the areas home to the largest shares of communities of color is also significantly lower than the average tree canopy cover of the county. Since trees are linked to health outcomes like birth weight, and beneficial environmental benefits like cooler temperatures during a heat wave, the lack of tree cover in certain parts of Multnomah County is a glaring example of an existing environmental injustice.

Beyond trees, access to parks and green space is vital to communal and individual well-being. While access to parks and natural areas is relatively well distributed in Multnomah County, access can be hampered if people don't feel safe traveling to a park because of dangerous streets or public safety concerns. Parks may also lack amenities that people want to use, like splash pads, seating, shade and playgrounds. School yards and playgrounds often lack shade, which makes accessing these resources on a hot day unpleasant and potentially dangerous.

A community where everyone feels welcome and safe in their neighborhood park is a healthy community. Moreover, trees, parks and natural areas are also vital for birds, insects and other wildlife that call the urban areas of the County home. The health of the ecosystem is also tied to human health.

### How we measure impact

- Tree canopy increases overall and elimination of tree canopy disparity
- Proximity to park or natural area
- Percentage of people who feel safe and comfortable accessing and using their neighborhood park
- Percentage of people who feel safe letting a child in their care walk to a nearby park

**EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER IS SURROUNDED BY AND CONNECTED TO NATURE, PARKS, AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE.**

**TARGETED STRATEGY**

Prioritize street improvements adjacent to parks to increase safe access to parks for pedestrians, especially children (fare-free transit park passes for all Multnomah County parks).

**Type of action**

Advocacy

**Additional context**

Do you feel safe letting your kids cross the street by themselves so they can get to the park? Through investments and deliberate decisions, parks and natural areas are well distributed throughout Multnomah County. However, access can be hampered because of busy streets and a lack of safe crossings for pedestrians, especially children. Local governments should make it a priority to invest in safe and convenient access to parks, especially in East County.

**Government organizations**

Cities are primarily responsible for maintaining and improving streets.

**TARGETED STRATEGY**

Identify parks in greatest need of investment based on existing amenities and demographic characteristics of the surrounding community, and work to increase funding to develop and maintain parks in communities with the least access to quality parks and green space.

**Type of action**

Advocacy, Create/fund program

**Additional context**

Not all parks and green spaces are created equal. Amenities like good walking paths that are well-lit at night, playgrounds, exercise equipment, playing fields, shade and other amenities that people want for their parks are important. These amenities can mean the difference between a well-used park and a space that is avoided because it does not feel safe. City and Metro park departments have long-term strategic plans. Multnomah County should prioritize the implementation of the Vance Vision project, including the development of park amenities for Vance Park.

**Government organizations**

Cities, Metro, Multnomah County Department of Community Services



Image description: A wooden sign, “Peace Park Community Gardens,” is mounted in front of a garden, beside educational signage.



## TARGETED STRATEGY

Establish community orchards in communities with high proportions of BIPOC residents.

### Type of action

Community organizing & support, Governance/  
Third space

### Additional context

Fruit and nut orchards are powerful tools used throughout human history to address food insecurity. Taking advantage of our region's favorable climate for fruit and nut production can help communities grow their own food and foster connections with neighbors and nature. Community-based organizations, community anchors like schools and churches, and other institutions can team up to create a network of community orchards that are planted and tended by the community.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Office of Sustainability, Health Department and Department of Community Services

**EVERY COMMUNITY  
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Image description: Two people under the shade of a tree look up through the leaves

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Plant trees east of 82nd Avenue.

### Type of action

Advocacy, Create/fund program

### Additional context

Planting and maintaining street trees should be considered vital urban infrastructure, just like sidewalks and streetlights. Unique challenges to street tree planting exist in neighborhoods east of 82nd Avenue. For example, many streets lack sidewalks or a well-defined planting strip for trees — in other words, basic urban infrastructure. Sustained investment and innovation are needed to overcome these challenges. Cities need to prioritize urban infrastructure development and development standards that require tree planting with good infrastructure like adequately sized planting strips in addition to sustained tree planting programs.

### Government organizations

Cities

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Fund pavement removal and tree planting in heat island areas.

### Type of action

Governance/Third space

### Additional context

Multnomah County has identified neighborhoods that get the hottest in the summer because of pavement, concrete, and rooftops combined with a lack of shade. Removing pavement and planting trees and other greenery can be a powerful intervention for cooling the surrounding area. Multnomah County should identify heat islands, and cities should prioritize interventions that will reduce the heat island effect.

### Government organizations

Soil and Water Conservation districts, Cities, Multnomah County

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Create solar panels shade structures.

### Type of action

Governance/Third space

### Additional context

To accomplish several goals at once, installing stand alone solar panel structures can both create shade and provide renewable energy. Cities and Multnomah County should look for opportunities to experiment with combining shade infrastructure with solar, especially community solar that can benefit local residents.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Office of Sustainability

**EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER IS SURROUNDED BY AND CONNECTED TO NATURE, PARKS, AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE.**

## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Create more tree shade at bus stops and playgrounds.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Shade is becoming more important because of increasing summer temperatures. Many bus stops lack shelter, let alone shade. Many playgrounds also lack shade, making them inaccessible during the hottest times of the year. Strategically investing in tree planting to provide shade that benefits community assets like playgrounds and bus stops should be a priority for cities, especially in partnership with TriMet for bus shelters. This should also include care and support of newly planted trees.

### Government organizations

Cities, TriMet



Image description: A person measures a tree trunk's diameter to assess its health.

# COMMUNITY GOAL



**EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE AND SAFE TRANSIT, BIKING AND PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE.**

## **Description**

This goal envisions a community where everyone can easily travel in a way that is affordable, healthy, sustainable and efficient, ensuring that everyone, regardless of income or location, can reach their destination safely.

## **Why this matters**

Policymakers and public officials have made decisions that continue to disproportionately harm the most at-risk users of our transportation system, including people of color and people with disabilities, rarely accounting for vehicle emissions and dangerous speeds. Over time, these burdens and associated costs have unfairly impacted specific populations. Major infrastructure projects have uprooted entire neighborhoods while other projects were designed and built without adequate input from the communities they were supposed to serve. The needs and desires of strategically undervalued communities were often ignored. The traditional ways in which municipalities and agencies have delivered personal freedom, access and connection have taken a heavy toll on our environment, as well as on frontline and fenceline communities along major transportation corridors. Finally, communities must prioritize investments that move our transportation system from one that is vehicle based to one that operates at the human/pedestrian scale.

## **How we measure impact**

- Proximity to transit stop<sup>31</sup>
- Intersection density<sup>32</sup>
- Traffic Fatalities and burden of death analysis
- Transit fare and access over time



Image description: Two people ride bikes over the Hawthorne Bridge.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Farefree transit all the time for specific routes (similar to Boston). As an alternative, expand access to low-income fare and move youth fare from half-price to zero.

