



DATE: February 23, 2022

TO: Waste Management Authority and Energy Council

FROM: Candis Mary-Dauphin, Program Manager
Karen Kho, Principal Program Manager

SUBJECT: Update on Equity and Empowerment Initiatives

SUMMARY

In December 2020 the Board adopted long-term Aims and two-year Guiding Principles. Staff will present an overview of initiatives related to the Equity Aim and Guiding Principle and will discuss how equity has become a gateway to examining all of the Aims, with efforts pursued throughout the Agency's programs and activities. A link to the Board-adopted Aims and Guiding Principles is available here: <https://www.stopwaste.org/about-stopwaste/who-we-are/aims-and-guiding-principles>

DISCUSSION

The Aim "Hold social and racial equity at the center of our work" and Guiding Principle "Use an equity lens when designing, implementing and evaluating Agency operations and programs" were adopted at a time of growing staff and Board interest and commitment in advancing equity and exploring its connection to sustainability. The Agency's equity initiatives group into three main categories:

- *Continuous Learning:* Intended to increase overall awareness and understanding, this work includes staff trainings, brown bags, and discussion groups
- *Project Integration:* Applying an equity lens to project design and evaluation to help ensure that the Agency serves all community members
- *Capacity Building:* Developing practices such as strategic questioning, values identification and meeting agreements to foster an equity mindset that permeates all aspects of Agency operations

Specific examples of how staff have increased the reach and impact of projects through applying an equity lens to project design include:

- Improvements to the Agency's grant application, contracting processes, and outreach efforts to make the grant program more accessible to a broader range of organizations

- BayREN Multifamily partnering with Alameda County Asthma Start to prioritize populations more likely to experience positive health outcomes from building upgrades that improve indoor air quality
- Supporting new Food Waste Reduction grantees by adjusting deliverables based on their needs and capacity

At the February 23 meeting, staff will provide an overview of these and other examples of how Agency projects have utilized an equity lens, what we have learned, and how this work has supported all of the Aims. These experiences have led to the formation of an internal Project Resource Team that will serve as “coaches” in carrying this work forward.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for information only.