

**Session 1:** Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 12:00pm

**Session 2:** Friday, January 23, 2026, 07:30am



# Equity Advisory Group – Equity Lens Session

January 2026

[www.myavista.com/eag](http://www.myavista.com/eag)



# Agenda

Topic	Presenter
Welcome, introductions, agenda, and shared expectations	<b>Amber Lenhart</b> , Facilitator
Connections/Partner Shares	Connections/Partners
Regulatory Update	<b>Amanda Ghering</b> , Regulatory Affairs Manager
Equity Advisory Group Kicking Off 2026	<b>Ana Matthews</b> , Customer Engagement Manager
Revisit Named Communities Investment Fund (NCIF) Prioritization	<b>Amber &amp; Ana</b>
Questions & Discussion	<b>Amber</b>
Wrap-up and Adjourn	<b>Amber</b>

# Shared Expectations

- Stay present** mentally and physically when possible.
- Listen** with an open mind and be open to new ideas.
- Participate** in discussion, share concerns and ideas, and give others space to do so.
- Ask questions** at any time. Use Zoom's "raise hand" feature or chat during presentations.
- Work together** to consider different perspectives and support the meeting goal(s).
- Respect** the role of the facilitator to guide the group process.



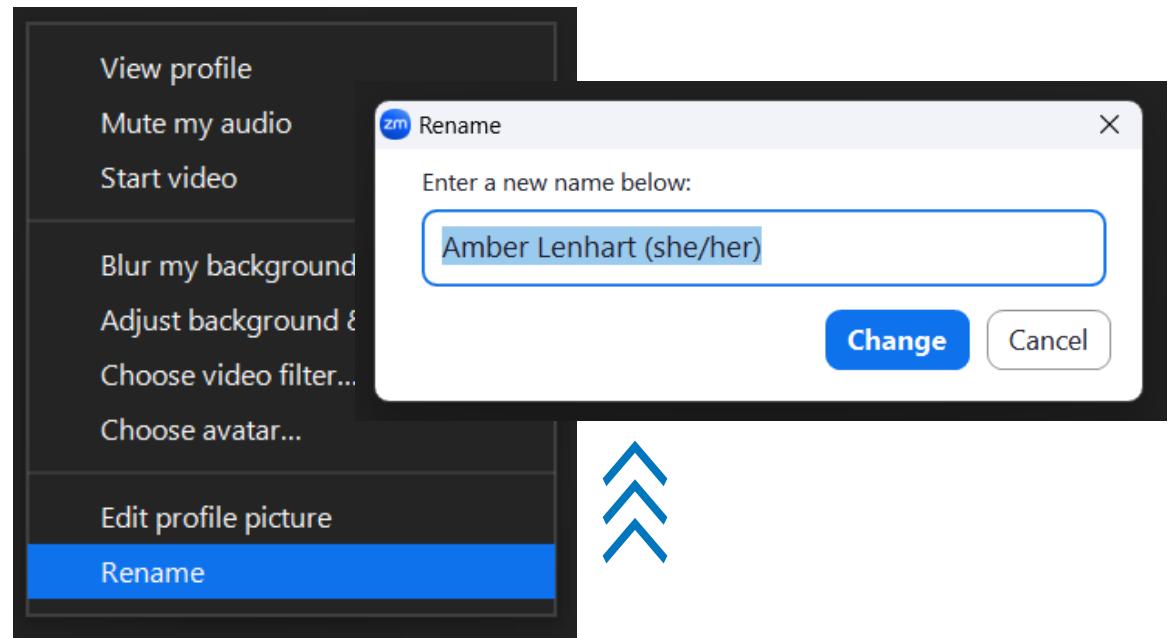
# Introductions

Please share in the chat:

- Your name
- Organization or community

We're so glad  
you're here!

*Optional:* Consider including >>>  
your pronouns in your Zoom name





- Vladimir Kronin, Pilgrim Slavic Baptist Church
- George C. Dahl, Spokane County Housing and Community Development

# Spectrum of Public Participation



INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION					
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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# Today's Equity Lens Session Goals



**Inform** members about the Equity Advisory Group's (EAG) purpose and how it functions.



**Involve** EAG members to explore and share their questions, perspectives, and desires about the group's role.



**Inform and collaborate** with EAG members around priorities for the Named Communities Investment Fund.

## Connection Question

Do you set resolutions for the new year?

If so, what are some of your resolutions this year?

If not, do you have other traditions entering a new year?