### Type of action

Advocacy, Game changer

### Additional context

Make transit fare free, similar to Boston's fare-free bus program, potentially starting with specific high-ridership bus routes or MAX lines in Multnomah County. A pilot program can initially target routes that serve areas with high concentrations of low-income residents, communities of color, and essential destinations such as schools, hospitals and employment centers. The pilot could be evaluated after a set period (e.g., one year) to assess its impact on ridership, equity, accessibility and overall transportation system performance.

An alternative strategy would be to expand the existing low-income fare program by making transit free for youth (people under 18) and significantly reducing fares for eligible adults.

### Government organizations

TriMet, Multnomah County Board of Commissioners

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Provide incentives and reimbursements to property owners and developers to build and improve existing pedestrian infrastructure that is ADA accessible (e.g., sidewalks and crosswalks).

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Advocacy, Game changer

### Additional context

Incentivize the development of safe, accessible pedestrian infrastructure by offering financial assistance to property owners and developers who construct or upgrade sidewalks and crosswalks to meet ADA standards. This program will contribute to a more equitable and inclusive community where everyone, regardless of ability, can safely and easily navigate our streets and neighborhoods.

### Government organizations

Oregon Department of Transportation, transportation and planning departments of cities in Multnomah County, Multnomah County Department of Community Services

**EVERY COMMUNITY  
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INFRASTRUCTURE.**

## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Require the Safe Routes to School Program in all school districts within Multnomah County.

### Type of action

Advocacy, Game changer

### Additional context

Multnomah County could mandate the implementation of Safe Routes to School programs in all school districts within its jurisdiction. This initiative will prioritize the safety and well-being of students by promoting active transportation, such as walking and biking, through infrastructure improvements, educational programs and community engagement.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Board of Commissioners

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Electric vehicle charging at public locations owned by the County.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Multnomah County can install and maintain electric vehicle charging stations at all public locations it owns to support the transition to clean transportation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, County Department of County Assets, County Office of Sustainability, Portland Bureau of Transportation

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INFRASTRUCTURE.**

## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Expand active transportation and make it safer (e.g., more frequent and accessible bus lines).

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Prioritize the expansion and safety of active transportation options by increasing the frequency and accessibility of bus lines, along with implementing infrastructure improvements to support walking and biking. These initiatives will promote healthier, more sustainable transportation choices and contribute to a more livable and connected community.

### Government organizations

TriMet, Oregon Department of Transportation, and transportation and planning departments of cities in Multnomah County, Multnomah County Department of Community Services

# COMMUNITY GOAL



## EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER THAT SUPPORTS THEIR NEEDS AND ALL LIVING SYSTEMS.

### Description

Equitable access to clean water is a pillar of climate justice. Clean water isn't just a basic human right — it's essential for healthy communities and thriving ecosystems. It fuels public health, fosters well-being and safeguards the natural world.

However, climate change intensifies existing water challenges, including scarcity, pollution and unequal access. This goal goes beyond drinking water and encompasses clean rivers, streams and lakes for swimming, fishing and the overall health of the ecosystem on which we depend.

### Why this matters

Life cannot exist without water. Clean water is foundational to public health and well-being. Water is our most cherished resource and essential to our community's wealth, health and viability. The Pacific Northwest, west of the Cascade Mountains, is known for its rainy environment. But climate change and past development patterns put water resources at

risk. The climate crisis is leading to hotter and drier summers, more intense rain events, and a shift from snow to rain, even at higher elevations. Wildfire threatens Bull Run, the source of most of Multnomah County's drinking water. And failing infrastructure, human-caused pollution and a lack of infrastructure to treat stormwater runoff imperil fish populations. Work is already underway to address some of these threats, but more needs to be done to preserve and enhance this most precious of life-giving resources.

### How do we measure impact

- All area waterways are safe for fishing, swimming and other recreation and cultural activities
- Barriers to migrating (anadromous) fish like salmon and lamprey have been removed throughout Multnomah County watersheds.
- All Multnomah County residents have access to clean drinking water
- People have access to safe, accessible places to swim, including pools and in-area waterways.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Asset mapping for emergency water resources.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Water access will be disrupted for a prolonged period by the Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake, while other natural disasters like wildfires and floods also pose a risk to drinking water. An emergency water supply is critical for personal preparation, but community points of emergency water access should also be well-known and distributed throughout the county. Multnomah County should secure funding to help grassroots and community-based organizations secure emergency water supplies and educate the public on how they can prepare for prolonged disruptions from natural disasters.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County Emergency Management and Multnomah County Health Department

**EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER THAT SUPPORTS THEIR NEEDS AND ALL LIVING SYSTEMS.**



Image description: An adult and three children play in a river on a sunny day.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Create safe places to swim in area rivers.

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

The Willamette, Columbia and Sandy rivers offer incredible recreational opportunities for area residents. However, access to swimming beaches, particularly on the Willamette River, is limited. Access to swimming in the river has become easier with the addition of ladders to floating docks and beach cleanups. The City of Portland could invest capital dollars to make beaches more inviting and accessible, and provide lifeguards during the summer.

### Government organizations

City of Portland

**EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER THAT SUPPORTS THEIR NEEDS AND ALL LIVING SYSTEMS.**

**TARGETED STRATEGY**

Ensure awareness and access to water utility bill discount programs.

**Type of action**

Create/fund program

**Additional context**

Every city in Multnomah County offers water utility discount programs. Making sure residents know about the programs and can access them when needed will require navigation assistance and coordination. Service providers, community-based organizations, schools and health clinics should all be equipped to help residents access these programs. Multnomah County, through its community energy programs and SUN schools, can better coordinate access and awareness for these programs.

**Government organizations**

Multnomah County

**TARGETED STRATEGY**

Incentivize water management and water efficiency.

**Type of action**

Advocacy, Community organizing and support

**Additional context**

Effectively utilizing rainwater by allowing it to water trees and plants while filtered through the soil is an important strategy to improve water quality and prevent flooding. Portland has long been a leader in requiring runoff from hard surfaces to be channeled to rain gardens in new developments. Retrofitting existing buildings, as well as depaving, are important strategies for cooling neighborhoods and protecting streams. Community-based organizations, municipal partners like cities and school districts, and soil and water conservation districts should prioritize depaving projects, especially in known heat islands. Additional strategies to consider: porous pavement, water collection/rain barrels especially ahead of droughts.

**Government organizations**

City of Portland, City of Gresham, Soil and water conservation districts



Image description: Concrete is broken apart by people using large hammers.



## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Prevent pesticides and promote practices to avoid runoff of substances like motor oil, car wash residue and weed killer into water.

