

# Responses to Questions and Comments from the CATF in Review of the Draft Community Engagement Plan

August 12, 2021

**Question: For the CATF to perform this work, I would like to see a list of documents available for the CATF to study and review and a timeline of when any documents that are not currently available will be.**

All the documents that we have are on Basecamp for you review as you like. We are deliberately scaffolding the information for task force members to prepare you to make informed decisions as we move through the process. We will be collaborating to create the remaining documents, with input from the public and subject area experts. The timeline for these will be determined by how quickly (or slowly) we move through processing information and making decisions together.

**Question: Also, what is our formal involvement with the Community Engagement Plan and the Climate Action Plan? Are we to comment upon the CEP content or merely follow it? How will the CATF then work with the PMT to develop the CAP to present to the BCC? During our next meeting, it would be helpful to provide an example to better understand the CATF's limitations on recommendations (e.g. is the 2050 timeline for carbon neutrality firm, or can that be changed), flow of work process, etc.**

In terms of CATF involvement in the CEP, we want feedback, questions, and suggestions for strengthening it. Once questions and comments are offered by the CATF, staff and consultants will integrate and make edits as possible. We will then share it with the BCC for their approval.

We invite CATF members to participate in the events outlined in the CEP to the extent possible. This could include, but is not limited to:

- Sharing engagement opportunities with your networks and encouraging their participation
- Attending engagement events and supporting activities at events (could include speaking on behalf of the CATF if authorized to do so, facilitating small group discussions, etc.)

As stated in the CATF Charter, the CATF will develop a recommendation to the staff team, who will prepare it to present to the BCC. The process for presenting the CAP to the BCC is yet to be determined, but we will welcome CATF members to be part of the presentation, and to share your ideas, opinions and recommendations with the BCC when the time comes.

The 2050 goal was set by the Board of Commissioners and the CATF does not have the authority to change that. However, the CATF could recommend an accelerated timeline as part of the climate action plan and propose milestones for achieving carbon neutrality before 2050.

**Question: Should the YATF also be mentioned in this section to clarify the role it plays?**

*From CEP: Decision-Making Structure*

- *The Board of County Commissioners (BCC) is the final decision-maker on the climate action plan.*
- *The Community Advisory Task Force (CATF) will study and review technical data and community input to provide recommendations to the Project Management Team (PMT) for the climate action plan.*
- **ADDED: The Youth Advisory Task Force (YATF) will engage with the CATF through a liaison and written recommendations to the CATF and PMT.**
- *The PMT, charged with coordinating and guiding the project, will recommend a final climate action plan to the BCC based on the CATF recommendation, technical analysis and community input.*

**Question: This goal was established a few years ago - it has sadly become a relic of an earlier day. The climate crisis is no longer something in the future - we are living its impacts now. This plan needs to reflect that - everyone is using 2030 as the date to reach - I urge us to join that conversation.**

We agree that the impacts of climate change are here and that our work together is to mitigate further impacts to not only our county, but the globe. The goal was proposed by staff and approved by the Board of County Commissioners based on the county's 2008 Action for a Sustainable County, and this task force was established to create a path that would get us to that target. As mentioned above, the CATF does not have the authority to change the goal date, but could recommend an accelerated timeline and propose milestones for achieving carbon neutrality before 2050.

**Question: Do the CATF and YATF still exist at this point (implementation)? Is there a different group formed for each 2 year plan?**

The terms for participation on the CATF and YATF extend throughout the development of the plan, which is projected to be acted on by the Board of Commissioners by December 2022 (though we will stop convening prior to that date). After the CAP is developed and adopted, a decision and/or recommendation will be made about what type of community advisory group is best suited to support the CAP implementation process and subsequent two-year plans.

**Question: What sources are considered the best available science? Are there conflicting data?**

The best science available was shared on August 9 in the report from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC):

[https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC\\_AR6\\_WGI\\_SPM.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM.pdf).

**Question: Will Inter-Governmental Agreements be explored with cities in Clackamas County?**

That's a great question that we don't have an answer to yet. We are convening a cities sub-committee to explore what support they will need to interact with the CAP. We will share outcomes of that conversation as we move through the work, which is kicking off in October. Cities in the county are at different stages of considering, developing or implementing climate action plans.