# Partner Shares



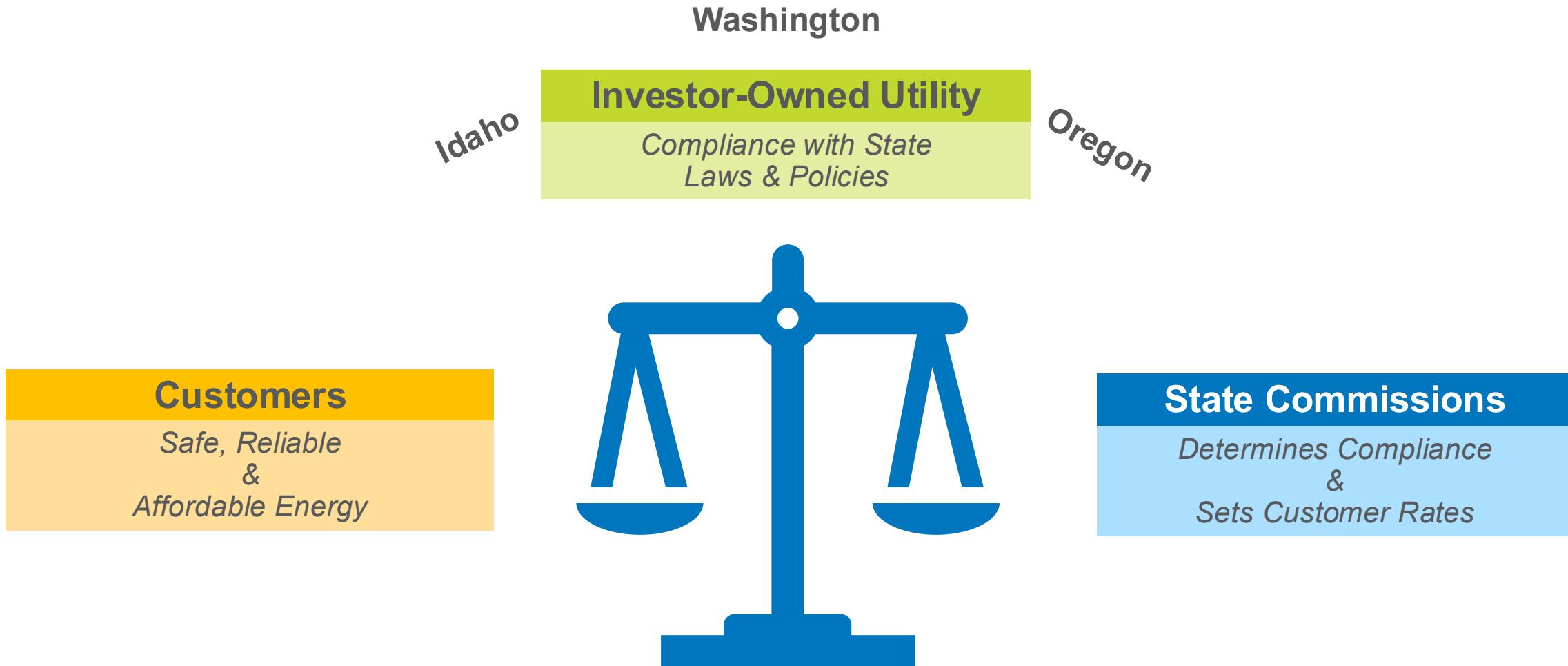
- Do you have a "win" to celebrate?
- What upcoming events or opportunities do you want to share with other EAG members and their communities?
- What pressing issues or needs are you hearing about in your communities or organizations that we should consider or work together to address?



# Regulatory Update

Amanda Ghering | Regulatory Affairs Manager

# Avista's Regulatory Model



# How Are Rates Set

## 11-Month Process in Washington



[Avista 101: Rates - YouTube](#)

# Who Participates?

- 3 Commissioners  
(Appointed by the Governor)
- Commission Staff
- Avista
- Consumer Advocates
  - Public Council
  - Industrial/Commercial
  - Low-Income
  - Environmental

**Commission reviews and determines:**



prudence, safety, and reliability



fair, just, reasonable, affordable, and equitable

# Why Are We Proposing Updated Rates?

**Power Generation and Supply**

**Regional Growth and Reliability**

**Infrastructure Upgrades**

**Wildfire Safety and Prevention**

**Technology Improvements**

**Clean Energy Compliance**

# Avista Resources



**Bill assistance programs.** Our refreshed programs, including My Energy Discount, make it easier for customers to get help—tens of thousands already have.