### Type of action

Advocacy, Governance/Third space

### Additional context

Overuse of pesticides and herbicides is common in urban and suburban areas. Chemical weed killers used to create a “perfect” lawn cause harm to humans and wildlife, especially insects like pollinators. Efforts like “Follow the Water” help people understand that their choices impact water quality. Public policies like pesticide bans also play an important role in protecting people and wildlife. Municipal agencies should expand partnerships and funding for promoting outreach and education, and explore regulations to prevent the sale or use of especially harmful chemicals.

### Government organizations

Metro, Soil and water conservation districts, State and local legislation (bans)



Image description: A bioswale is filled with plants and a tree and is located on the side of a paved street. This helps to manage the stormwater runoff created by the urban environment and prevents any polluted water from flowing into surface waters and groundwater.

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## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Address Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs).

### Type of action

Governance/Third space

### Additional context

Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) tend to occur in warm waterways with poor circulation (runoff also plays a role). Climate change is increasing water temperatures. Areas like Ross Island Lagoon, created by mining, are becoming a frequent source of HABs in the lower Willamette River, which runs through Portland. Improved monitoring and public communication are helping to protect people and pets from harm, but solutions can be found for specific known problem areas like Ross Island Lagoon. Restoring a flushing channel to allow the river to flow through the Ross Island Lagoon would address the major source of HABs in the lower Willamette River.

### Government organizations

Complex: local, state & tribal governments, academic institutions, CBOs, and businesses.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Find a non-toxic alternative to 6PPD in car tires.

### Type of action

Governance/Third space, Advocacy

### Additional context

6PPD is a chemical used in the production of car tires. As car tires wear out due to normal use, tiny particles of the tire will flow into local waterways through stormwater runoff. 6PPD has been conclusively linked to endangered coho salmon death. Finding non-toxic alternatives to 6PPD is vital to protecting coho runs, particularly in urban areas like Multnomah County. Multnomah County should continue to convene a 6PPD work group and look for advocacy opportunities at the state or federal level to promote the use of inert chemicals in tires.

### Government organizations

Complex: local, state & tribal governments, academic institutions, CBOs, and businesses.

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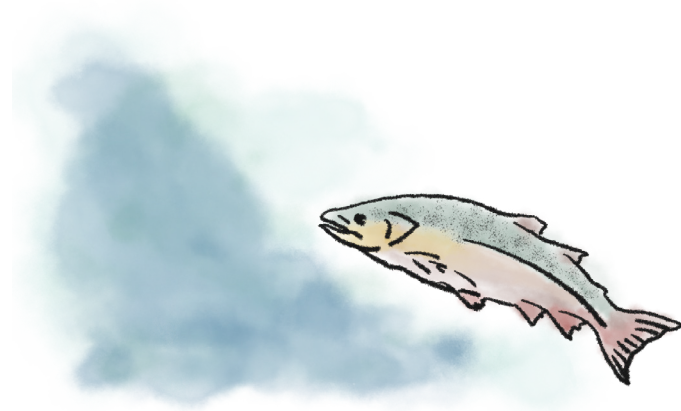


Image description: A hand-drawn salmon swims upstream.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Prioritize and fund the removal of culverts that block fish passage.

### Type of action

Create/fund programs

### Additional context

Outdated culverts that are too small or shaped like a pipe can create barriers to fish passage and hurt migrating fish. Culverts are a legacy of road construction practices from the mid-20th century that did not consider infrastructure impacts on migratory fish like salmon. These projects are both costly and time-consuming and should be prioritized based on the greatest potential habitat restoration potential. Multnomah County has received funding to replace a final failing culvert on Beaver Creek. As that project is completed, the County should prioritize other culverts that create barriers for fish.

### Government organizations

Oregon Department of Transportation, City of Portland, Multnomah County, Soil and Water Conservation districts, Metro

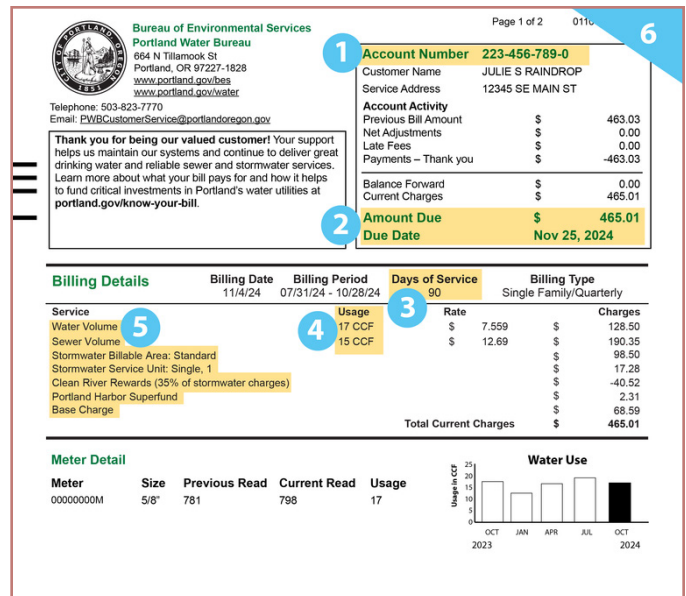


Image description: An example of a water bill is used for educational purposes by the Portland Water Bureau. Areas of the bill are sectioned off by number so that utility customers can understand what those sections mean, and how to read their bill.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Expand water system education, including where it comes from, how to read water utility bills, accessing and understanding water quality reports

### Type of action

Community organizing & support, Advocacy

### Additional context

Water can be among the most expensive utilities that people have to pay for. Water agencies, potentially with the help of partner community-based organizations, should educate customers on the water system, how to read bills, and ways to conserve water and save money.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County water agencies, and cities

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Provide water test kits.

### Type of action

Create/fund program

### Additional context

Free lead testing kits are available from local water utilities. While area utilities have removed lead pipes from the delivery system, some buildings may still have pipes or fixtures that contain lead. Making sure that people are aware of the availability of test kits is vital for public health.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County water agencies

**EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER THAT SUPPORTS THEIR NEEDS AND ALL LIVING SYSTEMS.**

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Invest in recreational water activities for youth in North and Northeast Portland.

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Access to swim lessons and neighborhood pools is key to developing water safety skills. Black children aged 10-14 years drown in swimming pools at rates over seven times higher than white children, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). North and Northeast Portland, home to many Black residents, lack access to swimming facilities and swim lessons. Investing in facilities and lessons is critical, especially as extreme heat makes swimming an important adaptive strategy for staying cool.

### Government organizations

City of Portland

**EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER THAT SUPPORTS THEIR NEEDS AND ALL LIVING SYSTEMS.**



Image description: People and their pets stand and play in the Willamette River just a few feet from the shoreline.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

Clean and restore the Willamette River and surrounding land.

