

Eugene Climate Action Plan 2.0

Community Health and Social Services Chapter Meeting

Wednesday, August 8, 2018 • 9 am-12 pm
Lane Community College Downtown Center, Room 303
101 W 10th Ave, Eugene, OR 97401

Present: Cydney Vandercar, 4J School District; Kevin Holman, City of Eugene; Jeannine Parisi, EWEB; Brian Johnson, Lane County; Merlyn Hough, LRAPA; Susan Blane, PeaceHealth

Climate Action Plan 2.0 Project Team: Chelsea Clinton, City of Eugene; Brittany Judson, City of Eugene; Jessica Lisiewski, City of Eugene; Ethan Nelson, City of Eugene; Joshua Proudfoot, Good Company

Opening Remarks

Chelsea Clinton gave an overview of the project vision including a review of the core project commitments (Triple Bottom Line, Strategic Doing and Adding Value) and an overview of the project equity initiatives.

Introductions

Participants and community members introduced themselves and provided what they hoped to get out of the meeting or process. Common themes included connecting with each other and across organizations, learning about other endeavors and new ideas, sharing, looking to the future, partnership, best practices for reducing single occupancy vehicle travel, and mapping out our community investments.

CAP 2.0 project goals and process

Chelsea Clinton provided a more detailed overview of the CAP2.0 project including the CRO Goals, 2017 Mayor's CRO Ad Hoc Work Group, core project commitments, equity initiatives, Large Lever Shareholders, CAP2.0 project timeline, and project team.

Equity Discussion

Chelsea Clinton facilitated the discussion. The group discussed the difference between equality and equity. Then the group reviewed the project equity lens. Last, the larger group broke out into smaller groups to share their organization's equity framework.

Scope of Today's Meeting – Josh Proudfoot

- Unique conversation: there hasn't been a lot of work done on this topic.
- High impact actions: We're focusing on large efforts that impact the most number of people in the community, or system-level impacts.
 - Educating households are important, but may not reach as many folks as your organizations can reach.
- Overlaps with other chapters: We focused on acute events in emergency response. We'll be focused on chronic and acute situations today.

Discussion of Best Management Practices – facilitated by Josh Proudfoot

Josh presented some Best Management practices (page 3 of agenda).

Additional best management practices and discussion:

- Merlyn Hough, LRAPA – Spoke about the importance of coordination across agencies. Regarding wildfire smoke, we work on creating clean and cool spaces for more sensitive populations. We partner with Lane County Public Health. It starts out with forecast, then we coordinate on joint releases: right after that call there's an air communicator's call. Oregon DEQ as well as many other agencies are involved.
 - Josh Proudfoot - Is there something to do to learn from warmer communities that have this more frequently? Like California's fires?
 - It can vary where the impacts are. Montana last year was like Southern Oregon this year. California's taken things to a higher level with property damage and death toll. We were lucky – we had smoke impacts but no property damage or human health toll. It can happen anywhere.
- Brian Johnson, Lane County - Extreme cold and ice storms can have high level impacts.
- Brian Johnson, Lane County - Land use related actions with the rural - urban interface. Folks are living in the trees and on floodplains – changing policies to develop where people are better protected.
- Brian Johnson- There are actions that are more preventative in nature to lesson people's susceptibility to chronic conditions such as tobacco prevention. Focus upstream. These actions help the community better positioned. Also actions relating to increasing physical activity.

Underserved populations to consider:

- Brian Johnson, Lane County – folks living on the streets, or the unhoused. Populations of color and low-income. Housing conditions and shelter conditions. People working certain types of jobs may put them in different risks, for example outdoor labor or workplaces/homes/schools with no air conditioning or heat.
- Cydney Vandercar, 4J - We talked about how some schools didn't have fencing around the schools, so when the heat hit last year, we couldn't open the doors to circulate air. We had to decide which was safer, opening the door without fencing or keeping the door shut.
- Cydney Vandercar, 4J - When the smoke hit, some sports teams couldn't play and didn't have the money to bus to a different area to practice. This created some equity issues. The smoke had implications that went much deeper than would've imagined. Also, the kids who suffered from asthma had a difficult time – we didn't know how to order the specific masks to protect students and employees. There's a need for a lot of bond measures to get new buildings, heating, etc.