**Flexible payment options.** Customers can choose plans like Comfort Level Billing, budget alerts, and payment arrangements to stay on track.



**Helping customers save energy and money.** Rebates, efficiency projects, and free home energy audits show customers how to cut waste and lower costs.



**Connecting customers to resources.** Community grants and online tools give customers more ways to manage their energy use and bills.

# Avista Resources



Your Energy Dollars at Work | Avista



Washington bill assistance



Conserve energy & save | Avista



Customer Service 1-800-227-9187



# Avista's Equity Advisory Group

Ana Matthews | Customer Engagement Manager

# WAC 480-100-655

## Public Participation in Clean Energy Plan

Integration of  
Input

Inclusive  
Representation

Public  
Meetings

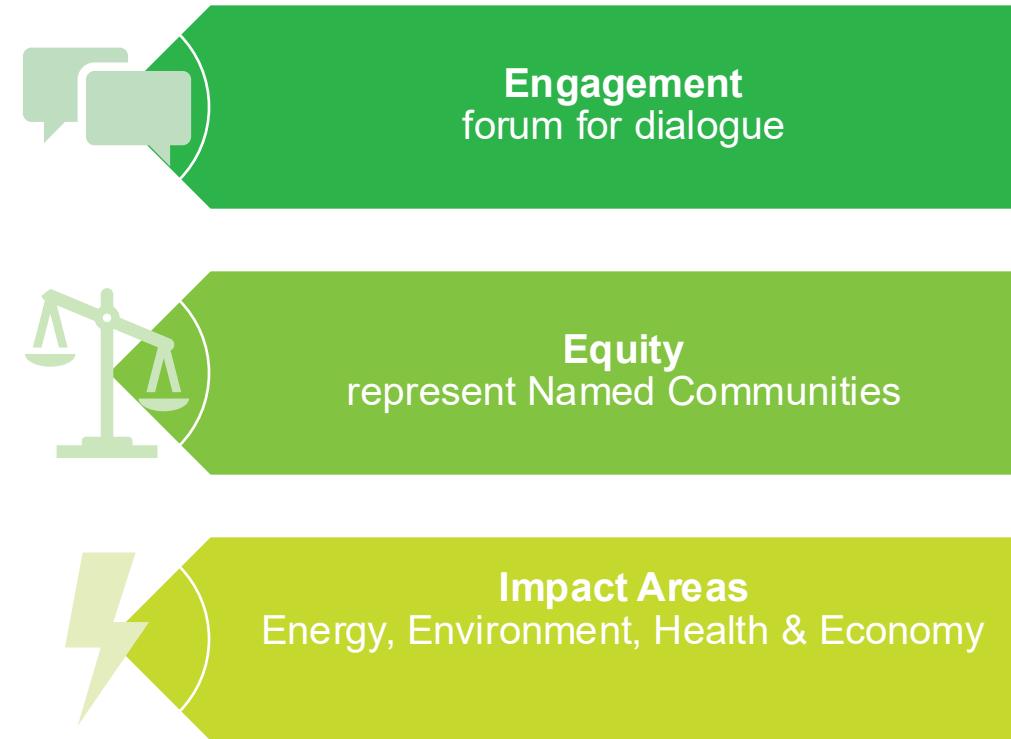
Ongoing  
Engagement

Transparency  
of Materials

Documented  
Feedback

# Equity Advisory Group Purpose & Role

Avista's EAG provides a forum for interested parties to engage with the Company through meaningful dialogue to ensure that customer initiatives and company programs do not disproportionately impact Named Communities who may experience undue challenges pertaining to energy as well as other environmental, health, and economic impacts.



*Promoting fairness and inclusion in energy initiatives*

# Inform, Consult, Involve

## Top Topics

Customer Benefit Indicators

Named Communities Investment Fund

Clean Energy Implementation Plan (CEIP)

