

## Renewable Energy Advisory Council Agenda

### Virtual meeting via Zoom

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

**To join the Zoom meeting, you will need to register in advance:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/tZIsf-GvrjorE9AamVDNp9ipJGuJ2TVZb4CN>

**After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.**

- 9:30 Welcome and announcements**
- New RAC member welcome
- 9:35 In-progress Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan for 2022** *(presentation)*  
Staff will provide an update and request input into development of Energy Trust's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan for 2022. The plan builds from the organization's 2021 DEI operations plan, found here: <https://www.energytrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2021-DEI-Operations-Plan.pdf>.
- 10:00 Solar Ambassadors NREL Grant Funding** *(presentation)*  
Staff will present information on a grant application Energy Trust submitted to NREL in partnership with Verde, African American Alliance for Homeownership and several other CBOs. The project's education program will seed a network of BIPOC "Solar Ambassadors" -- trusted solar advocates who are rooted in their communities and can help their neighbors navigate the process of installing solar and related home improvements.
- 10:15 HB 3141 Information and Update** *(presentation)*  
OPUC staff will provide an update on implementation of HB 3141 which creates a 25% requirement for serving low- and moderate-income customers and expands the technologies the renewable energy sector can support.
- 10:30 Community Solar Program Feedback** *(presentation and feedback)*  
Staff will present key takeaways from discussions with low-income carve-out applicants in the Community Solar Program and will seek feedback on some program concepts for providing assistance to these applicants.
- 10:45 Municipal PRV Hydro Scoping Study** *(presentation)*  
Staff will present on the results of the recently completed Municipal Water Delivery System Pressure Reduction Value to Hydropower Scoping Study.
- 11:05 Board of Directors Recruitment** *(information)*  
The Energy Trust Board of Directors is recruiting for two members. Staff will review the recruitment announcement and request the RAC's help in promoting the opportunity and referring potential candidates. December 10 is the deadline for receiving applications through this online form <https://energytrust.org/board-nomination-form/>. Here is a link to the recruiting announcement: [https://energytrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Announcement\\_open-board-positions\\_11.05.2021.pdf](https://energytrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Announcement_open-board-positions_11.05.2021.pdf)
- 11:15 Public comment**

**11:30      Adjourn**

You can view this agenda and notes from previous meetings at: [energytrust.org/about/public-meetings](https://energytrust.org/about/public-meetings).  
If you have comments on meeting notes, please email [Alina Lambert](mailto:Alina.Lambert@energytrust.org).

The calendar for 2022 is still being worked on. We do not have a confirmed date for the next RAC meeting, but it is likely to be Wednesday, February 16 at 9:30.

# Memo

**To:** Renewable Energy Advisory Council  
**From:** Energy Trust renewable energy sector staff  
**Date:** November 17, 2021  
**Re:** Concept for Community Solar Program Technical Assistance

## **Background:**

Among other renewable energy program options, Portland General Electric, Pacific Power and Idaho Power customers can directly participate in renewable energy production through the Oregon Community Solar Program (ORCSP). It expands access to those for whom rooftop solar power is out of reach due to not owning their homes, inability or difficulty to pay for a roof-top system or simply not having an appropriate site for an installation. This subscription-based program allows customers to reduce their energy costs and impact on the planet.

Energy Trust of Oregon's Renewable Energy Sector supports community solar projects through its Community Solar Development Assistance incentives for project development as well as custom project incentives for construction. Separately, Energy Trust is part of the third-party ORCSP Administration team through a subcontract with Energy Solutions. The Oregon Public Utility Commission is the responsible state agency.

From here on, this briefing paper speaks to Energy Trust's role in terms of being the public purpose charge administrator for renewable energy funds, and not as sub-contractor to the ORCSP.

## **Problem:**

Developers of commercial solar projects have been able to site, develop and operate projects in the ORCSP due to their technical expertise; the financial benefits that large-scale projects offer through economies of scale; and flexibility, particularly regarding site location. The portion of the program available to large-scale private developers is fully allocated for tier one.

