



Climate Action Plan

Focus Group Summary and Environmental Justice Update



April 6, 2022

Climate Action Plan Timeline



Focus Group Findings



Climate Action Plan Focus Groups



February/March Focus Group Meetings

- Establish relationship between consultant and Council work units (over 80 participants)
- Broad conversations across five climate strategy areas
 - Wastewater
 - Water Resources
 - Energy-related Emissions
 - Transit Services Operations
 - Regional Planning
- Summary memo of each focus group and preliminary findings
- Emergent objective areas established

Wastewater



Wastewater Focus Group Findings

- Hydraulic uncertainty
- Receiving water quality concerns
- Asset operations and maintenance
- Organizational perspectives

Water Resources



Water Resources Focus Group Findings

- Technical resources
- Communication and collaboration
- Turn policy and planning into action

Energy-related Emissions



Energy-related Emissions Focus Group Findings

- Staff structure and funding
- Energy efficiency
- Renewable energy
- Building electrification

Transit Services Operations



Transit Services Operations Focus Group Findings

- Facility resilience
- Route planning and Better Bus Stops
- Revenue fleet electrification

Regional Planning



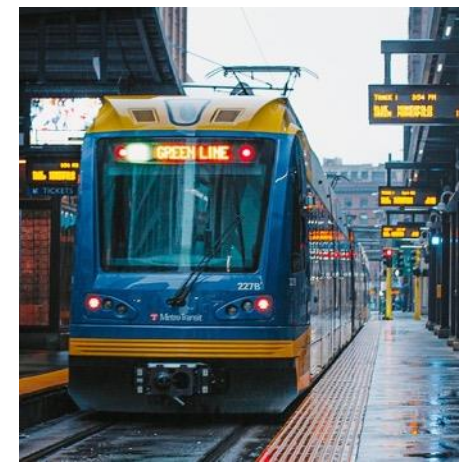
Regional Planning Focus Group Findings

- Internal project prioritization and resources
- Policymaker structure and role
- Grant-making
- Staff structure

Preliminary Findings

Summary of Focus Group Findings

- Desire for more data to aid in goal setting and decision-making processes.
- Need for dedicated staffing, resources, and funding as climate change stresses Council systems.
- Improve communication and collaboration across the divisions of the Council.
- Challenge in creating change due to lack of regulatory authority. Important to establish a framework that recognizes Council influence and responsibilities.



Next Steps



2nd Series of Focus Groups (March/April)

- Present summary of what was heard
- Establish policy areas of focus
- Use exercise to keep, toss, change, or park various strategies for all five focus groups
- Share best practice approaches for policies and implementation strategies
- Schedule further refinement if needed
- Present draft policy areas and strategies to Council Member Climate Work Group in May



Questions or thoughts
about the Focus Group
Work?



Environmental Justice



Environmental Justice (EJ)



Foundations of EJ

“Environmental justice did not grow out of government; it grew out of community. When we fight for justice, it’s not a sprint. It’s a marathon.”

Robert D. Bullard, cochair of the National Black Environmental Justice Network

Environmental Justice (EJ)