Bill Assistance

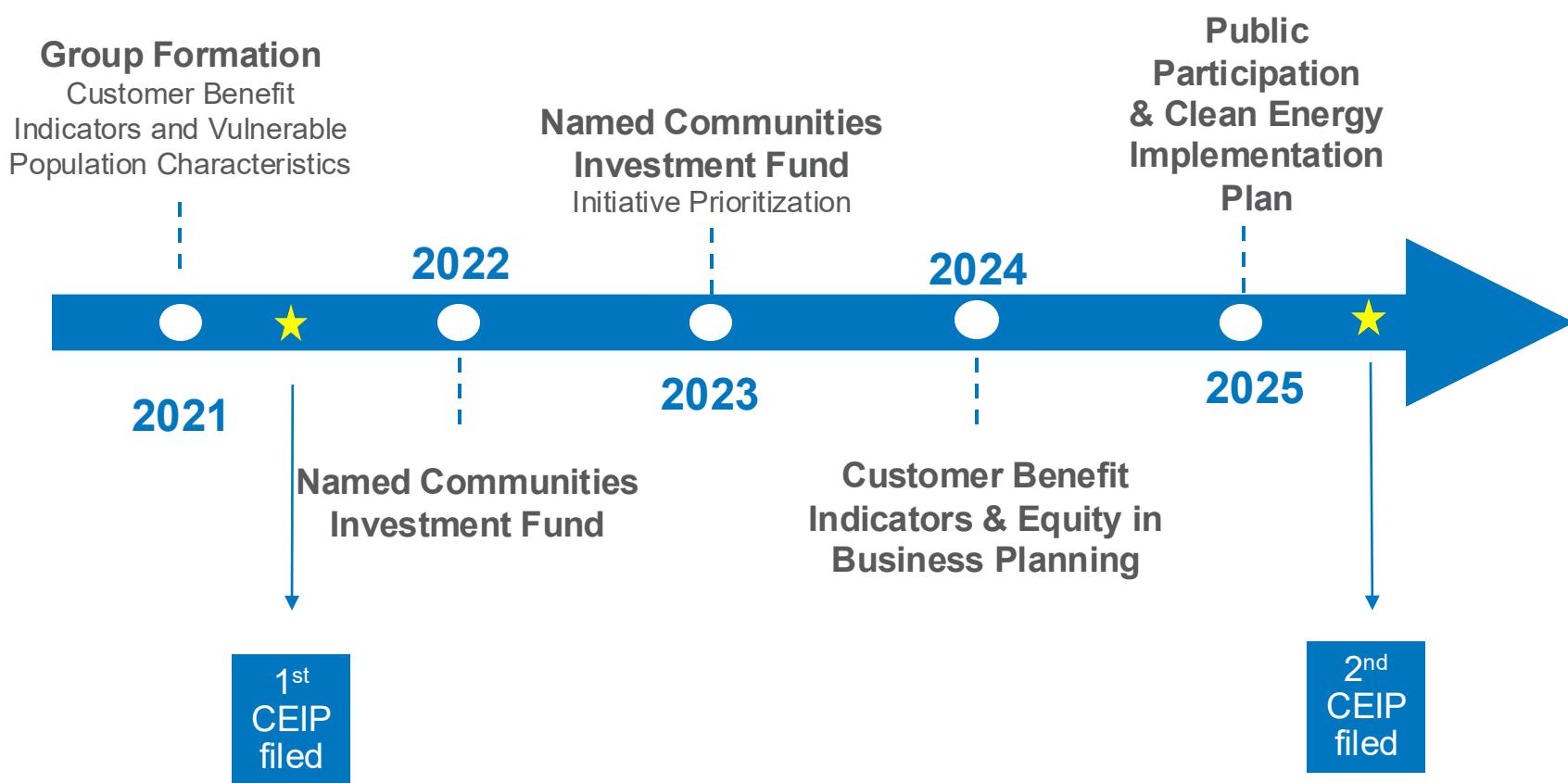
## Frequently Discussed

Equity in Capital Planning

Condition #10

Public Participation

# Group Activity Timeline



## 2026 Topics

- EAG Communication Materials
- Climate Commitment Act
- Clean Energy Implementation Plan Survey
- Named Communities Compounding Burdens
- Distributed Equity Analysis
- Integrated Resource Planning

# Resources for you

- [www.myavista.com/eag](http://www.myavista.com/eag)
- EAG Charter
  - Background
  - Structure & Governance
  - Key Resources
- Meeting Materials
  - Since 2021
  - Slides, minutes and recordings