Ethan Nelson, Project Team - We have passed bond measures which will help with long term fixes, but what do we do in the short term? We have a need around cooling centers and clean air centers. The bond for 4J and the bond for parks and rec recently passed. How do we get as many co-benefits and multiple uses of these community resources? The system actors that are investing resources in time and funding - how is that funding being a smart investment so that we are able to address these challenges?

This aspect of resiliency - If you have a healthier population, you're better able to withstand environmental shocks both acute and chronic. This is linked to our core missions and also just outside core missions.

Cydney Vandercar, 4J – The district is putting a lot of money into replacing windows in south. Only half of the windows this year – they are single pane with asbestos. The new ones are not as pretty, but it helps with reducing our footprint. Edison is beautiful – but it's beyond repair. It's difficult to explain some of these decisions to the public.

- Brian Johnson, Lane County - Older adults and kids are most affected.
- Brittany Judson, Project Team - People with disabilities. People with limited transportation.
- Merlyn Hough, LRAPA - People with asthma and respiratory issues

Josh – are there any folks that represent one of these groups of people that we should consider inviting to the next meeting?

- Susan Blane, PeaceHealth – Senior and Disabled Services. Trillium CCO – community advisory council and rural advisory council. The coordinated care organization. It represents the 1/3 of population on Medicaid.

Future Climate Conditions in Eugene – presented by Josh Proudfoot

Josh presented on the Future Climate Conditions whitepaper - what we can expect the future conditions in Eugene to be in the next 30 – 100 years from climate change. Some key anticipated changes included:

- Increase population - Increased economic activity in Oregon with decrease in the South and Midwest.
- Hotter and drier summers 10-12 degrees Fahrenheit warmer by 2100.
- Warmer winters with the same amount of precipitation, but less snow/more rain. Snowpack in Cascades nearly gone by 2040.
- Increased wildfires – 500-600 percent more surface area by 2040.
- Halved summer stream flows by 2040.
- Increased economic activity in the Northwest.

Discussion of impacts – facilitated by Josh Proudfoot

- Kevin Holman, City of Eugene – We need to start work as a team in order to get zoning and building codes to deal with pending problems that could occur with a Cascadia event. We should be working with 4J and EWEB instead of us all doing our own thing, especially with all these people coming. This is the time to build that infrastructure – before the population comes.
- Brian Johnson, Lane County - Our communities will be less stable.
- Jeannine Parisi, EWEB - This could exacerbate the have and have nots – the ones that are moving here and the ones that are already here and being pushed out of the market. We're seeing that now.
- Josh Proudfoot, project team - Milwaukee has established mosquito districts – a taxing authority that deals specifically with mosquitoes.

Cydney Vandercar, 4J asked if there will be more ice storms. Josh said that the average winter temperatures will be 4-5 degrees warmer by 2100, but can't say much about what that means for ice storms.

- Brian Johnson, Lane County – There might be greater potential for larger temperature extreme.
- Cydney Vandercar, 4J – School districts were trying to create places where people could go with generators. South houses with no electricity over by Spencer Butte. Wondering if it be better to create more generator-operated schools – should we create more of that? Places for people to go to shower and charge cell phones during ice storms?
- Kevin Holman, City of Eugene – The current winter storm interval is 2.9 years, but it's highly localized. Springfield had almost no ice storms – it has a lot to do with location. We're working on figuring out the frequency. We don't know if it will be longer or shorter. When talking about generators - we'd like to work with you on that. How do we start to move that ball forward? Japan as an example of having seismic-capable buildings, over 400. Only one in OR. Generators and micro grids on most of fire departments. We have 1500 gallons of fuel in reserve to power generators during emergencies. What you're talking about lends itself to sheltering, which is usually a Red Cross job – but oftentimes the Red Cross is stretched very thin. We'd like to be more proactive in conversations with school districts about sheltering with their facilities.

Josh Proudfoot asked Jeannine - Is EWEB shifting from winter peak to summer peak?

- Jeannine Parisi, EWEB - Not yet, but we've not seen the winter loads that we've seen in the past.

Josh Proudfoot brought up that the consensus is that the FEMA maps aren't accurate. Is the 100 year flood actually a 12.5 year flood?

Kevin Holman, City of Eugene brought up the concern of the dams, and the real risks and tradeoffs between storing water for summer and risking dam inundation of the community.