In contrast, there has been little uptake from smaller and community-led projects, for which the ORCSP has reserved capacity. Energy Trust conducted eight interviews with 10 respondents, all of whom investigated organizing community solar projects that would qualify for the program carve-out for small or community-led projects. The goal was to better understand the challenges that small-scale, community-led projects face and learn how Energy Trust might help these projects successfully move along the development path.

Those conversations confirmed several primary barriers:

1. Community-based organizations (CBOs), nonprofits and religious groups lack the expertise needed to navigate the project development and program administrative process, which is more complex than a traditional rooftop net-metering installation.
2. Community-based projects often struggle to identify sites with adequate solar capacity and grid characteristics for community solar, particularly in grid-constrained rural areas.

3. The smaller size of these projects prevents them from taking advantage of the economies of scale afforded to larger projects.

These factors have largely led to the inability of most small-scale, community-led projects to be developed, even with Energy Trust's financial assistance. This leads staff to believe that, in addition to providing incentives to help cover project costs and development, additional expertise and assistance is needed to realize the state's vision of having smaller community-based projects as part of the Oregon Community Solar Program.

**Proposed solution:**

Energy Trust proposes to provide CBOs, nonprofits and religious groups with several levels of assistance to familiarize them with the ORSCP process and development options, and better structure their projects. This assistance would include:

1. A handbook outlining the ORSCP, the development process and options for participation.
  - In addition to providing important information, this would create a shared frame of reference for all organizations involved in a specific project and would help organizations understand how they might proceed.
2. A coach who would assist potential project proponents – organizations that drive the development of a project – in moving through the process outlined in the handbook.
  - This would include helping the organization(s) decide on the role they want to play in a project and then assist them in moving forward. For example, an organization may decide it wants to fully develop a project and enroll participants; or it may choose to partner with a professional developer and limit its involvement to outreach and enrollment. It's also possible that after meeting with a coach, an organization may decide not to become involved at all.

Energy Trust proposes to try this high-engagement coaching model with 3-5 projects in 2022 and early 2023 to learn more about the barriers to projects and to test the value of this assistance. As staff develop the details of this proposed solution, the following topics will be explored:

- Coaching hours and per-project budget
- Variable scope and budget depending on project desires and needs
- Interaction with other offers (e.g., Community Solar Development Assistance)
- Organizations that can potentially provide coaching services
- Number of participating projects
- Program evaluation
- Addition of a cohort element for participant organizations

**Discussion questions for the Renewable Energy Advisory Council:**

1. What barriers do you see for small-scale community solar projects and how does this model address them?
2. What do you see as the benefits and potential problems for this proposal?
3. What adjustments would you recommend as we develop the details?





# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan for 2022

## Renewable Advisory Council

November 17, 2021

# Agenda

- Intention for today
- New approach to our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan
- Discussion
- Additional information:
  - [2021 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan](#)
  - [Progress to 2021 Plan](#)
  - [2018-2020 DEI Plan](#)
  - [2020 Results](#)



## Intention for today

- Share how this new plan will differ from the previous plans
- Get your thoughts on:
  - The development of the DEI Plan in 2022
  - Community engagement as a key focus area of the plan and accountability
  - Communicating and managing a plan that can evolve

