

Pacific Power Community Benefits & Impacts Advisory Group (CBIAG) Kick Off Public Notes

Thursday, November 17, 2022, 1-4 p.m. Pacific Time

E Source, PacifiCorp's meeting facilitation partner, synthesized and summarized these notes.

Executive Summary

A public meeting of the CBIAG was conducted virtually on Zoom from 1-4 p.m. PST. The meeting focuses on equity and a clean energy future in Oregon in accordance with HB 2021. The goal of the CBIAG is to advance real-world energy equity objectives.

Meeting Objectives

1. Close the loop on CBIAG input and discussion from the last meeting
2. Begin the discussion of understanding the underserved (mapping, surveys, studies)
3. Provide an overview of some key Pacific Power programs based on feedback from the last meeting

Agenda

TIMING	TOPIC
1 p.m.	Welcome & Feature CBIAG Member Check-in Closing the Loop
2 p.m.	Understanding Community Needs: Service Area Demographics Discussion
2:30 p.m.	Break
2:40 p.m.	Addressing Community Needs: Programs to Help Income-Challenged Customers Discussion
3:45 p.m.	Public Comment
3:50 p.m.	Summary and Next Steps

Attendees

CBIAG Attendees	
Rose Reeser	ACCESS
Jennifer Gustafson	AllCare Health
Erica Ledesma	Coalición Fortaleza
Alma Pinto	Community Energy Project
Sherrie Villmark	Community Energy Project
Britt Conroy	Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Patrice Hanlon	Josephine County Food Bank
Xitlali Torres	Klamath & Lake Community Action Services
Michelle Ehara	Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action
Tim Lynch	Multnomah County
Drew Farmer	Oregon Coast Community Action
Jennifer Groth	Rural Development Initiative
Shaun Pritchard	United Community Action Network
Public Attendees	
Michelle Scala	OPUC
Brett F	OPUC
PacifiCorp Presenters	
Kim Alejandro	Equity Advisory Analyst
Lee Elder	Load Forecasting Manager
Christina Medina	Stakeholder Policy & Engagement Manager
Alex Osteen	Senior Manager of Demand Response
Peter Schaefer	Senior Planning Manager
Charity Spires	Low-Income Program Manager
PacifiCorp Attendees	
Cheryl Carter	Director of Corporate Accounts & Community Relations
Kari Greer	Senior Manager of Community Relations
Ian Hoogendam	Manager of Distribution Systems Planning
Laura James	Planning Manager (?)
Amy Kort	Senior Communications Representative
Stephanie Meeks	Regulatory Manager
Alan Meyer	Director of Customer & Community Affairs
John Rush	
Cory Scott	Managing Director of Customer Solutions

Meeting Notes

Introduction


Interpretation in Spanish and American Sign Language (ASL) was provided for the event.

Christina Medina welcomed the attendees and invited participants to share their perspectives in the meeting or follow up with her afterward.

Kimberly Alejandro led the Land Acknowledgement:

Land Acknowledgement

We are meeting online from various locations within the United States. To find out original stewards of the land where you are now, check out:



Native Land Digital
<https://native-land.ca>

By acknowledging Indigenous peoples and tribes, their traditional homeland ties are renewed and reaffirmed

CBIAG Member Introductions

The following members introduced themselves to the group and shared their stories: Drew Farmer, Executive Director of Oregon Coast Community Action; Sherrie Villmark, Program Director of Community Energy Project; and Erica Ledesma, Executive Director of Coalición Fortaleza. E Source Facilitator Lisa Markus said the group will be working to create a library of content, including the stories of the CBIAG members and gave the group a heads up that they would be contacted for an interview.

Check-In & Closing the Loop

Goals of the last meeting were recapped:

- Get to know you, hear your story and have a conversation on your communities' unique goals, needs/wants regarding energy equity and the transition to a clean energy future
- Initiate a partnership to advance real-world, energy-equity results in Oregon communities, and meet HB 2021 requirements

First check-in question posed: For those who attended, what was your experience of the last meeting? Do you feel these objectives were achieved and why (or why not)? The group acknowledged that the goals were met and provided the following additional commentary:

- Helpful to know more about resources from the last meeting. Excited to connect the work the CBIAG is doing with energy equity.
- Thought it was a great first meeting and am excited to move forward.
- Enjoyed mixing in-person and virtual formats. Enjoyed that group has very diverse backgrounds.
- Great experience and impressed with the group. Not a typical energy policy space, which will help us center on values and people. HB 2021 has broad mandates, and am interested to see what parts this group can contribute to.
- Amazed at the talent, knowledge and diversity in the group. Amazing that PacifiCorp has diversity as part of its focus (never thought about it, but it's very impressive).

