



Equity Advisory Group Charter

Governance for Inclusive Clean Energy Planning

This charter describes the Equity Advisory Group (EAG), its purpose, composition, structure, and oversight

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Introduction

Washington’s Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA), passed by legislature in 2019 requires utilities to ensure an equitable distribution of energy benefits and a reduction of energy burdens on vulnerable populations and highly impacted communities.

Avista Utilities (Avista or “Company”) has an established Equity Advisory Group (EAG or Group) that will inform the development of the Company’s Clean Energy Implementation Plan (CEIP) to meet regulatory requirements of CETA, as well as advise and provide guidance on other company activities.

Background

On May 7, 2019, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee signed into law Senate Bill 5116, or CETA, which commits Washington to an electricity supply free of greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. The law requires that utilities replace coal-based resources with renewable power sources to meet this standard. The CETA includes provisions to protect customers located in highly impacted communities or vulnerable populations, jointly referred to as Named Communities.

The legislation also requires utilities to use a framework that enables the facilitation of public participation and oversight. Specifically, the law requires utilities to convene an equity advisory group per WAC 480-100-655(1)(b).

WAC 480-100-655(1)(b)

A utility must maintain and regularly engage an external equity advisory group to advise the utility on equity issues including, but not limited to, vulnerable population designation, equity customer benefit indicator (CBI) development, data support and development, and recommended approaches for the utility's compliance with WAC 480-100-610 (4)(c)(i). The utility must encourage and include the participation of environmental justice and public health advocates, tribes, and representatives from highly impacted communities and vulnerable populations in addition to other relevant groups.

Avista’s EAG provides a forum for interested parties to engage with the Company through meaningful dialogue to ensure that customer initiatives and company programs do not disproportionately impact Named Communities who may experience undue challenges pertaining to energy as well as other environmental, health, and economic impacts.

Structure and Governance of the Equity Advisory Group

Avista's EAG provides consultation on Company activities to ensure all customers benefit from the clean energy transition. The members discuss initiatives and programs to promote equitable energy and non-energy benefits, reducing energy burdens for specific communities.

The EAG may review and provide an equity lens focused on topics outside of Avista's CEIP actions and strategies. The following topics, as they relate to Avista's current and future Clean Energy Implementation Plans, customer initiatives, and company programs are included in the scope of EAG discussions, amongst others:

- *Vulnerable Population Designation*
The EAG will identify and further analyze vulnerable populations within Avista's service area, including those not previously recognized in impact assessments.
- *Customer Benefit Indicator Development*
The EAG will advise in the incorporation of equity into CBIs and metrics to track Avista's progress in achieving clean energy transition benefits for all customers, focusing on fair distribution and burden reduction.
- *Data Support and Development*
The Group will assist in reviewing and identifying data needed to inform the development and analysis of equity indicators and vulnerable population designation.
- *Creating Meaningful Customer Participation*
The Group will assist Avista to create meaningful engagement with community members.
- *Recommended Approaches for Equitable Distribution of Benefits*
The EAG will advise on Avista's energy equity and projects, providing feedback, validating strategies, and offering objective commentary as required.

Additionally, the EAG provides guidance and supports activities to incorporate equity considerations into the Company's future Integrated Resource Plans (IRP), with particular emphasis on Avista's Clean Energy Implementation Plans (CEIPs). These efforts strive to ensure that the benefits of clean energy transformation are accessible and affordable, that burdens are reduced and mitigated, and that the Company remains responsive and transparent in addressing equity-related priorities.

The EAG plays a pivotal role in both identifying and addressing barriers to customer participation, ensuring that all voices are heard and represented. Additionally, the EAG supports the Company in cultivating a deeper understanding of equity-related challenges, offering guidance and insights that shape more inclusive policies and practices.

Avista has a variety of existing advisory groups for initiatives related to its Energy Efficiency, Energy Assistance, and Distribution and Integrated and Resource Planning.

EAG Composition

In accordance with *WAC 480 100 655(1)(b)* the Equity Advisory Group should include participants from the areas of:

- Environmental Justice
- Public Health Advocates
- Tribes
- Representatives from highly impacted communities and vulnerable populations, that may include seniors, veterans, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), low-income, and individuals living with disability
- Urban and rural representation
- Additional individuals/organizations that may be identified by the Group members.

The EAG includes members who provide “*lived experience*” and expertise. These members intend to include a broad representation of Avista’s Washington service territories.