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

The lower reach of the Willamette River — the area that runs through Portland north of the Fremont Bridge — is contaminated by the legacy of industrial uses along the river. A planned cleanup of contaminated sediments has been in process for over 20 years and the area is a listed Superfund site. Organizations like the Portland Harbor Community Coalition have been pushing for an equitable and thorough cleanup of the river while minimizing harm to frontline communities near the cleanup.

### Government organizations

Environmental Protection Agency, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

# COMMUNITY GOAL



## EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO WEALTH-BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES AND GREEN JOBS.

### Description

The Climate Justice Plan aims to create a just and sustainable future where every community member has access to wealth-building opportunities and green jobs. Green jobs expand beyond traditional sectors like construction and clean energy to focus on all industries and communities. These jobs not only address climate change but also improve working conditions in undervalued sectors such as caregiving and education.

### Why this matters

Assets are critical for creating economic security, protecting people against income disruptions and financial emergencies, and helping households build intergenerational wealth. At the same time, Black, Indigenous and other people of color experience systemic barriers to employment, business creation, home ownership and other wealth-building opportunities. For example, according to the Black Business Association of Oregon's Black Prosperity Dashboard, Black Oregonians own homes at lower rates and have less household income than their white counterparts. These disparities are often a result of factors like racism, age discrimination, language barriers, wealth disparities, and limited access to education and training programs.<sup>33-34</sup>

To address these inequities in frontline communities, it is essential to create a just and inclusive green economy. Workforce development programs must not only equip individuals with the necessary skills, but also challenge cultural biases and foster a welcoming environment within the green sector.

### How we measure impact

- Rate of homeownership among Black, Indigenous and other households of color
- Racial wealth gap
- Employment statistics from local government and job agencies
- Percentage of Black, Indigenous and other people of color in "green jobs"
- Reduction in barriers to accessing green jobs and training programs
- Surveys of workers to assess job satisfaction, wage growth, and career mobility



Image description: A person wearing a hard hat and reflective safety vest smiles.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Support transition of fossil fuel workforce to green energy jobs.

### Type of action

Advocacy, Community organizing & support

### Additional context

As the economy transitions from using fossil fuels to renewable energy, workers in the energy sector may need to develop new skills. The energy sector in Oregon represented 4.8% of total state employment and jobs in wind and solar generation already employ the most people. According to the State of Oregon Employment Department, wind turbine service technicians and solar photovoltaic installers are projected to be the fastest-growing green occupations in Oregon through 2032. Developing programs that support workforce transition is a vital component of energy justice.

### Government organizations

Oregon State Legislature, State of Oregon workforce agencies, Multnomah County, Cities

**EVERY COMMUNITY  
MEMBER HAS ACCESS  
TO WEALTH-BUILDING  
OPPORTUNITIES  
AND GREEN JOBS.**



Image description: A young person looks through a handheld magnifier to view an insect.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Develop a youth Climate Corps program.

### Type of action

Create/fund program, Advocacy

### Additional context

Youth, in many ways, are the most impacted by climate change. Not only are young people often more susceptible to environmental harms like air pollution, they also have to cope with a warming climate for the entirety of their life course, which causes both physical and mental stress. Developing a youth climate corps program will help young people feel empowered to be part of the solution while also providing jobs. Multnomah County and other partners can work to modify and supplement existing youth employment programs to create a youth climate corps that works to address climate resilience, mitigation and care needs in the community.

### Government organizations

Multnomah County, City of Portland

# EVERY COMMUNITY MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO WEALTH-BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES AND GREEN JOBS.

## TARGETED STRATEGY

---

Provide comprehensive, high-quality services, including priority support services for people in workforce programs.

### Type of action

Advocacy

### Additional context

Workforce programs are vital for helping people develop job readiness skills, gain exposure to different career pathways, and develop the skills and connections needed to enter a career pathway. But for many people who could benefit the most from workforce programs, barriers like childcare, food assistance, housing, limiting their ability to participate. Additional supports are needed, including:

- Mental Health Services: Integrate mental health services into workforce development programs.
- Integrated Case Management: Support community-based organizations that empower Black, Indigenous, and other elders, youth and low-income individuals of color to participate in climate decision-making.
- Resource Provision: Offer financial assistance for transportation, childcare and other essential needs.

- Provide language assistance and cultural competency training for workforce training providers.
- Provide childcare assistance: Assist low-income families needing childcare to work or participate in education and training in addition to other activities related to childcare quality and coordination.

### Government organizations

State of Oregon workforce agencies, Multnomah County Board. Multnomah County Department of County Human Services

## TARGETED STRATEGY

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Develop a universal basic income (UBI) or guaranteed income program.

### Type of action

Game changer, Advocacy

### Additional context

Implementing a universal basic income (UBI) or guaranteed income program in Multnomah County can provide a crucial safety net, reduce poverty, and support climate justice efforts. However, it requires careful consideration of funding mechanisms, program design, and eligibility. But, pilot programs from across the country have shown that UBI can have a profound beneficial lasting impact on low-income households.

### Government organizations

State of Oregon, Multnomah County

## Examples of Strategies in Action

Steering Committee partners, including Multnomah County and the City of Portland have been working on implementing equitable climate solutions. The experience from implementing these solutions has helped to inform the goals and strategies in this plan. The following examples help to illustrate how these strategies look in practice.

### Energy Justice (Advocacy, Create/fund program)

To hit our carbon reduction goals, Multnomah County needs 100% clean electricity from sources like wind and solar. But real climate justice means more than that – everyone should be able to afford their power bills, the benefits of clean energy should reach environmental justice communities, and no one community should get stuck with the downsides. For years, steering committee members and like-minded groups, including the Coalition of Communities of Color, Verde, Northwest Energy Coalition, Community Energy Project, the Citizens’ Utility Board of Oregon (not a steering committee partner), Multnomah County, and others have teamed up to help people struggling with energy costs through advocacy and programs.

**TODAY, 27% OF HOUSEHOLDS IN MULTNOMAH COUNTY ARE ENERGY BURDENED, AN INCREASE OF 3% SINCE 2022. A HOUSEHOLD IS “ENERGY BURDENED” WHEN THEIR HOUSEHOLD ENERGY-RELATED COSTS EXCEED 6% OF THEIR INCOME.**

In 2020, Oregon’s frontline environmental justice groups formed the Oregon Clean Energy Opportunity Coalition (OCEO) to push for energy justice in the state legislature. Multnomah County was right there with them. This work paid off in 2021 with big wins like House Bill 2021, requiring major investor-owned for profit utilities to go 100% clean by 2040, with built-in climate justice measures like the Community Renewable Energy Grant Program. We also got House Bills 2475 and 2842 passed, beginning to address energy affordability and supporting healthy homes. Since then, a diverse group of Energy Justice Advocates (including many from OCEO) have been working hard at the Public Utility Commission to make sure those laws get implemented fairly. This has meant securing low-income bill discounts, making programs accessible to non-English speakers, and strengthening protections against winter shutoffs.

