

City of Seattle
Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) Summary Sheet
Cover Sheet and Questions

Department/Office: Office of Sustainability & Environment

Name of policy, program, etc. analyzed: Carbon-based building performance standards

Names and titles of key staff that led this RET process: Ani Krishnan, Sr. Sustainable Building & Energy Specialist (title when work completed);
Sandra Mallory, Buildings & Energy Program Manager

Dates of RET process: Jan-Sept 2019 & Jan-Dec 2021 [Note: This work is ongoing into 2022]

Carbon-based building performance standards RET Summary Sheet Questions

1. Describe the project, program, policy or budgetary decision that you assessed using the Racial Equity Toolkit.

Develop carbon-based performance standards policy for existing commercial and multifamily buildings 20,000 sq.ft. and larger. The policy will contribute to the 2013 Climate Action Plan target to achieve a 40% reduction in building-related emissions by 2030 to be net zero carbon by 2050. Per Executive Order 2021-09: Driving Accelerated Climate Action, "OSE shall develop carbon-based building performance standards for existing commercial and multifamily buildings 20,000 sq. ft. or larger. OSE shall immediately commence inclusive stakeholder engagement necessary to develop this legislation, with a draft ordinance due to the Mayor's Office by July 1, 2022."

2. List the racial equity outcome(s) that you set in Step 1 of the RET process.

- include equity-focused support services for low-resource building owners, particularly alleviating cost impacts on affordable housing and small businesses;
- minimize the risk of displacement and ensure Seattle's Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities benefit from healthier living and working spaces; and
- provide clean energy career initiatives to maximize the economic benefits and opportunities of the generated economic activity for BIPOC and women.

3. Which stakeholders (groups and/or key individuals) did you engage in this RET? In what ways did you engage them?

In 2019, a series of equity focused conversations were held with an interdepartmental staff from OPCD, OED, OCR, SDCl, SCL. The goal of our internal meetings was to develop a draft set of racially equitable outcomes, draw up a list of stakeholders to be engaged, identify data available (and data gaps) to help with analysis, and incorporating racial impacts in discussions around policy scope. Engagement occurred in the form of one-on-one meetings, team meetings, and one workshop which included an equity mapping exercise.

External stakeholder engagement with by the City around a potential carbon policy for existing buildings was put on hold during 2020-2021 due to Covid impacts on building owners and community generally. However, the Northwest Energy Coalition (NWEc), as part of their partnership with us through the American Cities Climate Challenge was able to conduct about 50 interviews of building owners, service providers and others to seek input on building energy retrofits generally and specifically to seek input on the recently passed WA State Clean Buildings Standards, which requires that larger commercial buildings meet specific energy performance targets. NWEc's efforts included some owners of smaller buildings and nonprofits, and some limited discussions with small business owners.

With OSE having now been given explicit direction in the Nov. 2021 Climate EO to conduct inclusive stakeholder engagement, we are designing a strategy to ensure we work with a diverse set of building owners, energy professionals, tenants and labor representatives. The DRAFT strategy includes:

- Technical Advisory Group (6 meetings), with invitations to building owner representatives from affordable housing, non-profit community-oriented and BIPOC serving facilities, environmental justice organizations, and labor.
- Public Open Houses (2)
- Focused conversations with key organizations, including environmental justice and CBOs

- Focused engagement with priority equity owners, e.g. non-profit, those serving community / low-income / BIPOC, cultural anchors, class B&C office, naturally occurring affordable housing
- An affordable housing task force, in coordination with the Housing Development Consortium
- Focused engagement with residential and small business tenants through the DON Community Liaison program
- Feedback sessions with equity subject matter experts – both internal w/in OSE and from the community
- Focused engagement with labor representative

In addition, we are coordinating with Emerald Cities on identifying inclusive workforce strategies.

4. Please describe up to five key benefits and/or burdens for people of color of this policy, program, project, or other decision, which the RET process helped you to identify or confirm.

Our initial understanding based on anecdotal information is that housing and/or business facilities occupied by EEI populations are older and less energy-efficient than average. If true, then the expected outcome is that those properties will as a whole face a larger financial burden to be brought up to standards, consequently increasing the cost burden of those owners and tenants and potentially leading to displacement. Conversely bringing these buildings up to higher energy standards, improving their operation, and transitioning to all electric buildings would decrease utility expenses and health. In 2022, we will be doing further review of buildings impacted by the policy and where there are opportunities to address benefits and burdens for people of color.

There is significant job creation component in the energy service provider space associated with this standard, which could benefit jobs access overall. We must ensure that EEI populations are well-positioned to fill these roles when they open up.

5. Please describe up to five key actions – things that you will do differently or begin to do now – of this policy, program, project, or other decision, which will increase opportunity and/or minimize harm for people of color.

We are implementing a Clean Buildings Accelerator program in 2022 as an early action to provide technical support to under-resourced owners to comply with the current State Clean Buildings Performance Standards, and to prepare for a future City of Seattle policy. Other actions TBD as part of our policy development process.

6. How will leadership ensure implementation of the actions described in question 4?

TBD as part of our policy development process.

7. How have/will you report back to your stakeholders? (This includes the people who were directly engaged in this RET process, those who will be affected by decisions made, and other departments or divisions impacted by the RET findings and the actions described in question 4.)

TBD as we refine our 2022 inclusive stakeholder engagement strategy.

8. What additional racial equity issues did this RET reveal? Consider how these unresolved issues present opportunities for structural transformation (i.e. working across departments, and with other institutions and sectors to achieve racial equity).

These will be revealed as part of our inclusive stakeholder engagement strategy.