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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.

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.

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.

Metrics	Notes
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	

Strategies	Description
Support transition of fossil fuel workforce to green energy jobs <i>Type of action: Advocacy; Mutual Aid</i>	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.

<p>Develop a youth Climate Corps program</p> <p><i>Type of action: Create/fund program; Advocacy</i></p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Provide comprehensive, high-quality services, including priority support services for people in workforce programs</p> <p><i>Type of action: Advocacy</i></p>	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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.
<p>Develop a universal basic income (UBI) or guaranteed income program</p> <p><i>Type of action: Game changer; Advocacy</i></p>	<p>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.</p>

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