That implementation work included successful advocacy for low-barrier low-income bill discount programs enabled by HB 2475. These bill discount programs allow low-income households to receive a reduction in their utility bill, providing them with critical economic breathing room. Energy Justice Advocates’ wins also include requiring intentionality around program accessibility to people who speak a language other than english, and ensuring that utilities automatically sign up as many qualifying households as possible. The Advocates have also worked to strengthen protections from disconnection, including by successfully advocating for winter weather shutoff protections that prevent utilities from shutting off power for failure to pay on days when freezing temperatures are in the forecasts.



The Energy Justice Advocates have also been running an Energy Justice Cohort, bringing together grassroots community advocates from all over the state. We're sharing knowledge, figuring out community needs, and developing solutions together. Cohort members have been testifying in hearings on utility rates and new energy justice bills. This work is rooted in the belief that everyone should be able to contribute to climate justice, especially those people most impacted by the current system's injustices.

In addition to participation, climate justice must include economic benefit for people who have been marginalized. Community Energy Project (CEP) is helping low-income households sign up for the Oregon Community Solar program. This lets anyone benefit from solar, even if they rent or can't afford the high upfront cost of solar panels or live in an apartment. CEP, the program's Low-Income Facilitator, has made enrollment easy and is pushing to make the program even better for low-income folks. Participants in the Oregon Community Solar low income programs actually save money on their utility bills, all while supporting the environmental benefits of renewable energy. We've made progress on a clean, just energy transition in Multnomah County, but there's still a long way to go. Too many families are struggling with rising energy bills, partly due to climate change. But, the coalition work for energy justice in Oregon shows that the status quo can change with focused and sustained engagement that centers community needs and facilitates grass roots engagement in legislative and regulatory spaces.

### **Build/Shift (Advocacy, Governance/third space)**

In 2019 frontline organizations worked with the City of Portland to form the Build Community, Shifting Power (Build/Shift) coalition. The coalition came to include many Steering Committee members, including the Coalition of Communities of Color, Verde, Community Energy Project, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility, and APANO. Build/Shift also included other important partners like Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods and individuals from the community. The Build/Shift coalition recognized that multifamily rental housing represented a critical intersection of the climate crisis and community stabilization. Unlike many previous efforts to address climate change in housing, this work was centered on elevating the voices of frontline community members through years of deep community engagement. Over several years, the Build/Shift coalition developed a set of standards for rental housing that, if enacted, would reduce carbon emissions, build climate resilience, improve tenant health, and help stabilize communities through an intentional focus on anti-displacement. These standards, later called the HEART Standards (Health housing, Equitable energy, Anti-displacement, Resilience, Temperature), formed the basis for advocacy work at the local and state level that continues to this day.

# Implementation

## Board Adoption / Resources

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners will consider adopting the Climate Justice Plan in the summer of 2025, after a robust public comment period and further revisions. Adoption by Board Resolution does not legally obligate the County to act, but does publicly commit the County and its partners to advancing each of the strategies contained within the CJP over time. Many of the strategies align naturally with existing programs and priorities and may not require additional resources to implement. This is particularly true of “advocacy” type strategies. The success of other strategies likely depends on a commitment of additional County resources, strong community partnerships and organizing, or both. This will require working with County leadership, with advocacy from community leaders, to be included in future County budget cycles. Multnomah County begins to consider budget ideas late in each calendar year, and develops specific proposals in the beginning of the calendar year for inclusion in the Chair’s draft budget in March or April. The full Board of County Commissioners deliberates on the Chair’s proposed budget in late Spring and must adopt a final budget by June of each calendar year. Concurrent to the public comment process, County staff will work to identify specific pathways for advancing the strategies in the Plan in anticipation of its adoption by the Board.

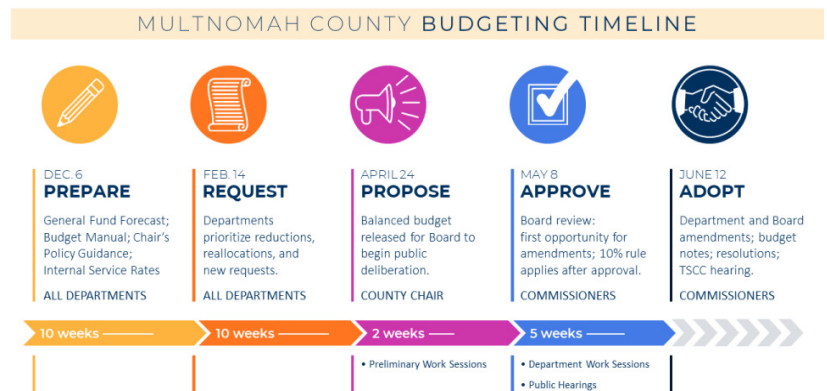


Image description: Graphic shows the Multnomah County Budgeting Timeline.

## Community Oversight

The CJP Steering Committee was convened to support the development of the Climate Justice Plan. While the wisdom and effort provided by the Steering Committee has made this Plan possible, it was not anticipated that the Steering Committee would continue to convene once the Plan is formally adopted by the County Board. However, the need for strong community oversight of the Plan’s ongoing implementation is essential both for accountability from the County to the community, but also to ensure that the work moves forward in a manner that reflects the values it is based: community and justice centered, co-creative and empowering.

The Board should establish a committee to oversee the Plan. Ongoing community oversight and involvement is critical for the success of the CJP. The strategies in the Plan will need to evolve over time to meet changing conditions. Staff will need counterparts in the community to help assess opportunities and set priorities. The County already has a variety of community advisory committees that help the County make better and more informed and effective decisions and the Office of Sustainability already has a community advisory committee, the Advisory Committee on Sustainability and Innovation.

The Advisory Committee on Sustainability and Innovation has proven to be an important and influential advisory committee. Helping the County understand opportunities to advance community priorities. Recommendations for the committee have led to a wide range of important County policies including:

- Establishment of the Clean Air Construction Standards to limit diesel pollution.
- Establishment of the PropertyFit program to facilitate private investment in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and seismic resilience for commercial buildings.
- Provided the initial recommendation for the establishment of a Board policy on environmental justice.
- Recommended the renaming of the Wapato Bridge to honor Indigenous Communities and their role as ongoing stewards of the environment.

The Board of County commissioners can amend the ordinance that established this committee to give it an expanded responsibility to oversee the implementation of the CJP. This would provide an outside group to help make sure implementation and reporting are carried out in line with the values and goals of the Plan.

