

# Snohomish County Ad Hoc Climate Action Advisory Committee (CAAC)

## MEETING NOTES

Thursday July 13, 2021  
5pm-7pm

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83488449726?pwd=dEgvNU11RG50TnJtektFTVNLakM2dz09>

Meeting ID: 834 8844 9726

Passcode: 415145

### Dial by your location

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

### Agenda

1. Roll-call (5 min)
2. Updates from committee members & working groups (10 min)
3. Continue Review of Draft SOAP Update Framework (100 min)
4. Wrap-Up (5 min)

### Members in Attendance:

Lisa Dulude  
Tom Campbell  
Jeanine SanClemente  
Jonathan Witte  
Margaret Seaney  
Stan Gent  
Ian McCluskey  
Kevin Ruuhela  
Suzy Oversvee  
Linda Lyshall  
Jake Salvador  
Patrick Sisneros

### Listeners/Community members in attendance:

Carol McMahon  
Valerie Rosman Brier  
Kate Lunceford  
Eileen Canola  
Janet Wright  
Julie Titone

### SOAP Powerpoint Overview by Lisa Dulude (Slides 1-11)

Proposed change for SOAP update and countywide plan - Racial and Social Equity as an integrated goal for all 7 Goal Areas: Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Transportation & Mobility,

Energy & Water, Consumption & Materials, Green Building, Ecosystems & Open Space, Adaptation and Resiliency.

**Questions:**

Tom Campbell - On other organizations and “choosing goals that support other organizations” - What are the other municipalities/jurisdiction’s plans that we can support through our goals?

Lisa - We started this process with committee members reviewing other plans. Some of those were within Snohomish County, including Edmonds and Everett.

**SOAP - Framework Overview by Lisa Dulude**

**GHG Emissions - 3 Actions Items**

Lisa - Let’s try to focus on the action item content as our primary focus. Our first priority is to discuss draft action items, as well as draft goals and strategies.

Tom – [on social cost of carbon] With the passing of legislation that we heard about last time, does this mean we need to wait to do this uniformly? Where does the timing of legislation fit into this?

Ian - The state has an established price of carbon at the moment. We can set our prices with the state’s pricing and move along with that.

Linda - I agree. We shouldn’t have to wait.

Stan - I have a concern with GHG 1.3 (When direct GHG reduction is not an option, purchase carbon off-sets), I think we can put this into place a little sooner and do not need to wait for this.

Lisa - I agree. We talked about a county-based carbon offset program to keep those offsets local. Ideally we wouldn’t be purchasing offsets on another continent, and would try to be more thoughtful with offsets within the county. If the committee and county wants to pursue a local carbon offset program, we could...

Linda - Are you looking for certified credits or something a little more informal with the offsets?

Lisa - Informal offsets can be beneficial, however it is less trusted. I’m hesitant to put out a carbon offset that isn’t third party verified.

Stan - There is also a clean energy fund, instead of buying Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), we could have departments purchase RECs developed by the clean energy fund, and

could provide funds for the clean energy fund. It's a more indirect way to the county. This continually reappears.

Linda - This is a much larger conversation and may need to create a subgroup to discuss this. There are a few organizations that are doing this work at the moment.

Jonathan - I think developing opportunities within the county to engage organizations/companies that could provide carbon offsets, (prior to 2024-25), this could assist with our plan, and one way of marketing what we are doing. Especially when we get the community plan in the works.

Jeanine - I was wondering if we could get some of the work we need paid for by developing a county offset plan, with other companies/businesses

Lisa - I think it's a possibility. The one thing that I will say is that I have met with King County on their forest program. If its a third party offset, it's not a simple process. Depending on the project, the project needs to be enrolled and approved, may need to show additionality, and approvals for the project in question. It takes significant effort a bit of effort to figure out what the offsets are, find a verifier, and a buyer, etc.

Jeanine- What about working with groups that are already doing this work and are already an established network?

Lisa - Yes I think that is certainly something we can add to a sub-committee. The PUD has given the County a total cost for purchasing RECs for the portion of county operations electricity that is not 'clean'. We haven't looked at cost of offsets on the gas/fossil fuel side.

Lisa – As an example, I know the state of Maine almost 10 years ago was getting carbon offsets through their weatherization program but came to a dead end due to someone not working in their department anymore.

## **Transportation and Mobility**

### **TM 1 Strategy: Increase the amount of clean fuels consumed by county fleet vehicles and transportation**

Tom - Wasn't there a budget request for the clean fleet transition?

Lisa - The budget process last year, one of the council members put in a budget note, unfortunately not discussed with the executive branch. The budget note asked executive branch to create a green fleet transition plan. However, no additional resources/funding were provided for this work. Fleet Services and OES are trying to work on this, but it is happening at a very slow pace. Tough to make happen with no additional resources. We need to look at this in

combination with electrifying buildings. I can provide the CAAC with the Memo and council meeting link on this topic.

Suzy - I would be interested in some of those meeting notes. I can help provide subject matter expertise from the PUD on that.