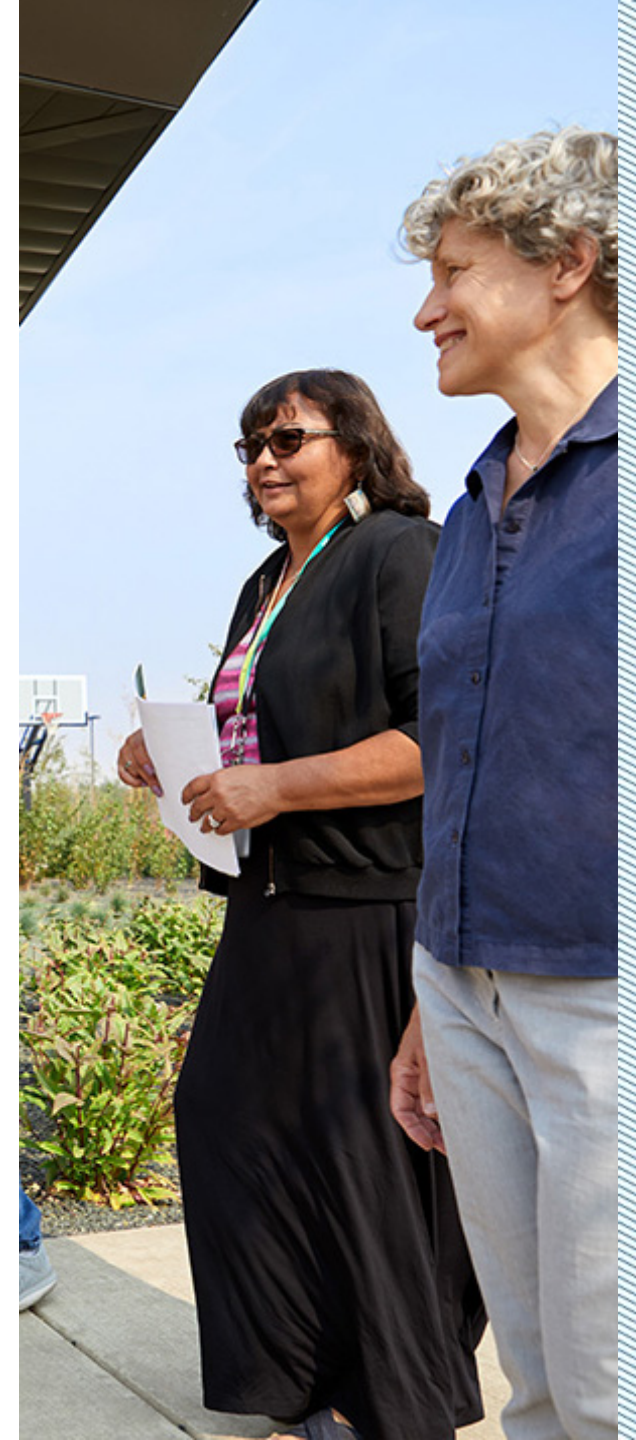
# 2021 DEI Operations Plan

## Current Plan

- Has set targets for 10 goals established for the 2018-2020 DEI Operations Plan

## 2021 Results (Progress as of Q2)

- On track to meet 18 of 22 targets
- Serving more residential customers with efficiency and affordable solar
- Learning from relationships with community-based organizations
- Launched summit series to hear from communities, customers and contractors
- Finalized Supplier Diversity Policy Statement and working on procuring a tracking system







## DEI Plan Update

- Current DEI Operations Plan concludes end of 2021
- Kicked off new plan development this summer with a series of summits
- Feedback leading to focus for 2022 on community engagement
- New plan will identify learnings from current plan, gaps and efforts that will continue
- Engagement over the next two months as we draft plan
- Plan will guide additional engagement in 2022 and be open to change based on what is learned