Warren County, North Carolina

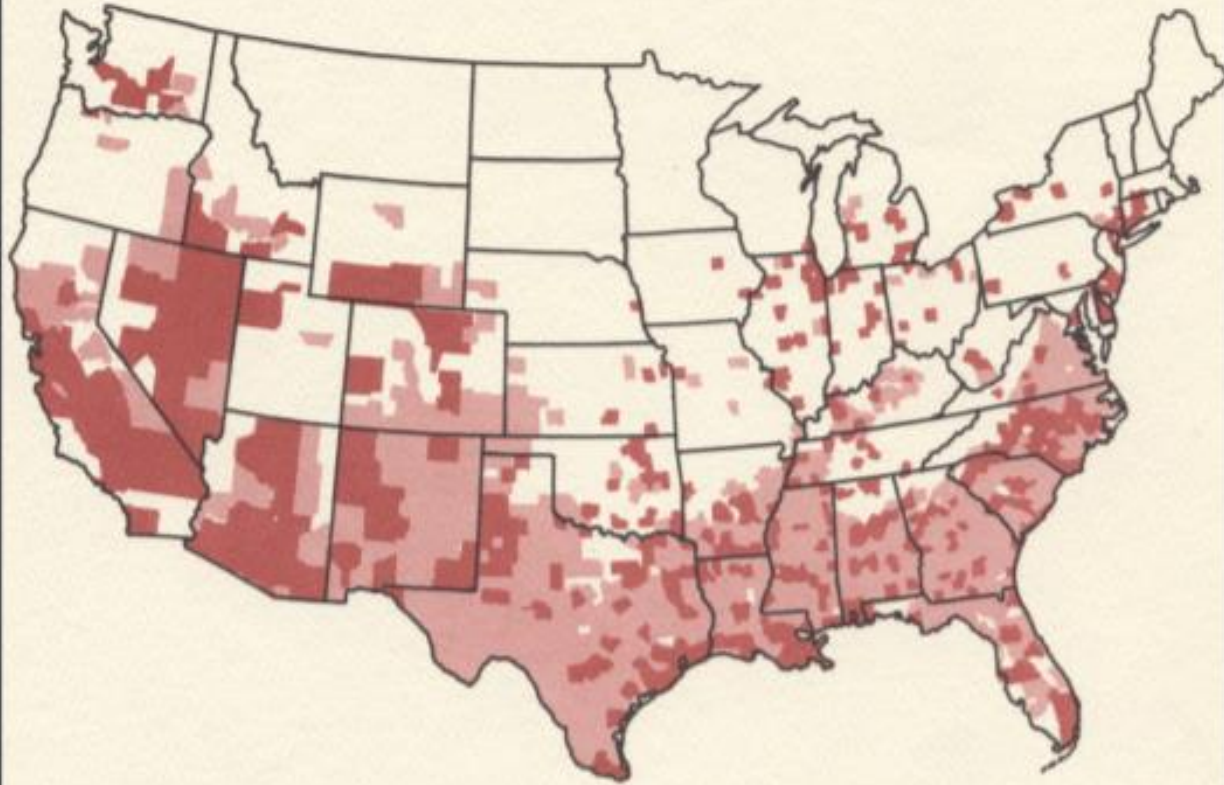
- State of NC permitted landfill next to African American community
- PCB contaminated landfill, 6000 truckloads per month
- NAACP and United Church of Christ staged 500 strong protest
- Unsuccessful but ushers in national, multicultural coalition of community groups focused on environmental justice

Protestors block the delivery of toxic PCB waste to a landfill in Afton, North Carolina, 1982.

TOXIC WASTES AND RACE

In The United States

A National Report on the Racial and Socio-Economic Characteristics of Communities with Hazardous Waste Sites



COMMISSION FOR RACIAL JUSTICE
United Church of Christ
©1987

National Press Club Washington, D.C. March 1987



Environmental Justice (EJ)

Federal Definition of EJ

Environmental Justice (EJ) is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys:

- The same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and
- Equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

(<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>)



Authority for agencies' EJ reforms



- Civil Rights Act
- National Environmental Policy Act
- Executive Order on Environmental Justice
- Associated regulations prohibiting both intentional discrimination and unintended disparate impacts.
- Various state-level policies, legislation, regulations, and executive orders.

EJ within the Climate Action Plan

EJ Task Force:

Scope

- Develop an environmental justice framework to apply to the Climate Action Plan

Tasks

- Convene internal work group to draft framework
- Convene EJ stakeholders to provide feedback on framework
- Apply framework to Climate Action Plan

Representation

- Cross-divisional



EJ Task Force Update



What have we been working on?

- Group review of scope and deliverables
- Assembly of best practices of EJ in government and other orgs
- Compiling a list of Twin Cities organizations engaged in EJ work to establish connections and possible technical advisory group
- Defining EJ as it relates to Council climate work

Questions



How do you think the Metropolitan Council can incorporate EJ into our climate work?

How would you define EJ when you think of the Metropolitan Council's roles and responsibilities?



Questions or thoughts
about the Environmental
Justice update?





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