- The dams are fairly secure. Currently we use the dams for flood control. But the scenario that prevents us from using the dams strictly for flood control is water retention.
- When we talk about floodplain, the floodplain and dam inundation area are two separate things. The dam inundation zone is unassociated with the flood plain. For example, parts of Eugene are not in the floodplain, but most of Eugene is in the dam inundation zone. Most of this area is not habitable without the dams controlling flooding. We dammed to prevent flooding. The demand from the community to have the dams in place back as early as the 1900s. Clear through to the early 1940s. There's a reason they are here. The flood plain maps changed dramatically by using the dams.
- Kevin Holman – confirmed that it is an all person concern, not just a certain population.
- Kevin Holman – We don't think the seismic events will take the dams out but there is no guarantee. That's not to say it couldn't happen. But if we use the dams for water storage for the summer, we risk dam inundation. It's kind of a two-edged sword.
- Josh Proudfoot– I think we're looking at more storage.
 - Kevin Holman– How do you store it and yet still be prepared for the large anomaly of a storm that fills these dams frequently in February, without risk of inundation? It already gets close to going over the top. How do you release the water while also holding back – if we can't predict the storms that are coming over the next month? How do you manage both?

- Josh Proudfoot – That’s got to affect the hospital.
 - Susan Blane, PeaceHealth commented that yes, it would.

Adaptation Actions of Each Organization - Facilitated by Josh Proudfoot

EWEB – Jeannine Parisi

Actions

We are focusing more on how we are supporting our low income population through social services. How will we manage affordability? People have competing needs for medications and housing.

- We have made changes to deposit policies. They have until Friday to come in and make a payment – to help people through the weekends. Don’t shut off power over the weekend now.
- We’re considering a rate for senior and disabled. Those who are most vulnerable are our fixed income customers.
- Reducing SDCs for tiny homes and houses with a small square footage.
- We have a stronger focus on energy efficiency programs for low income eligible folks like zero interest loans for water replacements. Climate change is going to put so much cost pressure on people. We’re focusing on keeping people in comfortable in their homes. We haven’t designed the program yet but we are considering the options.
 - We have year round programs – not just moment-in-time programs.
 - The board isn’t interested in across the board low income programs, but something more targeted like the senior and disabled rate.
- We’re installing VRF heating and cooling systems in the largest low-income senior housing facility in Eugene the YaPoAh Terrace. Will take out the window air conditioning units and replace with the fully electric heating/cooling system. It provides affordable winter heating – and also provides cooling.
 - We would love for the school districts to take a look at these systems. They had some early failed experiments, but the technology is much better now.

Lane County – Brian Johnson

Actions

A lot of our actions are relevant to both seasons.

- Flu prevention – we might need to ramp up vaccinations. Supported monitoring and vaccinations.
- Information sharing and actions related to air monitoring – air quality is worst during cold dry spells – pockets of air get stuck in the valley. Partnerships have been critical to improve air quality in those certain pockets.
- Support emergency response for flooding. Lane County Public Health’s role will be messaging, guidance on reduction, access to water and food, sheltering, supports that many of us have overlap to.
- The schools have a platform to stand on for sheltering – however if schools don’t have cooling, maybe need to add cooling.

- Cydney Vandercar, 4J: The new buildings have everything. None of our high schools have air conditioning. 4J is looking at new buildings in each region. South couldn't do it but Roosevelt right down the road has air conditioning. For sheltering, we can change one of the newer buildings to be the hub.
- Public Health isn't specifically focused on mental health but Lane County is. Mental health services are going to be stressed more and more with environmental and economic stress. I'm not sure if they're specifically looking at climate change – but there will be a greater demand on our system.

PeaceHealth – Susan Blane

Actions

- We're looking at what the healthcare system is doing to take care of vulnerable patients, these are things that will prepare for those patients for the future effects of climate change. But they're also applicable to other conditions like housing insecurity. We're supporting the Egan Warming Center, working with Laurel and Sheltercare. Those relationships will impact those patients' ability to continue to recuperate in adverse weather conditions. We don't want to put those people back onto streets or unstable housing.
- Numa-vax partnerships: making sure any potential candidates for certain conditions receive those vaccinations receive those before they leave the hospital. Anyone who's a candidate for pneumonia gets that vaccination. We're responding to the needs of the community and not to climate change specifically.
- Emergency preparedness: we have a well-evolved communication system for significant weather events. The ability to staff and what they'll use for transportation for key individuals.

Discussion

Ethan Nelson, project team asked regarding air quality and the wet season: With warmer wetter winters are we expected to have peaks of wetter and then cold and clear? Or just a longer stretched out wet period?

