



Equity Advisory Group – Equity Lens Session

Meeting Date: 08/23/2024
 Time: 7:30 am – 9:00 am
 Location: Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

<i>Facilitator</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>EAG Member</i>	<i>Member Organizations</i>
Amber Lenhart	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clyde Abrahamson	Spokane Indian Housing Authority
Avista Team Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	Margee Chambers	Spokane Clean Air
Kelly Dengel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Connie Kliewer	NEWESD101
Ariana Barrey	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clair Trapp	Rural Resources
Dan Blazquez	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joe Reilly	SNAP
Amanda Ghering	<input type="checkbox"/>	KJ January	Spectrum
Annette Brandon	<input type="checkbox"/>	William von Bracht	Othello, school English as 2nd language
Stephanie Myers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michele Bennington	Community member at large
Christine Tasche	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brook Beeler	Department of Ecology Eastern Region
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jupiter McGee	Sunrise Spokane Affiliation (youth led) (Facebook)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vanessa Strange	Spokane Public Library
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tami Dillion	Providence
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Latrice Williams	Community Member/ WA state board of Equity
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cindy Kimmet	Takesa Village
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carmen Groom	SNAP
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sandra Childers	Rural Resources
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jean Kindem	Aging & Long-Term Care of Eastern Washington
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Karen Boone	Red Cross
		Guests	

Agenda

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EAG Equity Lens Session Meeting Notes

I. Welcome & Introductions

Overview of Meeting: Rules and Intent

II. Partner Share

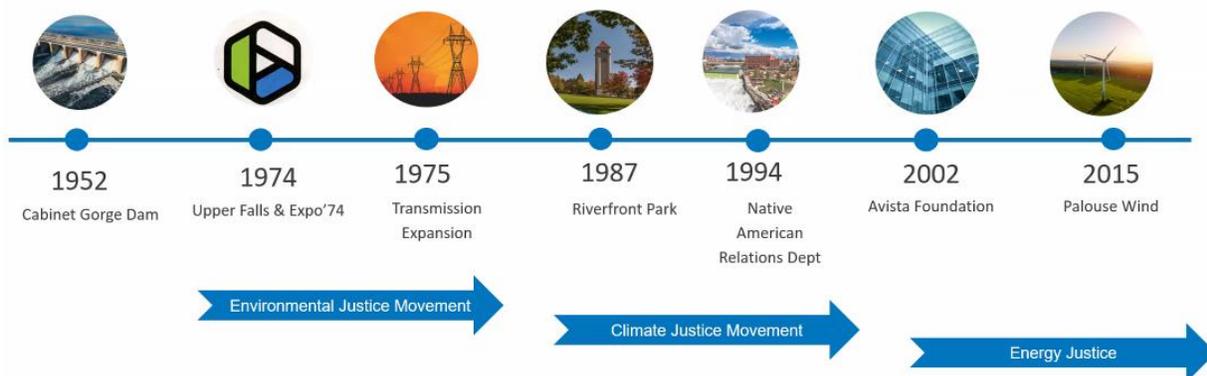
- Tacos y Tequila festival Sat and Sun on Spokane Falls Blvd behind the library!
- Finishing up the solar project, 120 installs on residences, 15 pole mount installs where roofs were not viable for solar, and Clyde is retiring at the end of October and still will be participating in the EAG.
- Tacos and tequila this weekend at the downtown library this weekend

III. Equity in Capital Planning Discussion

- Equity = fairness and that everyone has what they need.
- Energy justice in Avista's 135 years has always been at the forefront, maybe not using the term "justice" but customer fairness has been a core value. We look forward into the future enough to know that our customers want and need affordable, sustainable, and renewable power. Discussed ways Avista has kept energy justice at the forefront throughout the years.
- As an example, 1952 cabinet gorge dam, there were a lot of people working at the dam with families and to make sure their families we re not left behind, we built houses for teachers to live in, so the kids did not miss any schooling. Even in 2015 prior to CETA legislation, we invested in wind production down off the Palouse highway etc.,

Avista & the Progression of Energy Justice

Since our inception over 135 years ago, Avista has been a company founded on renewable energy innovation. Our journey began with hydroelectric operations and has expanded to include wind and solar. We've been planning for responsible and sustainable energy solutions – putting the customer at the center.