Lisa - Maybe we can have the PUD come and discuss electrifying plans. If we are planning to electrify we want to partner with other cities in the county and stakeholders to see if we can share the costs for charging infrastructure or other fuel alternatives (e.g. renewable diesel).

Stan - I believe we drafted a letter to the Executive to move this item to TM 1.1.

Tom - It was. They have gotten our request. It won't be finalized until the budget is done in November.

Lisa - I will send green fleet and electrification notes out to the committee.

#### TM 2 Strategy: Minimize fuel consumption from employee work & commute trips

Lisa - Silver lining with COVID: significant reduction in GHG emissions from reduced number of employee trips within the county.

#### TM 3 Strategy: Minimize unnecessary community vehicle trips to county facilities

Lisa - Another silver lining with COVID: Digital business and customer service capabilities have been improved.

Jeanine - Have there been discussions for four nine hour shifts?

Lisa - There has been.

Jeanine - I am wondering if we can advocate for this in response to studies done on high productivity.

Linda - There are upsides and downsides to this. I think the way the county is going about this good. I wouldn't advocate for more than we are doing.

## **Energy & Water**

### EW 1 Strategy: Increase the efficiency of energy and water consumption in county facilities and operations, and minimize consumption of these resources.

Lisa - This appears to be the biggest hurdle (EW 1.1) with limited capital to evaluate alternatives in terms of retrofitting.

Lisa - EW 1.3 - Energy efficiency projects with guaranteed cost savings, we are guaranteed energy savings through the efficiency of the equipment. However, as a result in the past the finance/budget team has reduced the amount of funding facilities receives. Ideally we would be investing those energy cost savings back into a fund or other energy efficiency retrofits.

Suzy - Has finance had any comment on 1.3?

Lisa - We haven't met with Finance/budget team yet. Planning on meeting with them after a quality draft is produced.

Stan on EW 1.3 - Potential addition of EW 1.4 - Develop an internal cost for carbon fee to fund these projects.

Tom - All the battery systems for landscaping are getting very good. Could be something to implement.

Lisa - Several departments are trying out some electric alternatives for weed wackers, leaf blowers, etc. What they have relayed to me is that the cost of these batteries outweigh the costs of traditional gas. It is something that we are looking at and may be a slow adoption.

Ian - Right now that is the case, however if gas prices go up again that may change the calculations.

Patrick - Should there be a running total in relation to investment costs?

Lisa - I like that idea, and think what we would ideally do, once we get a finalized proposal of actions, we can try to get a ballpark number assigned to it.

Tom - The initial costs may be higher, but if you put a bond behind it, it could be more beneficial. There may be more than one way to finance these things that are more long term in nature.

Lisa - Maybe we carve out a financing section to create ballpark values for some of the action items.

## EW 2 Strategy: Transition county facilities to clean energy

Stan comment on EW 2.3 - Propose to tax ourselves for carbon offsets and RECs and using that as seed money for the Clean Energy Fund.

Lisa - EW 2.2 - We have some of the life cycle cost analysis done, and the goal is to recognize some of the different tools that may be used.

Lisa - EW 2.3 - We would like to purchase RECs for the portion of electricity that comes from fossil fuels.

EW 3 Strategy: Conserve water use through efficiencies and alternative system design

Lisa on EW 3.1 - There are some water efficient landscaping and practices at sites owned or maintained by the county.

Stan on EW 3.2 - Instead of "identify opportunities" use "Identify and Implement".

**Consumption, Materials, Waste**

CMW 1 Strategy: Increase recycling, composting, and waste reduction from county operations.

Suzy - Is there an effort to tie this back to GHG emissions?

Lisa - Yes. That is the intent. Kevin anything to add?

Kevin - This definitely ties back due to emissions.

Suzy - I wonder if it makes sense to state that within here as an action.

Kevin - Perhaps at the goal level we can implement this.

Suzy - Even at the action level (with reducing GHG emissions at the county level)

Lisa - We can certainly think about this more. The SOAP Update report will include language about the purpose of the various strategies, action items, and provide overview of co-benefits. We can talk about the purpose with some of these goals and actions and how they reduce emissions. We could add some targets under this Goal to that end (quantifiable).

Tom - I mentioned methane and the landfill which is a significant contribution to GHG emissions. There could be space to discuss this.

CMW 2 Strategy: Maximizing recycling and reuse of construction and demolitions (C&D) waste from county operations.

Lisa - This is a draft at the moment and need to discuss with Public Works division. The real issue will be do we have the capacity/will to prioritize this an enforceable action.

Jeanine - I have concern over the degree at which this is adopted quickly depends on the degree of how easy it is to adopt. I think that if the county Executive is 100% behind it and we give them a lot of resources it would be very helpful.

Stan - I believe this is a very important section, (Consumption, Materials, Waste), some other countries (Great Britain) use this as a standard requirement.

Lisa - The county does have policies in place that require the recycling of some materials. I wouldn't say that this is followed all the time due to a lack of awareness within the county.