- Brian Johnson, Lane County said he was under the impression there would be more extremes, but not necessarily the case.
- Merlyn Hough, LRAPA said that there is no clear trend in number of inversion days increasing or decreasing. There's a lot of noise in the data.
- Brian Johnson, Lane County - If it's warmer, possible people will burn less wood.
 - Jeannine Parisi, EWEB commented that if it's wet people will burn, even if it's warmer.

LRAPA – Merlyn Hough

Actions

- For both summer and winter – we're trying to expand our distribution of information on air quality as wide as possible, which addresses equity considerations.
- We're making the website easier to use.
 - Last year we had 300 times as many hits and people stayed longer. We need to make sure there's capacity there.
- Expanding with social media to reach more people – it's easy for people to read posts.
- We do news releases during key air quality episodic events – and give advice during the time.

Discussion of Wildfire Smoke Response

Josh mentioned that in the Chicago airport he received a text that there was a flash flood alert in your area. He said he didn't sign up for any alerts, but he received the alert anyway. Do we have an alert system like that here?

Actions

- Merlyn Hough, LRAPA- People can sign up for alerts. Eugene, Cottage Grove, etc. Only if you select in.
- Kevin Holman, City of Eugene – we have that ability in the case of an emergency. The COE can send it out fairly quickly.
 - We tried to promote AlertSends to the community, but it was not well used. If we do use that we would want to back up with another system. We don't use it a lot.

Discussion

Josh Proudfoot asked if the wildfire smoke last summer was an acute enough event to warrant using the emergency alert system.

- Kevin Holman, City of Eugene said he couldn't make that call, and he would look to the Lane County Public Health department to let him know that.
 - If it was an immediate need, I wouldn't want the system to alert through email since most people wouldn't see it in time.
- Brian Johnson, Lane County – That should be a conversation between LRAPA and Public Health, and bring in Emergency.
- Kevin Holman, City of Eugene – The system we have is FEMA's replacement for that old alert system. For example, EIAS public system. This is an enhanced version of that. Fire would use it for wildland fire. It's not something that we use commonly in our area because we don't have events that raise to that need. It could be used for emergency evacuation due to fire and Amber alerts but for wildfire smoke, some common sense should be used as to how we project a message. It might be better to release it to local radio stations. It's got to be pretty serious for us to use our dispatch system.

Jeannine Parisi, EWEB – There were several things that went well last year during the wildfire smoke. LRAPA was working with schools to advise whether kids should go outside during recess. Track activities and UO football – when to cancel sports events. It was the first time seeing air quality conditions like that, so the messaging was tested for the first time last year.

Josh Proudfoot, project team – Are there programs to prepare and educate? I learned about N95 filters last year. How do we get that in everyone's hands in advance?

- Brian Johnson, Lane County – we don't have programs to prepare and educate with air quality. It's too complex, even the solutions. Those N95 filters are not a straight recommendation. It gives people a false sense of security. There's not a specific filter that's universally beneficial enough to put in a kit. Our first recommendation is that people to stay indoors. We provide specific behavioral messaging.

Equity Concerns

- Ethan Nelson, project team - Not everyone's going to be able to stay indoors. Could we say that there will be an increasing number of bad air quality days that align with hot days and lots of outdoor activities (recreational), and also from work standpoint – laborers out doing construction, farming (especially near harvest season), that we'll see a disproportionate impact on people's health and economic well-being? Current policies don't really reflect those needs. Would OSHA be likely to regulate those conditions? Are they anticipating the number of days people are exposed to air quality or heat?
 - Jeannine Parisi, EWEB said that she doesn't think OSHA does anything. Crews are outside 4-5 days a week.
 - Brian Johnson, Lane County – Those are work adjustments and practices.
 - Ethan Nelson, project team – There's a difference between a represented work force and one that is at-will. What we're seeing is more instances where people are forced to choose between their health and pocketbook.
 - Brian Johnson, Lane County - Some of the seasons might be expanded into the winter as winters warm. Construction season might be able to afford to shut down for a week or two.
- Josh Proudfoot – Are there clean air and cooling centers?
 - Kevin Holman—we've used the library in the past. We're working with the Red Cross to get agreements signed.
 - Brian Johnson—there is a list of daytime cooling centers, which are mostly public facilities. They don't necessarily translate to clean air shelters

Discussion

Josh Proudfoot – If schools are used for sheltering, who pays for the new cooling system? Other public entities missions: Fire department, PeaceHealth, LRAPA. Is there an opportunity to pool funds? Does that need to be managed? Or is there enough process to get there?