Discussed various Washington state legislative happenings and Commission filings that bring us to our topic of conversation today, equity in capital planning.

Avista requests and is required to obtain your feedback on how it is including equity within its capital planning processes.

Washington State Legislative Timeline



Some examples of equitable energy are:

Equitable Energy System Examples



- No households face extreme/severe burdens
- No disparities in energy burden by race, income, education, disabilities or health conditions, age, family structure, or property ownership
- All households have access to minimum level of energy services at a cost they can afford without sacrificing other needs

Discussed Avista's guiding principle for capital planning procedures:

Guiding Equity Principles

Data-Informed & Evidence Based

Decisions are informed by evidence and needs, leveraging insights and data wherever possible

Aligned with Corporate Strategy

Ensuring the delivery of safe, responsible, affordable energy for all customers

Inclusive & Impartial Decision Making

Using varying methods of communicating and engaging customers through meaningful participation

Outcome Focused; Results Oriented

Overcoming barriers and obstacles to maximize the benefits of energy service or minimize risks across communities' and between generations

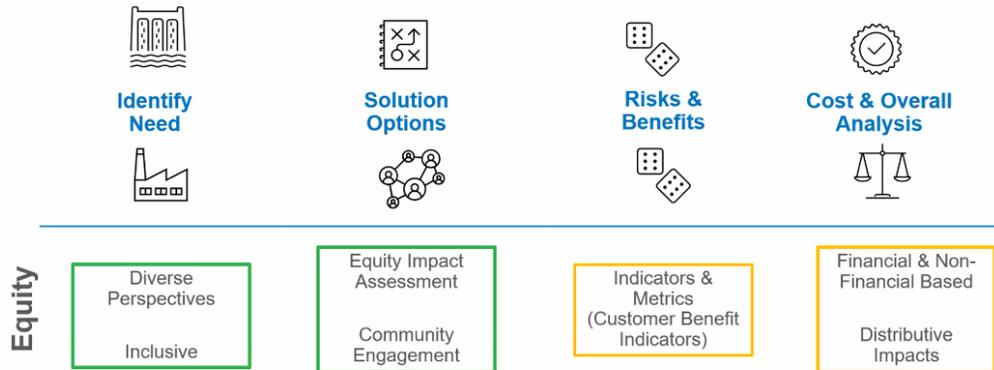
Some examples of capital investments are:

Technology upgrades, clean energy upgrades and improvements, wood pole replacement, infrastructure repair/replacement/etc., and wildfire resiliency.

Some Key equity considerations for capital investments:

- Impact to named communities,
- Customer benefit indicators,
- Strategic method to determine engagement level,
- Additional data points for evaluation and course correction as needed.
- The green boxes below indicate items that are done, and the orange boxes indicate items that we are working on and would like your feedback on.

Capital Project Considerations & Equity



Overall Project Evaluation

- Supports equity strategies applicable to all customers
- Meets regulatory requirements
- Consistency with energy efficiency, long-term and distribution planning
 - Avoided utility environmental compliance costs
 - Environmental benefits
 - Health benefits
 - Economic benefits



- Financial vs non-financial comparisons will be used. We are looking for ways to add value to the process for customers. Tracking costs and customer priorities will be key. How do we measure and quantify something that is non-financial and does not have a “defined” source. So by using a point base system helps by adding points to those in named communities etc., instead of only using costs as a driver.

Capital Investment Evaluation and Prioritization

COMPONENTS

- **Financial** : Tracking actual costs and estimated benefits
- **Non-Financial**. Prioritization based on customer priorities to ensure decision are made that reflect what is important to Avista customers.