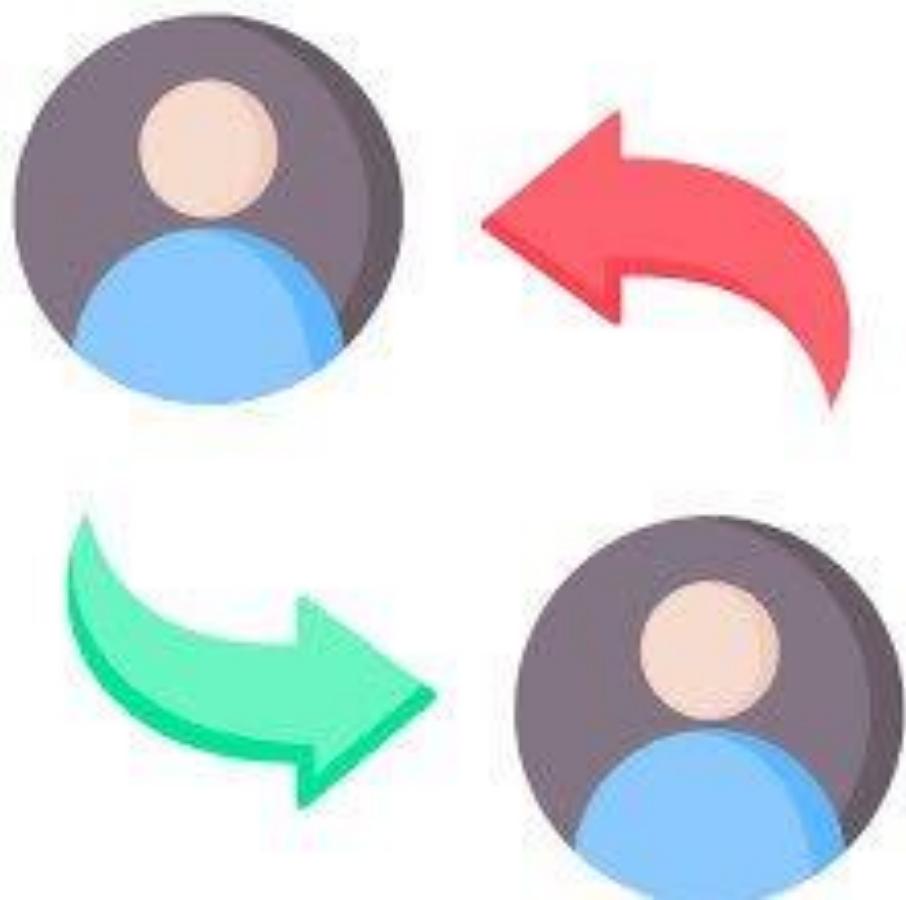
## Equity Advisory Group Charter

*Governance for Inclusive Clean Energy Planning*

This charter describes the Equity Advisory Group (EAG), its purpose, composition, structure, and oversight

# New in 2026

- Alternative representative for meetings when you are unavailable
- Process to establish your substitute
  - Complete the EAG Member Interest Form
  - Receive EAG onboarding
  - Attend a few meetings to observe





# Named Communities Investment Fund Initiative Prioritization

Amber & Ana

# Named Communities Investment Fund

- Specific Action dedicated to the equitable distribution of electric energy and non-energy benefits and reduction in burdens to Named Communities
- Funding is limited to \$5M annually