Beyond ACSI, we are committed to maintain and grow relationships with not only frontline communities, but across all communities and types of organizations, non-profit, public, and private. We understand that the ultimate success of the CJP is dependent on the breadth, quality and trust of the relationships we hold.

## **Reporting**

One mechanism of accountability is staff reporting to the County Board and the community periodically about progress in implementing the Plan, new opportunities that arise and challenges that are encountered. This periodic report will contain the metrics identified under each of the goals, as well as a status update about how each of the strategies is moving forward. This reporting will also include community experience, perspectives and priorities related to the Plan. The specific timelines for reporting on progress will be established by the Board in the resolution adopting the Plan.

## **Iteration**

The Climate Justice Plan is intended to be a living document that is updated to reflect the dynamic and changing conditions in our community, including climate impacts. While the twelve universal goals will not change, the strategies likely will. Some strategies may endure, reflecting their complex and long-term nature, while others may be completed in one to two years. Future updates to the Plan will include updating strategies to reflect successes, barriers, opportunities and new priorities. These updates will be shaped by the same commitment to community co-creation as the original Plan, and a greater emphasis on community experiences and insights collected through community data. No specific timeline has been identified to formally revisit the Plan, instead the timing will be dictated by the priorities of the County Board and the desires of community partners. But it is the hope that because this plan is rooted in universal values and long-term goals, it will serve as the foundation for the County's and community's climate justice work for at least the next 10 years.

## Conclusion

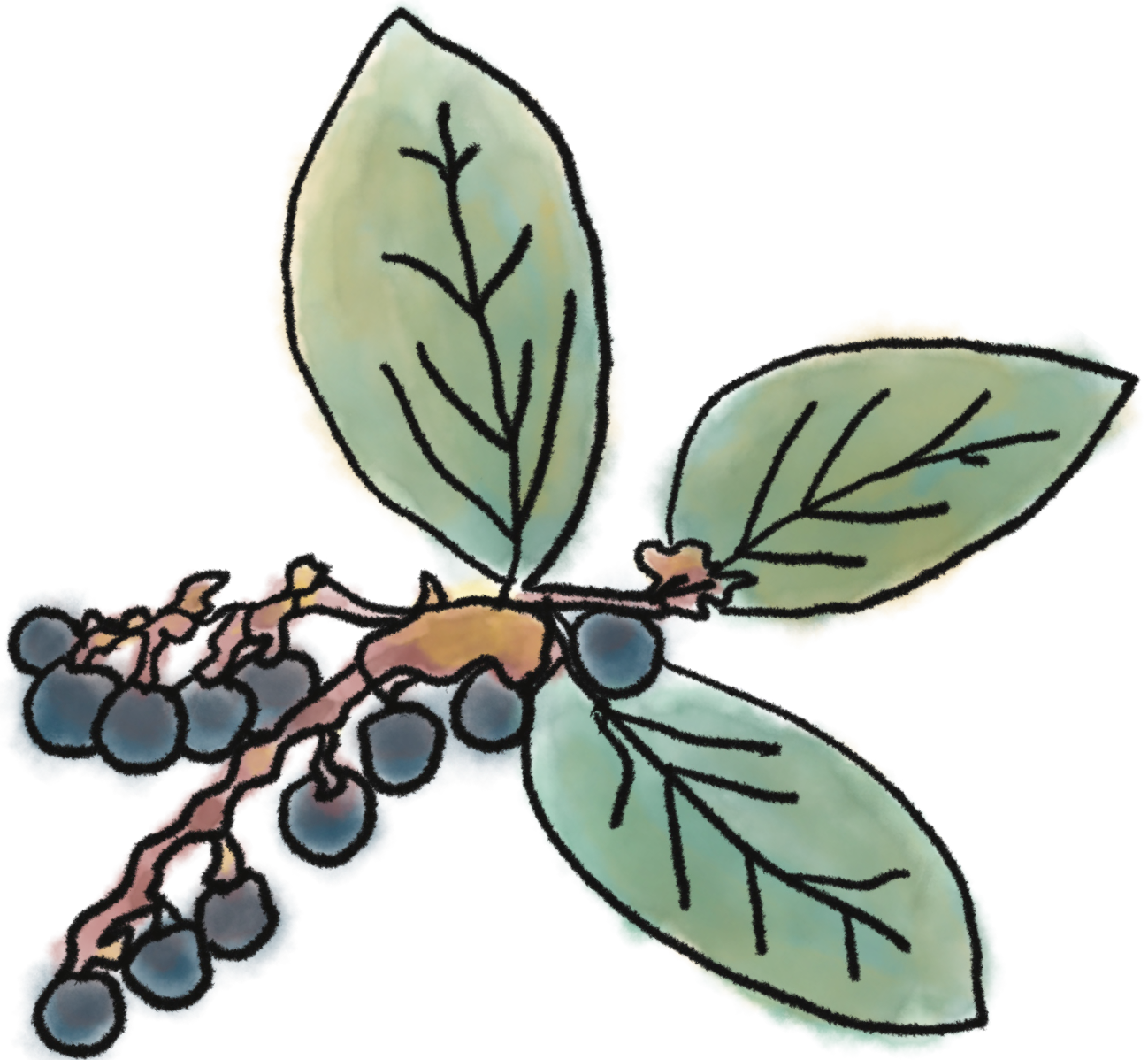
A better world is within our grasp, but the path ahead requires our collective commitment. Our current trajectory is unsustainable - out of control fossil fuel emissions are driving the earth's climate systems to the brink. Everyone is beginning to experience the increasing pain and pressure of a climate changed world - from extreme heat and drought, to more intense storms and flooding - the predicted impacts of unabated fossil fuel pollution are all around us. The impacts of those changes disproportionately fall on the communities with the fewest resources, people who are unhoused, people who have been denied economic opportunity because of institutionalized racism, immigrants and refugees, and other marginalized communities.

Imagining a better world and sharing that vision with others can be a radical act. It can be a struggle to see a brighter future. There is a tendency toward inertia, and a belief that our actions won't make a difference, sometimes called doomerism. And, there is a tendency toward an imagined techno utopia, a future lived separate from nature, safe in space or on a new world, or even a virtual world. Both of these extremes are actively destructive and ignore the spirit of humanity and nature that connects us.

Our interconnectedness with each other and the Earth demands a grounded approach. The Climate Justice Plan embraces a simple truth that if we care for each other and the natural world, we will thrive. That injustice and the climate crisis have the same roots, and addressing both will leave everyone better off. It's a vision that is big enough for everyone in Multnomah County to see themselves in, and we hope a vision that is big enough to ripple out to encompass the whole world. Building a better world is not easy, but let's not lose sight of the incredible possibilities that lie within reach. By staying focused, working together, and refusing to be deterred, we can transform our vision into reality.

