



DATE: March 22, 2023

TO: Waste Management Authority and Energy Council

FROM: Candis Mary-Dauphin, Program Manager

SUBJECT: Update on StopWaste Equity and Empowerment Initiatives

SUMMARY

In 2020, the Board adopted a set of six long-term Aims that help guide the Agency’s direction and strategy, as well as its programmatic work and budget development. Among those aims is holding social and racial equity at the center of our work. To support staff in aligning with this Equity Aim, the Agency established an Equity and Empowerment team comprised of a diverse group of StopWaste staff working across a range of projects and focus areas. In February 2022, staff updated the Board on the efforts pursued and provided specific examples on how staff had applied an equity lens to project design and implementation in order to increase the reach and impact of the Agency’s work. Staff will present an update on how the aim is now being applied as well an introduction to an Agency Equity Plan currently underway.

For reference, a link to the Board-adopted Aims is available here:
<https://www.stopwaste.org/about-stopwaste/who-we-are/aims-and-guiding-principles>

DISCUSSION

Staff acknowledges that the foundation of equity work – establishing meaningful connections with previously under-engaged communities – is a long-term ongoing effort. To direct this ongoing work and develop consistency around the approach and the way the Agency measures progress, the Equity & Empowerment team is developing an Equity Plan. The purpose of this plan is to support the Agency in making the shifts needed to align our culture, structure and activities with the aim of, “hold(ing) social and racial equity at the center of our work.” The plan is intended to guide the Agency in continuously expanding its current field of vision in a way that authentically values and respects the wholeness of people and communities – both internally and externally, so that we can unlock previously unseen opportunities and increase the impact of our work.

At the March 22 meeting staff will provide an overview of the Equity Plan and discuss how it fits into the context of the Agency's vision of an Alameda County in which people thrive, are resilient, and are empowered to utilize materials and energy in ways that are good for the health of our communities, our local economy, and the planet. Staff will also provide an example of how the Agency's equity work led to the redesign of the Bay Area Regional Energy Network's Multifamily program incentive structure -which now allocates higher levels of funding for energy upgrades providing multiple benefits in communities experiencing high health, heat, and housing affordability burdens.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for information only.