Merlyn Hough, LRAPA– Which places meet the need and fit the criteria and where can we recommend people go?

Brian Johnson, Lane County – Communities that have created shelters solely for smoke alone – and it's unclear if people will take advantage of the shelter if it's different from already existing public space. We set up all infrastructure and systems, and they got minimal use. Folks tended to stay in place. We should work on understanding what the use would be before implementing something. We don't want to create the solution and then go find the problem.

Kevin Holman, City of Eugene – With the ice storm a couple years ago people were using shelters during the day. Some people were extremely cold and needed a place to get warm. Under other circumstances there may be people living there on a more permanent basis. We try to have a cohesive plan when those events occur ahead of time what they might look like.

- Shelters need to be staffed.
- Need place to put animals and pets.
- The piece that's missing is the broad understanding of the scope of the problem, and then realize how the system works so we can work together when those scenarios occur. We're

moving forward, but how do we get all the players together to understand the scope and how the system that we're provided works, and how jurisdictional responsibilities are divided? If we can come together on that, we can make some impactful changes moving forward. Until we get that level of understanding, it'll be bumpy in how it works.

Discussion of impacts and actions- Other dry season public health concerns

Impacts

- Jeannine Parisi, EWEB - Pools will be in demand – do we have enough access to water or shade?
- Brian Johnson – Lane County – There will be increased outbreaks of waterborne illnesses. We have to respond quickly.
- Jeannine Parisi, EWEB - Increased algal blooms, when the water levels are lower – more will go to river or lakes – more likely algal blooms.
 - We need more research on the level of toxicity to have appropriate response. There's only been one study done in the 90s. No one really knows the level of human toxicity.
 - We've increased response times and analytics in anticipation of seeing more algal blooms of in our system than in the past.
 - Broader level – what are the safe levels in drinking water and contact?

Mental Health impacts – projected increase in violent crime and suicide

PeaceHealth - Susan Blane

Actions

- We're looking at this from different angles – teen suicide, new crisis stabilization, youth mental health – we're developing response to related situations but not from climate change.
 - We have something for every occasion, but not for the scale of the problem. Generally we're looking at program expansion but not new program development.

Vector Borne Illnesses Impacts

- Brian Johnson, Lane County - There's no district or agency really responsible for working on vector borne illnesses

Equity Lens and Discussion – facilitated by Brittany Judson

Brittany Judson gave everyone time to read the equity lens, and then had people break out in groups to discuss what the equity lens brought up in relation to their work and actions. The group then reconvened and shared elements of their small group discussions.

Jeannine Parisi, EWEB – We've experienced fairly unprecedented weather events recently. We all did the best we could to respond to those events. There's an opportunity to turn those experiences into planning and put systems in place so we're not all scrambling. We're currently unprepared for the type of shift we're talking about.

Kevin Holman, City of Eugene - Our urban forestry program is working on a shade study related to the urban heat island affect with PSU to see what neighborhoods have less shade. These are very useful studies - they indicate a need for a cooling center more acutely.

Merlyn Hough, LRAPA – We distributed 8 low cost sensors to 4J. Compared to more sophisticated systems- provide better localized results. It would be helpful to get indoor measurements in cool spaces

to make sure they're also clean spaces. Wildfire smoke has a pretty uniform effect across the city. Local sources of air pollution such as industries, roadways may have more localized effects. The low cost sensors might be useful.

- Brian Johnson, Lane County – This point source information/data might speak a lot to social justice issues related to neighborhoods
- Merlyn Hough, LRAPA – Oakridge, while not focus of this group is one of the more impacted areas.

Chelsea Clinton, project team – we need more data, but also more input from the impacted communities. The unhoused – how do we continually gather input from that community? As systems change and as we change systems we need to be responsive to those that are most vulnerable.

Key Takeaways and Next Steps – Facilitated by Chelsea Clinton

Everyone shared what they learned or took away from the meeting today.

Themes: Need to scale and integrate what's already happening. Need for coordination. Turning experience into systematic planning. Collaborative processes. Planning for the needs and health of our community. Need to advance multiple outcomes and co-benefits rather than singular missions with our limited funds. Ethical implications of the decisions we make – need to work together on those decisions. Need to think ahead, especially in the area of capital investments. Future generations.

Next steps: The City of Eugene will follow up on information you gave today.