**REMEMBER TO IMAGINE AND CRAFT THE WORLDS YOU CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT, JUST AS YOU DISMANTLE THE ONES YOU CANNOT LIVE WITHIN." DR. RUHA BENJAMIN**

# APPENDICES



## **Appendix A – Planet Earth is Getting Hotter and Hotter, and it's Bad**

Scientists agree that the Earth is getting hotter because of fossil fuel burning and the pollution that comes from it, which increases temperatures. The science has been clear for decades, but we are also seeing the impacts in our communities right now. These include deadly heat waves and forest fires in the Pacific Northwest, and intensifying hurricanes in the Southeastern United States. The Earth will keep getting hotter as long as people use more and more fossil fuels. If the use of fossil fuel does not ramp down quickly, Earth's systems can break down and global heating may continue even if fossil fuel use is eventually stopped.

Fossil fuels are non-renewable energy sources that are formed from the remains of ancient plants and animals. Burning fossil fuels, which include coal, oil, and methane gas, produces carbon dioxide and other pollutants. Once carbon dioxide is in the air, it stays there for a long time. Carbon dioxide is absorbed by the ocean, making it more acidic. Carbon dioxide has been building up faster and faster in the atmosphere since the start of the modern industrial age. The build-up of carbon dioxide acts like a blanket, trapping energy from the sun and making the world hotter. Pollution heating up Earth is called the greenhouse effect and pollutants that heat up the planet, like carbon dioxide and methane, are called greenhouse gases.

Hotter air can dry out landscapes faster, leading to conditions for more intense forest fires. Hotter air also holds more water, leading to severe storms that lead to flooding or landslides. Warming oceans are melting sea ice, which holds back glaciers in Antarctica and Greenland. As those sea ice “corks” melt away, ice on land begins to slide into the ocean and raise sea levels. This is already impacting coastal areas of the U.S., especially in southeastern

and Gulf states and in recent years sea level rise has accelerated. Warmer oceans also fuel storms, like hurricanes and atmospheric rivers, that impact the Pacific Northwest. Hotter temperatures can also impact the spread of infectious diseases like West Nile virus or dengue fever, which have not been common in the Pacific Northwest, but may become more common.

Here in the Pacific Northwest, we are already seeing climate change fueling stretches of extreme heat and a much-longer forest fire season, as well as emerging threats like cyanobacteria pollution in drinking water and forest fires affecting urban areas. The warming planet also exacerbates naturally occurring conditions like droughts, flooding, and forest fires. Taken together, these impacts present a major challenge that must be addressed by all levels of government, by communities demanding proactive policies from the government, and by networks of mutual assistance.

Too much warming can lead to a runaway chain of naturally occurring feedback loops that would lead the world to become inhospitable for human civilization as we know it.<sup>35</sup> Limiting warming to no more than 2 degrees Celsius past the preindustrial average must be our urgent goal, though it may be a significant challenge given current global emissions trends. To achieve this goal we will need to enact strategies that eliminate fossil fuel use by 2050 — the year the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates we need to reach net-zero fossil fuel emissions to prevent runaway climate feedback loops. Current projections estimate that the world is close to exceeding, or already has exceeded, 1.5 degrees Celsius.

## **Appendix B – Sources of Greenhouse Gas Pollution**

Where does fossil fuel and other greenhouse gas pollution come from and what are our goals for eliminating pollution?

Climate change is a global phenomenon driven by the growing concentration of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere. These emissions, primarily from the burning of fossil fuels, can be measured at the local, state, national, and global scales. A pound of carbon dioxide emissions (the primary, but not only, greenhouse gas) contributes equally to the global impacts of climate change irrespective of where it is produced.

However, as previously discussed, the climate crisis is neither experienced or enabled equally. The consequences of the massive scaling of fossil fuel-powered industrialization that kickstarted climate change — as well as its resulting wealth generation and ethos of consumption associated with it — have been distributed unequally around the globe.<sup>36</sup>

Average per capita carbon dioxide emissions are much higher in wealthier, more developed nations, but within countries, the average level of individual consumption varies greatly across income, with the wealthiest individuals in a given country far more likely to generate higher emissions due to greater resource consumption.<sup>37</sup> Wealthier individuals and countries carry a much greater responsibility for contributing to the climate crisis. At the same time, poorer countries and individuals bear a disproportionate burden of the harms of climate change-driven hazards.

The growth of the fossil fuel-based global economy over the past century has led to a great increase in wealth and standards of living, particularly in the United States and Europe,

while at the same time imparting devastating impacts on frontline communities both here and abroad, as well as on the natural world. Climate justice, then, isn't just about protecting the planet from the ravages of climate change itself, but an explicit recognition of, and response to, the grave harm the continued use of fossil fuels has on all of our global communities. Focusing on the elimination of fossil fuel use in Multnomah County will curtail greenhouse gas emissions, but it will also help eliminate local pollution and along the entire production chain that globally harms poor people and people of color disproportionately.

## **Appendix C – Expected Climate Change Impacts in Oregon**

According to the Oregon Global Warming Commission<sup>38</sup>, the hotter temperatures, changing rainfall frequencies and patterns, and high-intensity wildfires caused by climate change have already made measurable impacts on Oregon's natural landscapes, communities, and economy. These impacts are projected to become more frequent and severe as global climate conditions become more extreme and unpredictable.

Some of the main climate change-driven repercussions projected for Oregon include:

- **Extreme heat:** Excessive heat is the leading cause of weather-related death in the United States. In addition to contributing to fatalities from chronic health issues such as heart disease and strokes, and increasing hospitalizations due to heat-related illness, heat waves also increase air pollution that can cause or exacerbate other health risks.<sup>39</sup> Dangers related to extreme heat include increased risk of wildfires and conflagration (structure-to-structure fire spread), hazardous air quality resulting from fires,

the warming of streams and rivers and the resulting stress on ecosystems and wildlife, prolonged power outages, and harmful algal blooms.

- **Precipitation changes:** Precipitation is expected to increase during winter and decrease during summer. Further, winter precipitation is expected to intensify, and the proportion of precipitation falling as rain rather than snow is expected to increase. Dangers relating to precipitation changes include increased frequency and severity of floods due to projected extreme wet-day precipitation increases over the remainder of the century. Lower summer streamflow increases water temperature that will have negative effects on salmon populations, and reduced snowpack that stresses water supplies.
- **Winter storms:** An increase in freezing rain is expected in the northern Willamette Basin while projections suggest that easterly winds through the Columbia River Gorge may strengthen during winter, even as the Willamette Basin becomes warmer. Ice accretion on some surfaces in the region may increase during freezing rain events. Risks relating to winter storms include interruptions to transportation, prolonged power outages and disruption to activities such as school instruction time.
- **Droughts:** Drought risk during the summer is likely to increase statewide. Overall drought risk is expected to increase over the 21st century on the western slopes of the Cascade Range and southern Coast Range, decrease in the Deschutes and John Day basins in north-central Oregon, and change little elsewhere. Potential dangers relating to droughts include impacts to farming and food production, lower summer streamflow and negative effects on salmon populations, reduced summer hydropower, and reductions in water supplies.