EAG Structure

- Meetings are conducted in a virtual setting or periodically in person.
- Meetings are facilitated by Avista staff or its contracted EAG facilitator.
- Meetings are open to all customers, including EAG members, related Avista staff, and additional guests.
- Meeting schedules, topics, and times can be found on Avista’s clean energy webpage located at: www.myavista.com/ceta.
- Members who express a need are compensated \$90 for their participation in each EAG session.
 - Members can opt to attend both sessions each month but are only compensated for one session each month.
 - For in-person meetings, if they occur, reimbursement for travel and transportation expenses is provided for travel that is beyond 10 miles of the meeting location.
- Two (2) EAG meetings are scheduled during the third week of each month to offer members flexible attendance options.

These two meetings are scheduled to occur on Wednesday at 12pm, and Friday at 7:30am. Dates and times may vary dependent upon holidays, and all are posted to the [EAG’s webpage](#).

Meeting schedules are subject to change in response to the evolving needs and recommendations of the group, ensuring flexibility and alignment with participants' priorities.

EAG Member Recruitment

The Company is committed to engaging members that reflect the diverse representation of its customer base with emphasis on those who have been adversely affected by energy generation and delivery.

Membership in the EAG is open to individuals who demonstrate genuine interest and ability to contribute meaningfully to equity-related efforts. This includes advising on strategic planning, coordinating resources, and shaping the direction of company initiatives to ensure equitable outcomes for the clean energy transition.

Interested individuals are invited to complete a Member Interest Form found on Avista's [EAG webpage](#). Community members interested in joining the EAG can join anytime. The Company reviews interest forms on an ongoing basis.

EAG Participation & Governance

Meeting Norms: Guidance for Group Participation

- Members are encouraged to actively participate in discussions
- Each member is provided with time to speak
- Healthy and civil debate is encouraged
- Members should be open to new ideas and concepts
- Members should be respectful of differing opinions
- Collectively the group should strive to align varying opinions (e.g., identifying shared goals from different perspectives)

Roles and Responsibilities

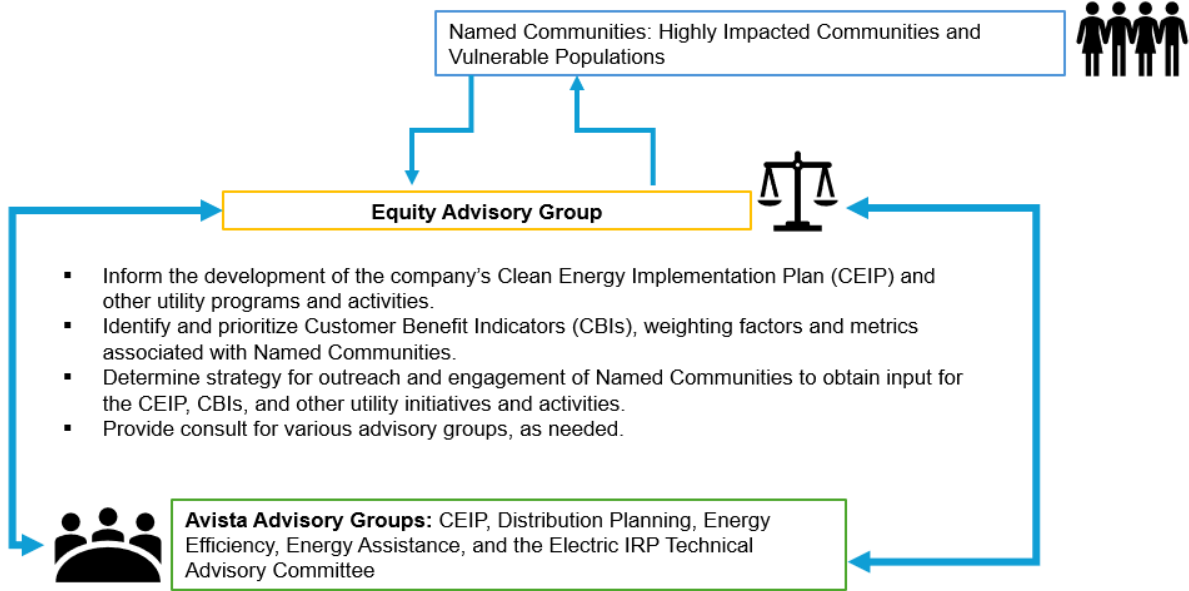
This is an active advisory group made up of participants from community-based organizations, public health, government, and social services, along with individuals with relevant lived experience. They will offer guidance to ensure that the needs and interests of the communities they represent are considered when assessing the potential benefits and drawbacks of a clean energy future.