Intended to be used as a comparative tool to ensure equitable investments



We use a point-based system in our request for proposal process so bidders who have a DEI plan get points, minority, woman, or veteran owned business get a point, etc., to help with the decision process outside of solely looking at the cost.

Equity in Capital Planning – Summary



So, in summary, we are now including the use of CBIs, customer engagement and outreach, and adding point value system to compare financial vs non-financial decisions when it comes to capital planning processes.

Member: I wonder about rural communities and there are so many that surround Spokane and often the needs of those individuals can be silent, so I wonder about that, and I wonder about engagement of named communities and the impact upon the community, how do you define community? How does this plan empower the community and empowering it to care of itself? Partnering with community-based organizations in those smaller communities to bring them in and ask them the questions they can give you a greater sense of the need and the future direction. Partnering with CBOs or rural governments I think that you can help them see the importance of caring for their client base.

Company: Great ideas, thank you. When we talk communities, we are talking about those with similar characteristics, but we have technical maps that actually outline these communities, some are identified by the state and others were developed by the EAG (vulnerable populations). We will continue that conversation throughout the Equity Lens Sessions later this year. Speaking with CBOs is embedded in this new public participation plan and how we might partner with them.

Member: Avista is like a monopoly, as you roll out your plans to the community, you are asking them for engagement around your plans, and I think what I am suggesting around empowerment is finding ways in which you can engage with customers and community partners where you can bring them in and engage in a dialogue that allows you to hear their voices. If you are a doctor giving a Rx upon a community that is different than inviting them in and saying that is what we

have, tell us about your community and allowing them to weigh in in a meaningful manor. They then are empowered in the process where it opens their eyes to look deeper in their communities to see their customers or rural community and to tap in at a deeper level.

Company: We are working towards that heavily and will work with each of you and have you review the various components of our public participation plan prior to filing so you can provide your feedback and input.

Member: Sounds like you have some sound methods moving forward and I am glad this is an iterative process and checking in with communities.

Member: If you are trying to reach the most vulnerable people, they are not likely to show up for public participation, but if you go to the CBOs they will most likely be seen in those organization and you can see what their needs are without actually requiring the participation that may not occur.

Company: we even went to a plant sale in a rural community to meet people where they are,

Member: that is great, but some may not even go to a plant sale, you will find them at a grocery store, a medical facility, a school etc., the places where people are more likely to show up is where you need to go.

Company: That is great, thank you, we are trying to do that too, and we bring anything that is available on the web, we try to print and bring with us.

Member: What I am saying is have a “train the trainer” program where you are giving the CBO what they need to have those conversations, not Avista having those conversations. This will lead to further engagements by using the trusted entity within the community.

Company: Beyond engagement it is educating and being clearer building trust and credibility in the community. We are going to tap into those customer experts we have.

Company: We had a young member in the EAG last year, who suggested that we add posters and materials into places such as laundry mats and this is a good reminder that places where low-income customers will frequent is important to keep at top of mind. Everything you have mentioned so far is the direction we are headed so that is great to hear.

Proposed Next Steps



Newsletter: <https://cloud.ask.myavista.com/CEIP-Newsletter-Signup>

IV. Your Support Team and Next Meeting

- Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday September 18th and Friday September 20th.
- Please sign up for our quarterly newsletter if you have not already and we hope to see you all in September.

V. Additional Resources

<i>Resource Link</i>	<i>Description</i>
Washington's Clean Energy Future	Avista page for CETA related activities
Clean Energy Transformation Act	Clean Energy Transformation Act - Washington State Department of Commerce
Chapter 19.405 RCW	Laws and Regulations: Revised Code of Washington Investor-owned utilities
Chapter 480-100 WAC	Laws and Regulations: Washington Administrative Code Investor-owned utilities
WA Energy Strategy	Washington State Energy Strategy
CETA Overview	CETA overview and interim assessment