Following the last session, PacifiCorp drafted the following Equity Perspective based on the group's feedback on the equity exercise:

Each CBIAG member serves a community of those left behind (Latinx, rural, elderly, income-challenged, disabled and others).

When people are left behind, inequity is at work.

Equity requires trust between givers and receivers to:

- *Identify root cause issues*
- *Fix systematic problems*
- *Build the relationship*
- *Deliver the benefit*

So no one is left behind.

The second check-in questions posed: *For those who attended, to what extent does this capture what you expressed on equity? For those unable to attend, do you have any initial reactions?*

- How can we start with the perspectives of those left behind, and how can we bring them to the table from the beginning? Not just fixing but facilitating systemic change – more words around creating solutions?
- Work on trusting the validity of all partners in the conversation. Not questioning others' experiences.
- Call out situational and generational income challenges because they sometimes require different approaches.
- Having goals, measurements and accountability. Having equity goals shaped by the internal and external perspectives with ways to measure them. How are we accountable for those things?
 - Being low income – your needs are defined for you, and how you get your needs met is defined for you. Building opportunities for the community we are serving to give input about what they would like.
 - Identify whom we are missing in our process?
- Hope this effort can benefit communities most in need from the outset, perhaps by solving short-term challenges and long-term systemic changes. e.g., issues of energy burden and associated rulemaking that is happening today.

[Underserved Community Needs: Service Area Demographics](#)

E Source Facilitator Lisa Markus summarized the community needs to be voiced by the CBIAG in the last session:

- Someone to speak up for the community
- Greater cultural sensitivity in diagnosing and developing solutions
- Trust is essential. Otherwise, receivers will refuse the help.
- Sustainable and affordable housing, particularly for vulnerable communities displaced by natural or human-made disasters
- Attention to disaster preparedness, particularly for vulnerable communities

- Demystifying the energy provider language, processes, resources and benefits so that vulnerable communities can understand and act
- Increase in nutritious and accessible food (Note: when food insecurity is reduced or eliminated, vulnerable communities can better pay their utility bills)

These voiced needs were acknowledged as important in influencing PacifiCorp's efforts to understand better equity factors in the service area and influence planning. Lee Elder, PacifiCorp Load Forecasting Manager, presented the role of metrics and data in implementing the Clean Energy Plan.

- Understand our service territory and where underserved populations are.
 - Described data sources that PacifiCorp is using to understand customers.
 - Use a residential survey in WA to understand energy burden and anticipate doing that in OR as well.
- Track how well we are doing in meeting our goals.
 - Metrics will be presented to the CBIAG for input.
- Targeting outreach, services and resources to vulnerable populations.

Described the geography of the PacifiCorp service area in Oregon.

QUESTIONS

How are individuals finding the new Low Income Discount Program (LID)? Collecting language and ethnicity in the PacifiCorp database could be used to support this work.

- PacifiCorp will consider these data collection categories to support the work of the Oregon Low Income Discount Program.

TRANSPORTATION ELECTRIFICATION EQUITY MAPPING EXAMPLE

PacifiCorp Senior Planning Manager Peter Schafer described the planning process at the utility. Provided an example of transportation electrification and how it guided investments in underserved communities. Looked at environmental harm because they were trying to use infrastructure investment to mitigate adverse effects.

CBIAG member feedback on transportation electrification:

- Identify who utilizes and who is and isn't served by the investments within a community
- Where do chargers go? Dense environments where they'll be utilized, or critical areas where there's a longer-range transportation island?
- Cultural barriers – rural people want trucks
- Definition of rural can be a hot topic

Addressing Community Needs: Programs to Help Income-Challenged Customers

PacifiCorp's Low Income Programs Manager, Charity Spires, presented the assistance programs offered by the utility. Multiple programs aimed at:

- Lowering bills
- Helping pay bills

- Addressing other choices

Low-Income Discount Program

- New program launched October 1, 2022
- Eligibility: <60% state median income adjusted for household size receive a discount on their bill
- Income information is self-certified (no documentation needed) to make this accessible
- Multiple channels for enrollment (web, mail, phone) translated into Spanish.
- Previous LIHEAP and OEAP customers were automatically enrolled
- Working on data-sharing partnerships to auto-enroll more customers
- Have over 18,000 enrolled since October 1.

QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK

- Appreciates how quickly PacifiCorp did this, and she's heard others in the community say that too. They are helping enroll people.
 - Can put flyers in boxes being handed out in the food pantries. PacifiCorp is working on flyers and aiming to distribute them before the holidays.
 - Will also be made available on the CBIAG hub.
- Who in our community will be the hardest to reach? We would love to partner in determining who that is and how to contact them.
 - Ongoing metrics and impact – what will they be tracking?
 - How much does a household receive?
 - Are households that receive this less likely to be disconnected?
 - Charity Spires – not all customers go to an agency for assistance, so we must partner broadly. We are tracking enrollments, primary language, ethnicity

PacifiCorp's Low Income Programs Manager Charity Spires continued to present on Energy Assistance programs. The following programs are delivered through Community Action Agencies that engage customers and certify income:

- COVID Energy Assistance
- Oregon Energy Assistance
- Low Income Hope Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Fuel Fund Program

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

- Have > 60,000 qualified people in their territory, and she immediately sent information on their assistance programs to their care coordinators. This is a good portfolio of programs because some working families fall through the cracks in eligibility. Suggest reminding our organizations about the resources, so they stay top of mind.

Alex Osteen described PacifiCorp's demand response portfolio. PacifiCorp is in the planning process for a residential demand response program in Oregon. Envision it to include smart thermostats and electric water heaters. Could eventually incorporate EV charging and batteries.

Invites people to provide input during the comment period and to attend the [technical workshop on January 10, 2023, at 10 a.m. PST.](#)

- Wildfire safety – trying to grow awareness and plan to incorporate wildfire mitigation topics into this forum. Wildfire Power Shutoffs - Opportunities for generators, and PacifiCorp has grant opportunities that can pay for generators.
- Concerned because they have clients with medical concerns or special diets. Would like to do mapping with PacifiCorp to identify those individuals – that would be key. Medicaid Waiver 1115 provides additional funds and approves generators for eligible people. PacifiCorp is working on Customer Resource Centers to be stood up within 8 hours of a Public Safety Power Shutoff. These will have various items, including food, power, charging, etc.
- Appreciate the link to the rate charts, but they are difficult to understand and could never send a client to that and expect them to understand it. Suggests using language at around a sixth-grade level to be more fully understandable to the public. PacifiCorp separately shared the TOU rate page.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Next Session

December 15 hybrid meeting with an in-person option in Portland.

CBIAG Charter

Christina Medina described a framework for an Equity Charter.

Agreements around expectations of each other, the space, and the outcomes should be. Will present more at the next meeting.

Take Away from Today's Meeting?

- Liked that PacifiCorp initially created the space to share and get into the meat of energy equity issues. They wished the meeting was recorded and look forward to the in-person meeting next month.
- Appreciate the time spent educating us on energy burden.
- Enjoy hearing everyone's perspectives
- They appreciated the equity discussion. They are interested in the data aspect and the mappings. Curious if there is a map for languages.
- All the collaborative work across sectors is impressive. This has become one of my favorite monthly meetings. I learn so much and feel green. Love how clean energy is crossing into the healthcare sector.
- They have been discussing DEI a lot, focusing on rural communities. Mapping was a great place to start; discussing the historical context would also be interesting. How did

we get where we are today? Might help shift the conversation (energy policy and operations, along with systematic barriers to access).

- Great to hear partners speak about their programs. They would like to find new partners to work with and new ways to reach the community.
- Enjoy absorbing a lot of the information and plan to review the slides again. Enjoyed others' thought-provoking questions and perspectives.
- Nice to see everyone's reactions to the PacifiCorp assistance programs. Nice to hear everyone's take on equity and see the excitement of the group
- Appreciate that this is a proactive group. Celebrate the rollout of the Energy Assistance Program!
- Great to have expertise in many areas: health, fire, weatherization/air sealing, etc. Examples of intersections are weatherization to keep smoke out of people's homes. Or if homes can stay warm (or cool) during outages, that impacts health outcomes.
- They like everyone diving into the details. They appreciated that we asked how to make things accessible. Consider having more storytelling aspects.