The EAG is expected to provide a voice for Named Community customers and will assist in the development of the inputs to be considered for future energy resource planning processes.

Information gathered from the EAG may be shared with the Company's other advisory groups to help develop strategies that reduce barriers to customer participation and ensure that members of Named Communities are well represented across all advisory groups.

Figure No. 1 provides an illustration of the activities the EAG undertakes and how their consultation informs the Company's activities and advisory groups.

Figure No. 1: EAG Consultation Activities



Decision Model

Decisions are made by consensus should EAG discussion result in the need for a decision.

The Gradients of Agreement are utilized, combined with collaborative dialogue, to gauge the level of support for a proposal to ensure each member has had the opportunity to express ideas and better understand what is important to each member. The solution should then have a broad level of support and enhance the commitment and success of the resulting decision.

Gradients of Agreement: Better Vocabulary

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Whole-hearted Endorsement	Agreement with a Minor Point of Contention	Support with Reservations	Abstain	More Discussion Needed	Don't Like but Will Support	Serious Disagreement	Veto
"I really like it"	"Not perfect, but it's good enough"	"I can live with it."	"This issue does not affect me."	"I don't understand the issues well enough yet."	"It's not great but I don't want to hold up the group"	"I am not on board with this – don't count on me."	"I block this proposal."

Gradient of Agreement Details

- If all the responses from the group members are 1, 2, 3, or 4, consensus is achieved, and the group can proceed.
- If most of the group answers 1 to 4, and one or more members answers 5, then the initiative moves forward with a minority report written by those members who vote 5.
- If less than 60% of the EAG votes 1 to 4, the initiative goes back to the Group for further consideration.

Activities & Oversight

Meeting Format

All meetings of the EAG follow a presentation-based format and include a slide deck, which is shared with members in advance, at least three days prior to the scheduled meeting, in alignment with WAC 480-100-655 (g).

During meetings:

- Presentations are delivered in a structured format that encourages active engagement.
- Members are invited to ask questions, offer input, and provide feedback throughout.
- All EAG members are encouraged to identify and propose clean energy and/or equity related projects or initiatives for presentation and discussion with the group.
- Suggested presentations may be from internal staff, external partners, or other stakeholders, depending on topic and relevance.

This format supports transparency, informed participation, and shared ownership of key initiatives.

Meeting and Group Activity Archive

All EAG meetings are documented to ensure transparency and accessibility.

Recordings, presentations, and notes are archived and made publicly available on the Company's [EAG webpage](#) for reference and review.

This archive enables ongoing engagement, allows for easy tracking of discussions and decisions, and supports continuity between meetings.

EAG Oversight: Company Leads and Liaison Roles

As needed, lead staff from the Company will convene meetings with an internal group of Avista representatives to share updates on EAG's activities and progress. This group provides oversight to ensure alignment with broader company initiatives, effective use of resources, and appropriate distribution of EAG recommendations to relevant advisory groups, program leads, or project managers.

Internal Lead Representatives

- Manager of Social Impact: Tamara Bradley
- Customer Engagement Manager: Ana Matthews

Customer Engagement Manager – EAG Responsibilities

The Customer Engagement Manager serves as the cornerstone of the EAG, ensuring the group operates efficiently, inclusively, and in alignment with its mission. This role bridges communication between the Company and EAG members, fosters engagement, and manages the logistical and administrative functions that support successful meetings and ongoing collaboration.

- Facilitate and lead EAG meetings
- Coordinate all meeting logistics, including scheduling, agenda preparation, and distribution of meeting materials
- Document meeting notes and track action items
- Ensure timely follow-up on action items
- Serve as the primary company liaison for all EAG-related activities
- Actively support and empower EAG members to encourage meaningful participation and engagement

Key Resources

Avista Information

- [Washington Clean Energy Future](#) webpage is the central hub for Avista’s clean energy updates and initiatives
- [Equity Advisory Group](#) detailed information and resource hub for the advisory group

Overview and Guidance

[CETA Overview](#) CETA summary

Laws & Regulations

- Revised Code of Washington (RCW)
 - [Chapter 19.405 RCW](#) rules governing investor-owned utilities under CETA.
- Washington Administrative Code (WAC)
 - [Chapter 480-100-600 WAC](#) regulatory requirements for investor-owned utilities
 - [Chapter 480-100-610 WAC](#) clean energy transformation standards

Legislation

[Clean Energy Transformation Act](#) – foundational law driving Washington’s clean energy initiatives

Contact

Email CETA@avsitacorp.com for more information.