**Question: Is it possible to identify a common problem and its impact that affects everyone in Clackamas county?**

It is possible to identify problems that appear to impact everyone at least qualitatively or indirectly, such as air quality; vulnerability and impacts from wildfires; changes/loss of land for agricultural production; timber harvest; impacts to salmon runs from rising water temperatures; landslides, and/or erosion; workplace impacts (i.e., costs to business from loss of labor if air quality is too poor to leave your house); along with several more. We emphasize "appear" because while impacts may be widespread, the range is really in what people value as most important. This is why we state, "the definition of the problems...", because people identify with climate change in several ways that don't always overlap.

**Question: It would be helpful to understand how other counties in Oregon are tackling this (or not). What timelines are they using to achieve carbon neutrality and other guiding principles?**

County-level climate action plans are very rare compared to city-level plans. While some counties have operational climate action plans to reduce their organizational climate contributions or efforts for climate resilience, Multnomah County, in combination with the City of Portland, is the only Oregon county currently with a community climate action plan.

**Question: Any info on how people feel about electrification? The County could do that in its own properties, but I think in order to make it practical and acceptable we need a more reliable grid, as demonstrated last September and this February.**

These are exciting options to explore through the process of the plan development, but we do not have data on opinions.

**Question: We know the food production/land management are two really important elements in the lowering of emissions - do we have any stats on that and if not, should we get some and include this? They are functionally two different things - one is food production specifically and the second also involves old growth forests - I understand this is a hot button for our county but do we continue to punt down the line when we all know it's critical to the conversation?**

We anticipate exploring food, forestry and agriculture actions in the plan.

### **Questions and recommended edits related to Equity**

We will consider the range of very thoughtful suggested language changes; thank you. We do have money to support community participation (up to \$6,000). The lens questions are below. Please feel free to offer comments and ideas to strengthen what is here.

- *How does the work product, report or deliverable...*
  - *Contribute to racial justice?*
  - *Rectify past injustice and health inequities?*
  - *Differ from the current status?*
  - *Encourage equitable distribution of resources and power?*
  - *Engage community to design changes?*
- *How were communities of color or impacted community members engaged in creating the work product?*
  - *Were they co-creators?*
  - *Were they consulted?*
  - *Who held the power in the process?*
- *How does the work product, report or deliverable impact the community?*

### **Questions Related to Engagement Measures**

*From the CEP: At key milestones, the project team will meet to discuss and assess how well the program is meeting the community engagement goals listed in this plan. While much evaluation of these goals is subjective, the team will also consider measurable objectives including:*

- *Number and diversity of participants attending meetings or events, or participating in online surveys.*
- *Participant perceptions of inclusion and collaborative decision-making.*
- *Number of website hits or downloads occurring during a specific time period and/or on a specific topic.*
- *Number of people signed up for the project mailing list.*
- *Number of comments received (phone, email, online, social media responses) and relevancy of the comments to the project (indicates project understanding).*
- *Modifications of project decisions or recommendations as a result of public input.*
- *Voice and tone of media stories.*
- *The degree to which the engagement built community capacity to promote and implement the CAP, as embodied in the principles outlined on page 3.*

**Question: Most of these seem to measure the measurable without it being obvious whether it's meaningful - are we just counting or using them as indicators of some type? If these define effectiveness, do we risk tilting our efforts toward the evaluation points (teaching to the test)?**

That's an excellent point and we will work to qualify the engagement as well as quantify it. All suggestions are welcome!

**Question: Are these evidence-based measures and if so, can we see the evidence?**

These are standard process measures, not impact or outcome measures. We are tracking our success in reaching people and their attendance at our events. Our scope at this stage of the CAP development is to engage community members to respond to, inform, strengthen, and integrate their views into the draft CAP. We will also ask qualitative questions to participants of engagement events in order to learn how to make them increasingly more meaningful across several participant types.

**Comment: Most of the first five bullets will always show a cumulative increase regardless of meaning, the second and the last two are highly subjective; media tone is not only beyond our control but a highly questionable indicator, and using subjective success of an objective as a measure seems either circular or redundant.**

Monitoring media coverage and its tone is a common practice because, regardless of what it is and the fact that it is largely out of our control, it is likely to impact public perceptions and the project as a whole. However, as we do our outreach and engagement across the county, we do hope that opportunities to participate in engagement events are covered by local media (with help from press releases and other media contacts) and that it is positive, or at least not vitriolic.

