



Equity Advisory Group – Equity Lens January Session

Meeting Date: May 20 & 22, 2026

Location: Zoom

Attendees:

<i>Facilitator</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>EAG Member</i>	<i>Member Organizations</i>
<i>Amber Lenhart</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clyde Abrahamson	Spokane Indian Housing Authority
<i>Avista Team Members</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brook Beeler	Department of Ecology Eastern Region
<i>Ana Matthews</i>	<i>5/20/26</i>	Karen Boone	Community Advocate
<i>Matt Reding</i>	<i>5/20/26</i>	Margee Chambers	Spokane Clean Air
<i>Steve Carrozzo</i>	<i>5/20/26</i>	George Dahl	Spokane County Housing and Community Development
<i>Lisa Garrett</i>	<i>5/20/26</i>	Tami Dillion	Providence Healthcare
<i>Meghan Pinch</i>	<i>5/22/26</i>	Andrew Gardner	Spokane Public Schools
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carmen Groom	SNAP
	<i>5/22/26</i>	KJ January	Spectrum
<i>5/20/26</i>	<i>5/20/26</i>	Cindy Kimmet	Takesa Village Homeowners Cooperative
<i>Ashley McAndrew</i>	<i>5/22/26</i>	Jean Kindem	Aging & Long-Term Care of Eastern Washington
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Connie Kliewer	NEWESD101
<i>5/22/26</i>	<i>5/20/26</i>	Vladimir Kronin	Slavic Community
<i>Kelly Dengel</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sue Lani Madsen	Washington Rural Environmental Network (WREN)
<i>Kristine Meyer</i>	<i>5/22/26</i>	Maliek Martin	Spokane Workforce Council
	<i>5/20/26</i>	Lynn Suksdorf, Phd	Rural Community Member
	<i>5/20/26</i>	William von Bracht	Othello, school English as 2 nd language
	<i>5/22/26</i>	Latrice Williams	Community Member/ WA state board of Equity
		<i>Guests</i>	
	<i>5/20 & 22/26</i>	<i>Paul Koenig, WUTC</i>	
		<i>Substitutes</i>	

Agenda

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EAG Equity Lens May Sessions Meeting Notes

Welcome & Introductions

At both meetings, the group facilitator - Amber opened the meeting with introductions and a connection question about what makes virtual meetings smoother or more engaging. Members shared various preferences, including accessibility, inclusive participation, camera usage, hand-raising for speaking turns, providing meeting information, sharing links in chats, and visibility for hybrid meetings interactive elements, visuals, and opportunities for discussion.

Member Shares:

- Both meetings:
 - Avista's new My Clean Energy program and grant that can help community-based organizations lower upfront costs and make solar projects easier to afford. It also helps teach our community about clean, renewable energy. This program is a great fit for nonprofits and community-based organizations. [My Clean Energy Grant](#)
 - Spokane Clean Air Wood Stove Change Out Program
 - Pre-qualified homeowners that burn one cord of wood or more a year and have a 20-year-old or non-EPA certified wood heating device, receive a voucher to use at a participating stove shop to receive an instant rebate on the purchase and installation of a new electric (\$500), wood (\$1,000), pellet (\$1,400) or gas (\$1,800) stove/insert or a ductless heat pump (\$2,500). New devices are more efficient and cleaner, saving you money and improving your air quality. For details on the wood stove changeout program and online application go to SpokaneCleanAir.org/changeout or stop by your local hearth dealer.
 - Limited income? An income qualified wood stove replacement program is available to pre-qualified homeowners. The grants cover the cost of the wood stove changeout. Email mchambers@spokanecleanair.org or call 509-477-4727x114 for more information.
- 5/22/26:
 - Spectrum Center's upcoming Pride Preparation Party will precede a month of activity in both CDA and Spokane. To learn more, visit: [Home | Spectrum Center](#).

Agenda Item I: Equity in Capital Planning

Matt Redding, Manager of a project management group at Avista, explained that the purpose of his presentation was to review the company's capital planning process and how equity is embedded within it.

He emphasized the importance of capital planning in identifying and prioritizing long-term infrastructure investments, driven by factors such as safety, reliability, and community impact.

Matt then provided an overview of Avista's capital planning process, which includes three key phases: identifying system needs and potential projects, developing business cases with benefit-cost analysis, and executing approved projects. He explained that business case documents are central to evaluating and prioritizing investments and noted plans to gather feedback and further refine how equity is measured within benefit-cost analysis.

Throughout the discussion, Matt highlighted how equity considerations are incorporated at each phase of the process, including assessing impacts on communities with higher energy burdens or increased vulnerabilities. He also outlined the documentation approach used to track equity-related considerations, decisions, and outcomes across the lifecycle of capital projects.

He provided an overview of a cost-benefit analysis framework used in capital planning, which assesses four main categories: economic impacts, environmental non-energy impacts, energy resilience, and carbon greenhouse gas impacts on the identified Named Community. Matt explained how this analysis helps compare different projects and inform prioritization decisions, using examples like substation projects and their impact on grid resiliency.