CMW 3 Strategy: Promote responsible consumption and minimize waste through the county's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy (EPP)

Lisa - Terminology and definitions will be added later down the line.

CMW 4 Strategy: Minimize the use and purchase of plastics materials in county operations

Stan - I would suggest a CMW 4.3 of eliminating single use plastics from vending machines, etc. No back door for plastics.

Suzy - One thing at my office that is great is water bottle filling stations as opposed to selling plastic bottles.

Lisa – Great ideas. These have been introduced at fairgrounds, but would be great to add more throughout the county.

CMW 5 Strategy: Purchase and use products and chemicals that are least toxic to humans and the environment.

Lisa – The Responsible Purchasing Network non-profit conducted an inventory of county products in use and found there is a ton of room for using safer products and developing better standards across the board in the county. They produced a final report. While this report has been shared across the county, it has not been implemented.

## **Green Building**

GB 1 Strategy: Design and construct new buildings and capital projects to maximize resource efficiency and minimize GHGs

GB 2 Strategy: Reduce embodied emissions from common building and construction materials

Stan - Language suggestion: Standard should be changed to "low carbon standard"

Tom - Doesn't the county have a facilities plan for buildings to be made in the future? If we are trying to capture reductions, what is the pipeline for building projects?

Lisa – Most departments do have a plan for buildings and facilities. The courthouse was one of the examples you discussed, and options for renovation or building a new courthouse have been discussed for over a decade. Plans for the courthouse kept changing as different Executives were elected to office. LEED gold certification was part of the new courthouse plan at one time but was later dropped. There are facilities that the county is looking at to change/adopt, but don't have a county-wide facilities plan.

Patrick- Where is the county on LEED certification? What do maintenance folks think about energy efficient goals but may be expensive to maintain.

Lisa - The code SCC 3.06 applies to any new county construction/major renovations and basic requirements of that policy is that it is LEED goal certified, and no fossil fuels can be used as a primary energy source. It is a commitment the county decided to make.

Lisa – Maintenance staff have said that it is different maintenance, but not necessarily more maintenance, depending on the systems installed. As far as the policy and costs, GSA put together case studies that gave ranges of upfront costs, lead vs. non-lead. Can be a minimal upfront cost (approximately 1 to 2 percent). Upfront costs alone are not supposed to be used as a primary reason for exemption request from the policy. Especially when high-efficiency equipment and/or design choices can have lower utility costs over the life of the equipment and/or building. If an exemption is requested council is supposed to consider a lower level of LEED instead.

Stan – Getting off of fossil fuels is a priority, especially for new construction or equipment replacement.

Lisa - I agree if you had to choose over lead certification or decreased fossil fuel use I would have to go with the latter.

Lisa – Costs always depends on what you are installing, and looking at life cycle costs. Example - Going from a non-condensing boiler to condensing boiler is minimal incremental cost difference. Changing a system from gas to electric would be considerably more upfront cost (but has a lower social cost of carbon for example).

Kevin - Our facilities have always been supportive of the transition to energy efficient equipment. However they have found that adopting new systems take time and training to maintain. There is concern over costs once we reduce the operational costs, the budgets get reduced. Overall, facility staff look at it positively and look to make those transitions.

GB 3 Strategy: Purchase products for facility construction, renovation, and furnishing that are the least harmful for people and the environment.

Lisa - If this feels redundant from the action item from the previous page we could combine it.



GB 4 Strategy: Ensure that new county facilities are designed for deconstruction

Lisa - I still have to have this conversation with county departments and where this would land on their priority list.

Goal: Natural Systems & Open Space

OS 1 Strategy: Protect and improve the health of county-owned Healthy Forest Project (HFP) sites

Lisa - In conjunction with Forterra. No departmental input yet on this strategy.

Lisa - The HFP is a good way to get involved. There are stewards that are trained and have scheduled work parties. Additionally, Surfacewater Management Division has Native Plant Program.

Tom - Do we have money to implement Forest stewardship plans?

Lisa - We do not. Also, we do not have money to continue the HFP after this year. There are conversations with the Land Conservation Initiative for funding.

OS 2 Strategy: Increase tree canopy coverage across county-owned land

Lisa - This is an opportunity to look across county-owned land to plant new trees where we see fit.

Suzy - Has there been any inventory/assessment to be a baseline for success? A forestry intern could be a low cost way to create this baseline.

Suzy - I know there was some free tools through the Forest Service that could be used as well.

Lisa - Snohomish County HFP website has information on surveying.

Tom - Should we be taking this to a more detailed level?

Lisa - This is something we should all consider. We will be doing a county-wide action plan. Since county has limited resources, maybe we should think about tree planting county-wide as opposed to only county facilities. If there is something on this list that shouldn't be implemented (for the sake of most impactful actions) then we can add them to the county-wide plan.

Tom - It is our job to point out how realistic this can be and what the county can achieve/do.

Lisa - Update - Potential new committee member to help represent underrepresented communities.