**\$2M**

**Supplement Energy  
Efficiency**

**\$3M**

**Community Investments**

**Energy Efficiency**

**Community Identified Projects**

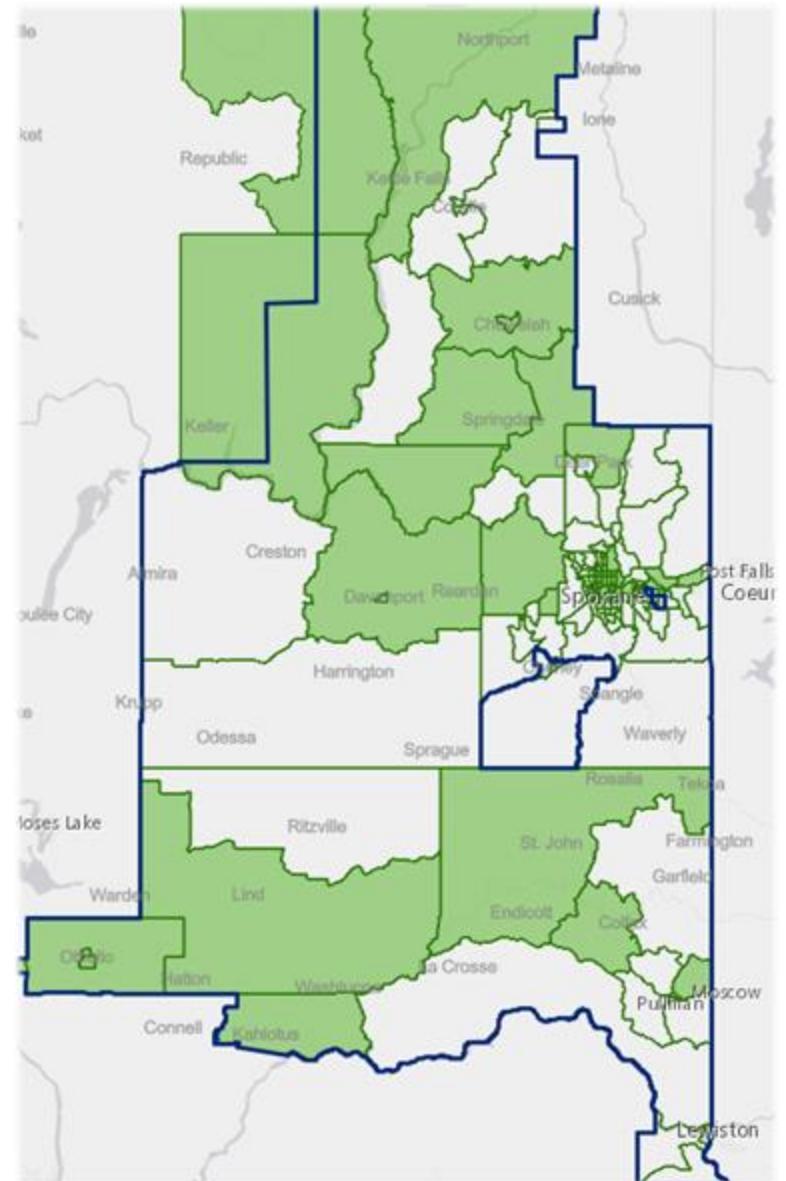
**Distribution Resiliency**

**Targeted Outreach & Engagement**

**Other**

# Our Approach

- I. Assurance for equitable distribution of NCIF awards throughout Avista's service territory
  - Committed action toward underserved groups and rural inclusion and development
- II. Community Identified Projects
  - Grounds program in community reality
  - Mechanism for community input and support
- III. Comprehensive assistance with application and proposal submission from start to finish
- IV. Accountability and Feedback
  - Reporting internally and externally
  - Oversight Group
  - Participant Survey