**Comment: Modifications of decisions/recommendations might have substance, but it depends on how we count that.**

This measure relates to holding ourselves accountable to our commitment to integrating community feedback. Do you have ideas of how to strengthen this?

**Question: No question that public engagement is hard, meaningful engagement much harder, and assessing meaningful engagement harder still. I'm concerned that we're setting up a process that will allow claims of success regardless of outcomes (or lack of such), or at least offer the appearance of that. // What is the target under each of these measurable objectives? An indicator of success would help steer meaningful engagement. // Regular updates on performance of the measures, and tracking engagement results over time would be helpful. This could inform which engagement tactics are most effective and which ones may need to be modified.**

Meaningful engagement *is* hard, and we are excited to do it well with this project. We don't believe that the measures established will lead us to success no matter what. Attaching reasonable numbers to them will help us aspire to engage specific numbers of the population and qualitative evaluation of engagement events will help us understand what is working, what is not, and how we can do better as we move through the engagement phases. We will look at adding reasonable targets to the CEP.

And yes to iterative learning! We will be tracking the success not only of numbers reached but the impact and effectiveness of engagement methodologies. This information will be incorporated into ongoing and future engagements. We can and will report out, share, and seek input as needed and appropriate with the CATF.

**Comment: I'd like to learn how these measures were determined and what options we have to change or add to them. I'd love to offer a list of suggestions; at this point all I can do is identify potential problems and commit to giving it more thought. Thanks.**

The measures are based on successful measure from past projects. We are very interested in hearing your suggestions and ideas for improvement – please pass them on to us!

**Question: Is there a way to quantify how many CC residents are aware of the CAP? Is there a goal of contacting or engaging a certain number or percent of CC residents to inform them about the CAP?**

We do not plan to quantify how many residents are aware of the CAP, though our strategy is focused on engaging as much of the population as we can. We are doing this in large part via targeted engagement of rural residents and business owners. To support the success of this, we are convening a small group of rural residents to co-create the rural engagement plan and working with business representatives to vet and refine our business engagement. Engagement of both of these groups will be supplemented with a focused community engagement period once a draft CAP is completed that will use a range of engagement methods.

**Question: These two activities and the more extensive engagement in the next session are arguably the most important and most difficult tasks. I think we identify the importance of general and targeted outreach, but it's really hard to generate extensive two-way engagement. I agree with the concepts and principles we've laid out, but principles aren't strategies. I've yet to be involved in a process that was built around community input that actually succeeded in the desired breadth and depth. We can measure numbers, but how do we qualitatively assess if we're hitting the marks? I've added comments on the measurement section at the end; is there a detailed strategy to apply the stated principles and maximize engagement?**

Great comments and questions. There are more details about the implementation (strategies) of the CEP, though the CEP outlines the approaches we will use with each phase of engagement. However, what I think you are asking for is designing events that truly are a dialogue and not one-way communication. As we narrow in and get closer to the events being convened, we would be happy to share agendas with interested CATF members in effort to strengthen and improve them.

**Question: Were consultants or experts in public engagement or climate policy engagement used to draft the CEP, if not, would we be able to have it reviewed and recommendations made?**

Yes, the CEP was created in collaboration with both consultant groups working on this project that are experts in public engagement and climate policy engagement. The methods proposed were also informed by the experience of Clackamas County public engagement staff around what has been done and what has worked. The process designs for each method are yet to be created but will be created with optimal engagement in mind.

**Question: What are examples of "opposing values"? What are they?**

*From the CEP: ...diverse views and ideas about how to address climate change, informed by strongly held and sometimes opposing values. The County's plan ... will benefit by understanding and addressing these differences, and by bringing in a broad range of perspectives to work towards solutions that meet the needs and support Clackamas County values.*

There are many different perceptions of what climate change is, how it is caused, whether it needs to be mitigated and how it can be mitigated. We expect to address these varying points of view on our task force and in our community.

**Question: What is a CBO? I cannot find where it was defined. Is it possibly a typo for CPO?**

A CBO is an acronym for Community Based Organization.

**Question: Why are your articles to be published in the #ClackCo Monthly and My#ClackCo? Why are you not utilizing the local newspapers?**

That's a great point. We will look into providing notices in print form for community members that aren't as reliant or used to digital communications.