## **Appendix D – Vision, Power, Solutions Framework**

Community-driven climate justice and resilience planning is a relatively new field of practice. The National Association for Climate Resilience Planners (NACRP) is a national network of community-driven planning facilitators, grassroots organizers, and multi-sector partners focused on climate justice solutions, led by the Movement Strategy Center’s Taj James and Jovida Ross, as well as Rosa Gonzalez, founder of Facilitating Power. NACRP developed the Vision, Power, Solutions Framework, a living framework on community-driven climate resilience planning that Multnomah County’s Office of Sustainability and the Health Department have looked to as a guide for increasing the flow of critical data from communities to decision-makers, while simultaneously supporting community capacity for building solutions into action.

The Vision, Power, Solutions Framework outlines the principles, practices, and crucial roles that community-based organizations and other entities, such as local governments, can fulfill in actively cultivating leadership within frontline communities to drive climate resilience solutions. Having the roles that community-based justice organizations and local governments can play, articulated clearly, ultimately helps improve governance structures and aids the effectiveness of our efforts to meet the challenge of the climate crisis, while also addressing the needs of the communities the County and our partners serve.



## Appendix E – The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership

### The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership

The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership framework, developed by the Movement Strategy Center, provides a valuable lens for understanding how to effectively engage communities in climate justice planning.

This framework emphasizes a shift from traditional models of engagement — where government agencies primarily inform or consult with communities — toward a model where communities have genuine ownership over the decision-making process.

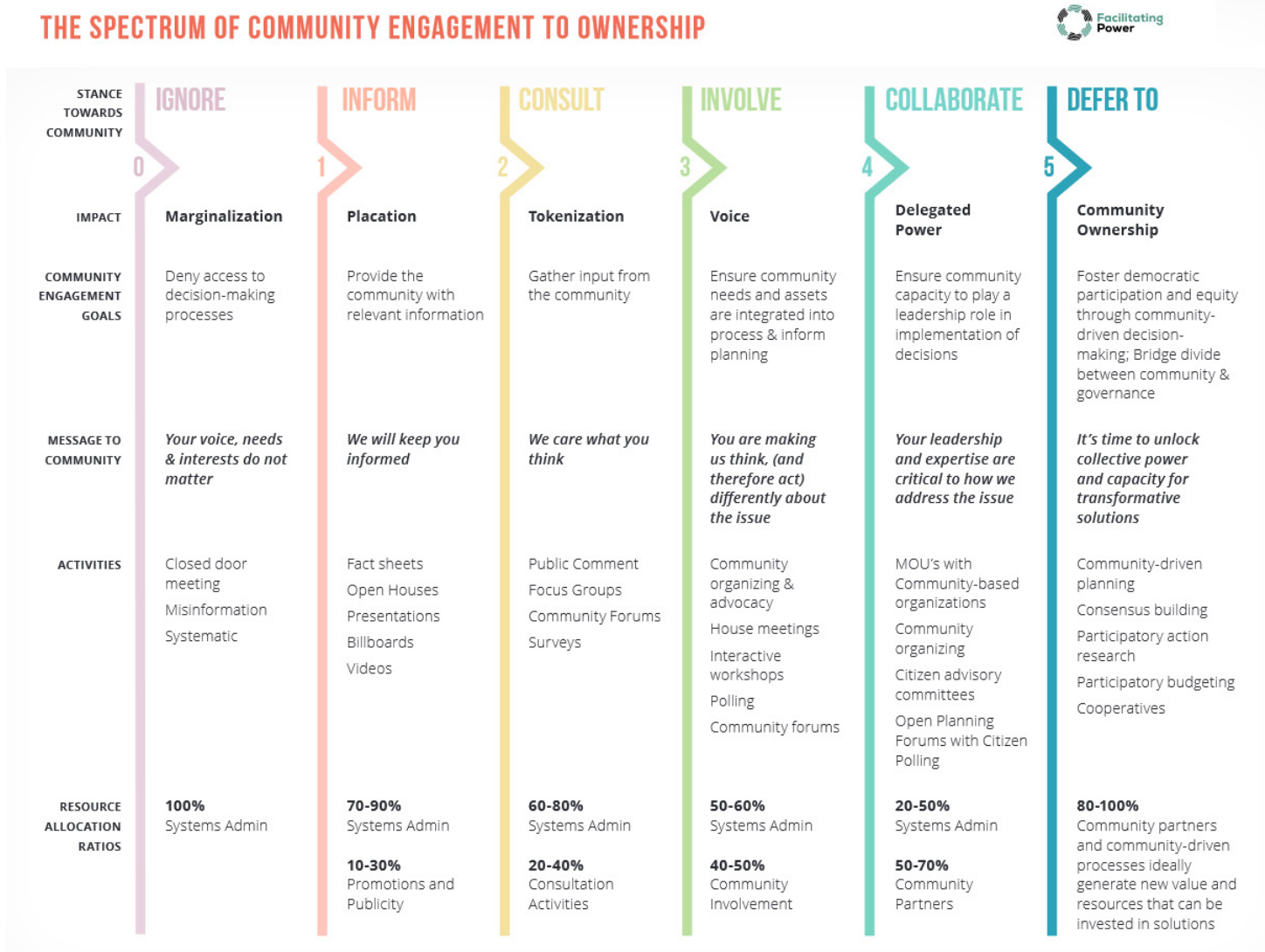


Image description: A graphic shows The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Community Ownership. Credit: Rosa Gonzalez and Movement Strategy Center, 2019

## Endnotes

- 1 Frontline communities are those impacted most by climate change and its root causes, which include white supremacy, patriarchy, and colonization. These communities are embedded in legacy struggles against social, economic, and environmental injustices exacerbated by extractive and pollutive industries that have been purposely and systemically situated adjacent to their communities, and in some cases, on the actual land of the communities. This disproportionate exposure to climate and environmental injustice results in acute and chronic impacts to human and environmental health. Frontline organizations are those created of, by, and for frontline communities, and are accountable to a base of frontline community members. “A People’s Orientation to a Regenerative Economy”, Climate Justice Alliance: United Frontline Table, 2020, p. 7 [climatejusticealliance.org/regenerativeeconomy/](https://climatejusticealliance.org/regenerativeeconomy/)
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# CLIMATE JUSTICE PLAN

## COMMUNITY DISCUSSION DRAFT

We value your feedback on what is written in this draft plan.

Share your thoughts with us: [rebrand.ly/CJP2025](https://rebrand.ly/CJP2025)



Office of Sustainability