# Looking Back: November/December 2022

## Results-Based Accountability Process



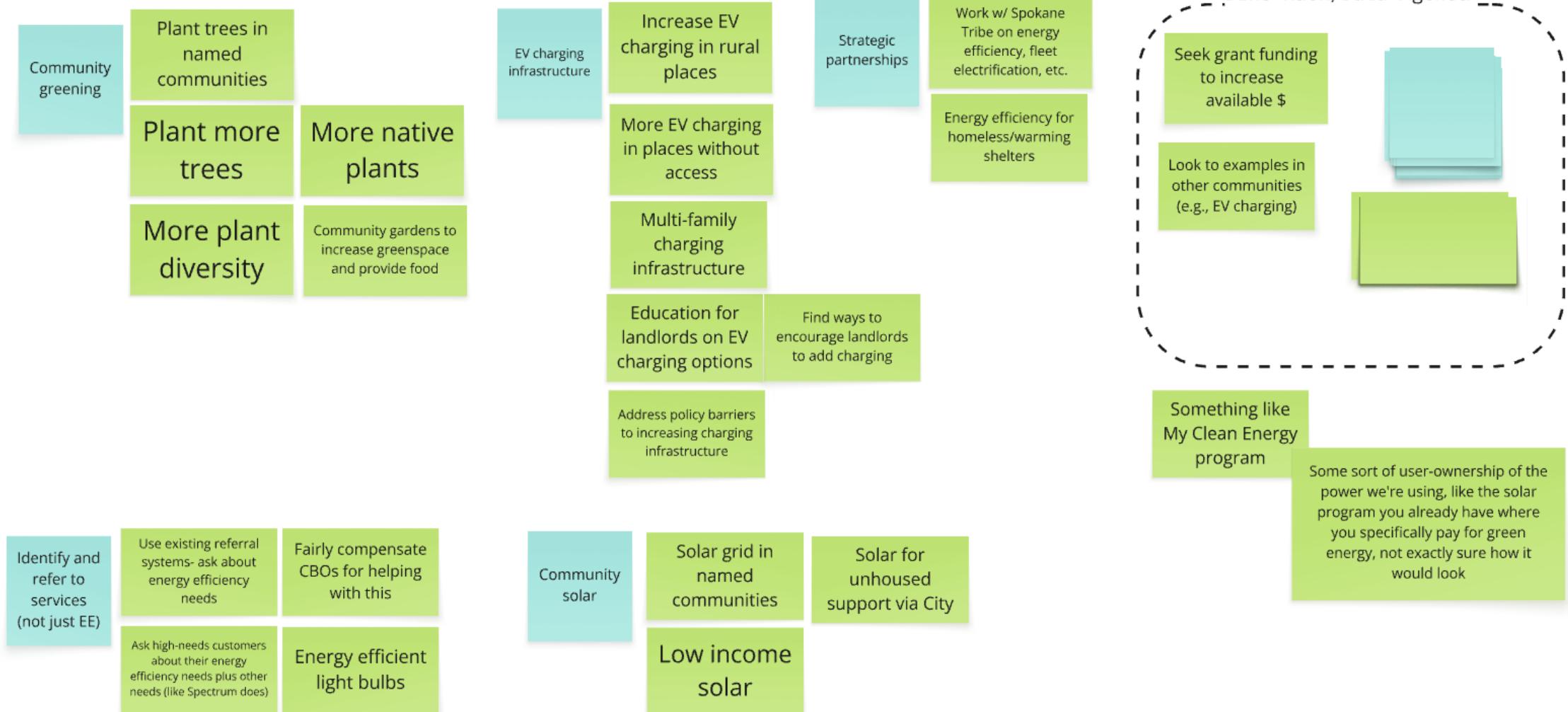
# Looking Back: November/December 2022

## Brainstorm



- Evidence-based or proven programs and projects
- Low-cost projects
- Out-of-the-box ideas
- Where do we need to know more? What would we put on our “data agenda”?

# Looking Back: November/December 2022



# Looking Back: November/December 2022

## Prioritizing possible strategies



Leverage



Feasibility



Specificity



Values

# EAG NCIF Prioritization

Rank	Initiatives
1	Focus efforts on improving energy efficiency (and EE awareness/education) for schools, community centers, and other places where Named Communities spend time
1	Focus efforts on improving energy efficiency for Spokane Tribe partners
2	Improve energy efficiency in multi-family and mobile home communities
3	Increase tree canopy and shade in Named Communities (consider tradeoffs with solar)
3	Increase access to energy efficient products and appliances for Named Communities
4	Increase awareness of and engagement in energy efficiency programs while also meeting whole-house needs through community-based partnerships and referrals to services
5	Set aside funds to match for energy efficiency grant applications for community organizations and tribal partners (could have higher feasibility)
6	Focus efforts on improving energy efficiency for community members without stable housing (consider including with other initiatives)

# EAG Priorities and NCIF Projects

EAG Initiatives	NCIF Projects
Focus schools, community centers, etc.	MLK Community efficiency improvements (Spokane), Westminster Church window and HVAC replacement (Spokane), Corbin Senior Center HVAC replacement (Spokane),
Spokane Tribe	Energy audits at 11 buildings at the reservation, award to support Commerce funded efficiency improvements, microgrid (Wellpinit)
Multi-family and mobile home communities	Walnut Corners window and HVAC replacement (Spokane), Hill Ray Plaza window replacement (Colfax), KW Energy Aeroseal duct sealing for manufactured residential homes in north-eastern, rural Washington, SNAP Pine Villa and Pacific Apartments multiple improvements, Takesa Village and other manufactured home parks multiple improvements
Increase access of products/appliances for NC	Scale House Market (Spokane), Loon Lake Food Bank cooling system rebuild (Stevens County), new appliances for the Supper Club (Spokane),
Match funds for grant applications	Kettle Falls Community Chest Department of Agriculture grant and loan, MLK Center solar and battery storage
Community members without stable housing	Family Promise of Spokane window and HVAC replacement, Helping Captives Education Center and Emergency Services Center (Spokane), Corner Laundry at St. Ann Church (Spokane)
Increase tree canopy	Multi-year partnership with Lands Council SpoCanopy and Spokane plotter software

# Other NCIF Project areas

- Workforce Development
  - Career Path Services Dignified Workday and Christ Kitchen
  - Building Contractor Certification Course
  - Low Income Weatherization for community action agencies
- Solar arrays and Batteries
  - Solar for Habit homes in Spokane and the Palouse
  - MLK Community Center solar and battery
- Multi-language strategy
- Microgrid for Spokane Tribe
- Enhanced rebate for Avista Programs  
Project Cost = Rebate + NCIF
  - Home Insulation Program
  - Small Business Lighting
  - Multi-family Energy Excellence Program



**Boost year-round comfort  
and energy efficiency.**

# Revisiting EAG Priorities for NCIF Proposals

- What clarifying questions do you have about the process or our goals for today's discussion?
- How are we doing? Are we on the right track?
- What is missing?
  - Were there ideas brainstormed in 2022 that should be included as priorities, but currently are not?
  - What new ideas do you have for project priorities?
- How could an NCIF project benefit your community?