A member posed concern about the inclusion of named/impacted communities in the final equity scoring and report back to the group.

Action: At an upcoming meeting, Avista staff will report on how this can be better addressed in the scoring methodology.

May 20th EAG member comment in the Chat:

- My view of questions is that they serve these purposes: 1. to gain information, 2. to gain understanding, and 3. to learn to become more informed for participation.

During the May 22nd meeting, the group reviewed Matt's cost-benefit analysis slide, with Avista staff seeking feedback on its completeness.

Based on an EAG member question, Matt explained how the analysis considers both quantitative and qualitative factors, using noise studies as an example of how they measure community impacts even when exact dollar values aren't available.

Action: The Avista team to consider the suggestion to include light pollution as a factor in the cost-benefit analysis for capital projects, as raised by the group facilitator.

An EAG member asked about federal regulations affecting Avista, and Avista staff responded that while legislation is monitored, she is not aware of any immediate impacts from a capital planning standpoint.

EAG member question: How might Avista be affected by a new freeway?

Action: Avista staff will investigate and provide feedback at the next meeting.

Action: The Avista Equity in Capital planning team will explore ways to improve meaningful engagement with communities throughout all phases of capital planning projects, including early and ongoing engagement, as discussed and suggested by EAG members at the May 22nd meeting.

Matt shared the following snapshot from the Environmental section for the cost-benefit analysis in the Chat.

9. Environmental	Description	Select (Drop Down)	Scoring Options	Scoring Options	Description - Scores reflect the magnitude and duration of negative or positive impacts relative to baseline conditions
1) Air Quality (Indoor)	Particulate matter, combustible byproducts, mold, or ventilation quality	1	-3	-3	Major Environmental Harm - Results in significant, long-term adverse environmental effects that are difficult, costly, or unlikely to be fully mitigated
2) Air Quality (Outdoor)	Criteria Pollutants, Dust, Construction Emissions, Odors	2	-2	-2	Material Environmental Harm - Results in clear adverse environmental effects that are measurable and require mitigation or sustained management
3) Water Resources	Water Withdrawal/Consumption, Water Quality Impacts, Impacts to Wetlands, Stormwater Runoff, Sediment Control	3	-1	-1	Minor Environmental Harm - Results in limited, short-term, or localized adverse environmental effects with minimal mitigation required
4) Land Use, Soil, Site Impacts	Acres disturbed/habitat conversion, soil contamination, right of way impacts, vegetation clearing	1	0	0	No material environmental change - Results in no meaningful net environmental change relative to baseline conditions
5) Habitat, Biodiversity, Natural Resources	Species impacts, habitat fragmentation, vegetation management impacts, invasive species risk	1	1	1	Minor Environmental Benefit - Results in small or localized environmental improvements or reduced environmental burden
6) Waste, Materials, Circularity	Hazardous waste generation and disposal	-1	2	2	Material Environmental Benefit - Results in clear, measurable environmental improvements that are sustained over time
7) Noise, Light, Visual, Nuisance Impacts	Construction Noise and traffic disruption, operational noise, light pollution/security lighting, visual impacts	2	3	3	Major Environmental Benefit - Results in significant, long-term environmental improvements or substantial reduction of environmental harm
8) Climate Adaptation	Flood risk, wildfire risk, heat risk to assets, ecosystem services	-1	N/A	N/A	This environmental category does not apply to the project
Environmental Score:		1			

Agenda Item II: Demographic Questions in Distributed Energy Resources

Lisa and Meghan presented an update on a proposed framework to collect anonymous demographic data from customers participating in distributed energy resource (DER) programs, emphasizing privacy protection and voluntary participation. The group discussed potential barriers to survey participation, including technology access, and received suggestions for increasing engagement, such as hosting pop-up events in strategic areas and leveraging existing community gatherings. The team acknowledged the importance of addressing equity in program benefits and committed to exploring solutions to ensure diverse demographic participation.

Based on feedback provided the Avista DER team will finalize and implement the anonymous demographic survey for Distributed Energy Resource program participants, ensuring it is available in at least English and Spanish, and explore options for non-online survey access to increase participation among underrepresented groups.

Specifically, the team will:

- Partner with Avista’s multilingual and accessibility outreach efforts for the demographic survey to ensure inclusion of non-English-speaking and non-tech-savvy communities.
- Develop and implement strategies to increase survey participation among rural communities, communities of color, and lower-income groups. This may include pop-up events and leveraging existing community gatherings (e.g., senior lunches), as suggested by EAG members at the May 22 meeting.
- Share results and findings from the new demographic data collection process with the Equity Advisory Group once the data becomes available.
- Investigate and report back on ways to address potential bias in online-only survey collection for DER programs, including options for non-technology-based participation, as raised in recent meetings.

May 22nd EAG member comments in the Chat:

- Appreciate you for coming back with the fulfilled asks
- Yes 🙌 sometimes it's frustrating to request things but not hear or see anything answers

Next Meetings are noon on Wednesday, June 17th, and at 7:30 am on Friday, June 19th.