Climate Equity Checklist

This checklist was adapted from the equitable climate action recommendations developed by the Equitable Climate Action Team (formally the Just Transition Plan Committee) for the 2020 Climate Action Recommendations Report. The purpose of this checklist is to assist staff in expanding the impact of a City program. Although this checklist was designed for climate action, it can be applied to other City programs.

Before implementing a program, it is important to lay the groundwork for equitable and inclusive actions among those involved in the project.

- **Capacity Building:** Provide baseline information on climate action, equity, and equitable climate action to policymakers, city staff, stakeholders, and community members involved in this process.
- **Frontline Communities:** Focus on frontline communities most likely to be affected by crises of ecology, economy and democracy, but historically receiving the fewest benefits. This includes black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), displaced workers, households below 80% of the median income, households with children, LGBTQ+, mobile home communities, non-english speakers, older adults on fixed incomes, people experiencing homelessness, people with criminal records, people with disabilities, refugees, immigrants, undocumented immigrants, and renters. It is important to focus on frontline communities in climate action outreach and program development to ensure equitable and inclusive climate action.

Once the groundwork has been established, walk through the following sections in this checklist (not all sections or items may be relevant to your program):

- Data and Research
- Marketing and Outreach
- Program Access
- Equitable Access to Jobs
- Health and Safety
- Address Cost Burdens
- Community-based Programs
- Funding Mechanisms

This checklist is not an all-encompassing list of how to best incorporate equity but instead is designed to assist staff in thinking through ways to expand inclusion and participation in City programs.

Data and Research: Use available, new data sets and engage frontline communities to learn the following as they relate to the climate action:

- Community attitudes around the climate action.
- Community interests and motivations.
    - Why might someone want to participate in the program (e.g. level of concern about climate change, desire to save money, etc.)?
    - How might the climate action be adjusted to better meet the motivations of more residents and/or businesses?
    - Are there more important priorities in the residents' life (e.g. access to affordable housing) that take precedent over the climate action?
    - Can the climate action support the more important priority (e.g. is there a connection between the climate action and emergency assistance for families without housing)?
- Community access to resources.
- Interconnection between attitudes, interests, motivations, access to resources and climate action.
- Positive and negative impacts of current and future climate action on different frontline communities.
- Needs, gaps and inequities of current and future climate actions.
- When creating surveys, make sure you are receiving input from frontline communities

Marketing and Outreach: Expand the program or policy's reach to the entire community.

1. Build partnerships
    a. Engage cultural brokers to reach diverse populations.
    b. Set up a system of community navigators to assist communities in understanding the system (e.g., navigators for the bus system).
    c. Identify businesses, locations, non-profits, schools (K-12 and Front Range Community College), and places of worship (e.g., churches) to partner with in disseminating information.
2. Develop culturally relevant messaging
    a. Campaign messaging should be easy to understand and culturally relevant:
        i. What type of messaging inspires the group? Focus on positive messages and highlight that action does not increase burden.
        ii. Avoid direct messaging translation and prioritize more culturally appropriate translation.
        iii. Address stigma associated with the action.
    b. Start with frontline communities listed above – which communities with the most needs.
        i. Targeted Social Media (e.g., demographic or geographic targeting).
        ii. Radio and TV ads (e.g., wider audience, especially older adults).

    iii.   City Communications channel (e.g., utility bills, e-newsletters).
    iv.   Targeted door-to-door canvasing and neighborhood events with small giveaways (e.g., some neighborhoods may prefer a scheduled event rather than someone knocking on their door and vice versa).
    v.   Design outreach to the specific audience (e.g., design outreach that specifically targets youth and their families, instead of just general outreach for everyone).
    vi.   Develop incentives. For example, frequent users of the public transportation receive an appreciation or incentive.
    vii.   City employees should participate and promote climate action initiatives.

Program Access: Engage frontline communities and think through different scenarios of how individuals will engage with the climate action to identify potential barriers.