# Questions and Discussion

Amber Lenhart

# Questions and Discussion

- What clarifying questions or curiosities do you have about the presentations?
- What disparities, root factors, or inequities (historic and current) are related to these topics?
- How could Avista improve engagement strategies related to these topics, if at all?
- What new ways could help measure and track benefits and reduced burdens related to these topics?
- What steps, practices, or policies could help reduce future inequities related to these topics?
- How does this affect your community? What steps will you take after learning about these topics?**

# Your EAG Team



**Amber  
Lenhart**

Facilitator  
Founder &  
Principal, Social  
Impact Partners  
Northwest

**Ana Matthews**

Customer  
Engagement  
Manager, Avista

**Amanda  
Ghering**

Regulatory Affairs  
Manager, Avista

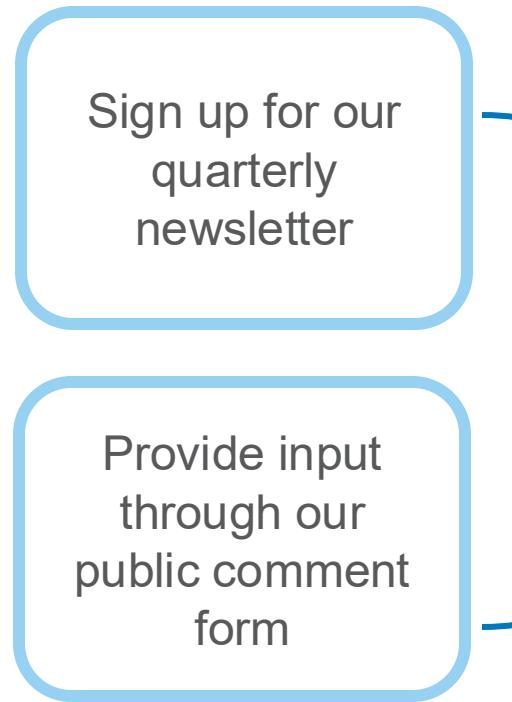
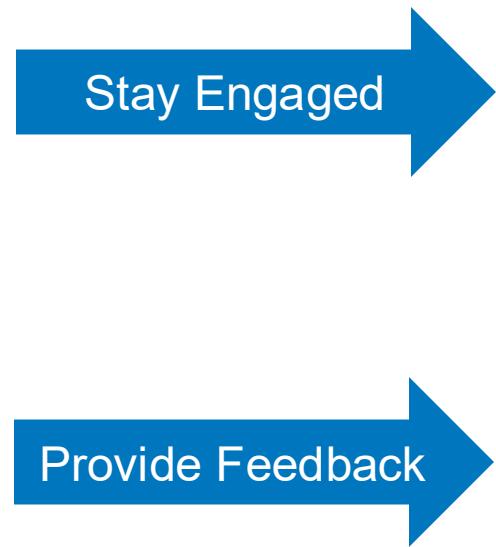
**Kelly  
Dengel**

Clean Energy  
Policy &  
Implementation  
Manager, Avista

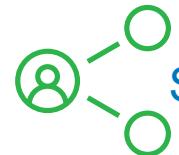
**Ariana  
Barrey**

Senior  
Communications  
Manager, Avista

# Thank you



[www.myavista.com/ceta](http://www.myavista.com/ceta)



Share with your communities

# Next EAG Equity Lens Session Meetings

Afternoon: 12pm –  
1:30pm

**Wednesday, February  
18th**

**Friday, February  
20th**

Morning: 7:30am to  
9:00am

**Mark your calendars:  
In-person meeting in Spokane  
on Wednesday, April 22nd**

**Amber Lenhart**  
[amber@sip-nw.org](mailto:amber@sip-nw.org)  
509.475.9575

**Ana Matthews**  
[Ana.Matthews@avistacorp.com](mailto:Ana.Matthews@avistacorp.com)  
509.495.7979