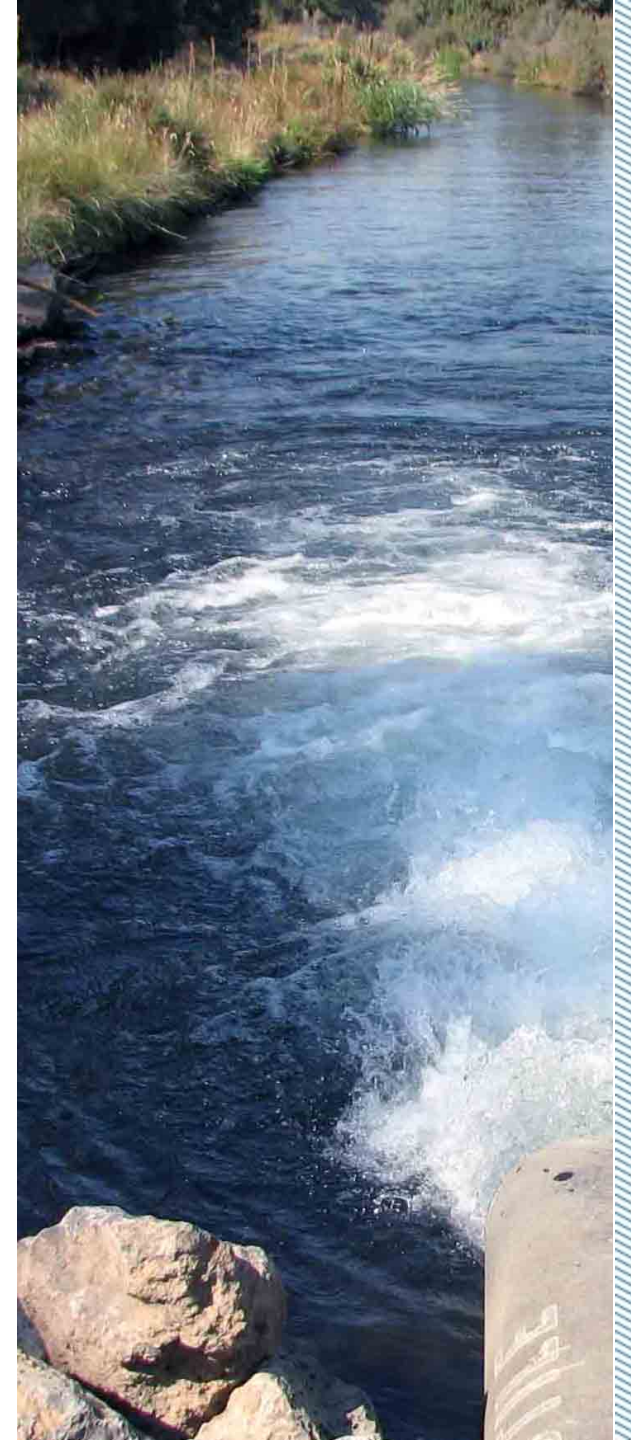
## New Approach for Plan in 2022

- Current plan defined where we would focus and set specific benchmarks to achieve
- Our initial ideas for new plan:
  - It should focus efforts on engagement and participation by community members and allow goals to be set based on community needs
  - It should focus on building trust and relationships with community members, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders so that we can work together toward mutually beneficial goals
  - It should offer flexibility so that input from communities, stakeholders and customers allows us to assess progress, and be willing to adjust when needed



# Initial Outline for Plan

- Why this plan
- How it came together (acknowledgements) and will be used
- History of DEI initiative and past plans
- Lessons so far
- Gaps that remain
- 2021 Summit findings
- Community engagement principles
- Who we will engage with and how
- Metrics, including those not related to engagement, e.g. internal staffing and retention, Supplier Diversity, etc.
- Timeline
- Reporting



# Discussion: Engagement Plan Development

- We are seeking your input on....
  - How can we be most impactful?
  - How do we know our engagement is successful?
  - How do we hold ourselves accountable?
  - Where should we aim to be by the end of 2022?
  - How do we develop community-informed or led programs or activities?



# Timeline

- Summer 2021 – Residential, Business, Tribal and Workforce Summits
- November 2021 – January 2022 - Engagement to develop DEI plan
- February 2022 – Approval of plan by Board
- 2022:
  - Engagement guided by plan, coordination with utilities and OPUC
- 2023:
  - DEI Plan updated to reflect 2022 engagement results and establish new goals and accountability for 2023 and beyond





# Thank You

2022 DEI Plan Team

Michael Colgrove and Tracy Scott – Sponsors

Quinn Parker – Project Manager

Team Members:

- Tyrone Henry – Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Lead
- Sue Fletcher – Outreach and Policy Manager
- Emma Clark – Outreach Manager, Communities of Color
- Abby Spegman – Communications Specialist
- Ryan Crews – Residential Program Manager
- Kate Wellington – Commercial Program Manager
- Matt Getchell – Renewables Project Manager
- Kirstin Pinit – Industrial and Agriculture Program Manager
- Alex Novie – Measure Development Manager

# Appendix



# Community Engagement Spectrum

## THE SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO OWNERSHIP