1. Consider the following potential barriers:
   a. Access to the internet, phones, and apps (i.e. the digital divide).
   b. Citizenship status and lack of documentation.
   c. Language barriers (e.g., different language, vision impairment, too technical, etc.).
   d. Situational differences (e.g., medical devices that must run all day long, a night job, ownership of the home or business, etc.).
   e. Economic barriers.
   f. Geographic barriers (e.g., access and costs to transport options).
   g. Others?
2. Consider how different scenarios impact access (see **Example Scenarios List**).

Equitable Access to Jobs: Consider the industries and workers that will be impacted by the climate action and develop workforce development programs to mitigate impacts.

1. Identify and engage workers that will be impacted by the climate action (e.g., oil and gas workers, car dealerships).
2. Identify job and training opportunities for displaced workers.
3. Develop internships, certificates and workforce development programs:
   a. Partner with local organizations (e.g., Boulder County Workforce), schools, and vocational programs.
   b. Engage frontline communities and impacted workers.
   c. Develop long-term career development paths to support long-term growth and skill development.
   d. Identify barriers to completing and participating in certificate programs (e.g., access to healthcare, childcare, citizenship status, disability, etc.).
   e. Design applications that are simple and accessible to those with any educational level.

Health and Safety: Identify, understand and improve health and safety issues related to the climate action.

1. Speak with participants and use data (e.g., crime statistics, respiratory hospitalizations) to identify health and safety issues.

2. Consider levels of perceived safety. For example, If a transportation route, home, business, or other area is not perceived to be safe and healthy, then participants are not going to want to participate in the climate action.
3. Consider participants' ability to improve their own health and safety. For example, rental unit tenants do not always have the ability or access to improve the health and safety of their home.

Address Cost Burdens: Work with frontline communities and low-income households to understand if high upfront costs or current high bills and other important expenses are barriers to participate in the climate action.

- Are there assistance programs or other programs that this climate action can partner with?
- Are there programs that should be implemented first to reduce the cost burden (e.g. Focus on energy efficiency upgrades before electrification)?
- How will the cost burden pass from landlords to renters?
- Is the cost of the program a barrier?

Community-based Programs: When appropriate, build self-reliance and access to resources within communities and neighborhoods.

1. Consider resources at a neighborhood level.
2. Develop and support programs that support community reliance on a family or neighborhood level (e.g., the Sustainable Neighborhood Solutions program).

Funding Mechanisms: Identify alternative funding mechanisms for climate action.

1. Focus serving frontline communities, list at the top of the document.
2. Apply for grant funding and partner with local businesses and foundations.
3. Sample ideas:
   a. Develop community-based programs (e.g., resident/business helping resident/business donation program; products or financial).
   b. Develop "pay as you can" or "adopt a…" programs.
   c. Consider optional fees on the utility bill to pay for programs.
   d. Focus on corporate responsibilities programs or industries that have foundations or grant programs or polluter-pay programs
   e. Partner with non-profit organizations that have climate as a target or mission.

Example Scenarios List

As referenced in the Program Access Section above, the following are examples of how to consider different scenarios when identifying ways to improve program access.

Example One, bus service

What are some different ways that someone could use the bus? And how can the bus program be improved to meet these different scenarios?

- To the grocery store
- To work
    - What time of day do they work?
    - Where do they work?
- For fun or to visit family or friends
- In an emergency
- Travel within or outside the City of Longmont

Example Two, Commercial Building System Retrocommissioning (RCx)

- Does the business own the building?
- If leasing:
    - Is the business owner responsible for the building systems?
    - What type of lease does the business have? If triple-net, will upgrades be reflected in actual costs or will the building owner be the beneficiary?
    - Does the business owner have a good relationship with the building owner?
- How does the business owner usually learn about programs and resources? Reference the Marketing and Outreach and Cultural Broker list for example ideas. Also, consider the different barriers stated in the Program Access question section.
- Does the business owner have staff available to dedicate to the process (study, decision-making, and implementation capital)?
- Are there emergency situations that would cause a business to use this program? (weather, financial, etc.)?
- Are there any emergency situations in which the business would be adversely affected because they are participating in the program?
- How would a business with limited funds access the program?