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## DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES ADVISORY GROUP EQUITY FRAMEWORK UPDATE

### Discussion questions:

- *Who is this for and what's the use case for it?*
  - *Who can refer to this for guidance in the event we can't talk about it in a meeting or a SME*
  - *Should this framework allow us to cut and paste when we need to write a letter*
- *What still feels relevant?*
- *What needs to change?*
  - *Is there's language/context within the framework that needs to be updated because language is out of date*
- *What's missing?*
  - *Areas tied to our priority areas?*
    - *Affordability*
    - *Non-energy benefits*
    - *Community engagement and participation (maybe this can replace economic development - it's a better descriptor of what's already there)*

### Considerations:

- *Should the framework help us filter what topics come to our full meetings and/or SME*
- *Open docket for feedback? Prioritize feedback from DACAG and groups representing most impacted communities. However, some feedback might not be currently relevant, be applicable to this framework or might need further discussion. If this is the case, we can table the item and update the framework in the future.*
- *Where in the process should we engage topics?*
  - *Inception, development, implementation, analysis?*
  - *Many items come to us when once they are pretty much done, so if that the case, where we can influence the outcomes*
  - *Bring items where we can be thought partners in development (because the initial strategy failed or staff are having a hard time finding the right approach).*
    - *Preference would be to focus discussions on these agenda items rather than just providing feedback on items that have already been baked and almost ready to be implemented - we embrace failure or challenges as an opportunity to learn and try new things!*
- *Once this framework is complete, how do we build a practice of using them and referring to them - in agenda-setting, full meetings, SME meetings, etc.*

### Timeline:

- *April 2024*
  - *Discuss new process to move update forward*
- *May 2024*
  - *Provide update on progress and if ready, present draft for discussion*
  - *Open docket for public comment*

- June 2024
  - Vote on final draft

## POTENTIAL NEW STRUCTURE

1. Introduction
  - a. Who we are, what this is and who this is for (reference the charter and any other relevant documentation)
2. Definition
  - a. ESJ definition
  - b. What are we bound to (SB 350)
  - c. Language around our thoughts on the use of the term disadvantaged
  - d. Alignment with ESJ
3. Principles
  - a. Identify the ones that are in the charter
    - i. \*\*\*might not be able to update since it would require updating the charter
4. Framework
  - a. This is the lens that staff and others should look at
  - b. Include a set of questions that they should always ask themselves before making decision
    - i. Who is impacted
    - ii. How are they impacted
    - iii. Who benefits and who might be harmed?
    - iv. Who is at the table and gotten input from?
    - v. What stage are you in the process?
      1. Beginning and we can influence, great
      2. If at the back end, maybe not top priority
  - c. After these questions, here are some other things you should take into consideration based on each of these sections?
  - d. Sections
    - i. Health and safety
    - ii. Access and education
    - iii. Financial benefits
    - iv. Economic development
      1. \*\*\*Should Workforce Development replace economic development
    - v. Consumer protections
    - vi. Affordability
    - vii. Non-energy benefits
      1. \*\*\*knowing how important this has been to the DACAG, does this need to be a separate section with more detail?
    - viii. community engagement, outreach, and participation
    - ix. 10. Quality & Reliability
5. Metrics, evaluation and measurement

- a. Guidance on how to make sure that evaluation is not at the end, but through the implementation, adapt and adjust
  - b. Setting up clear equity requirements upfront
6. Review framework on an annual basis

## **EXISTING LANGUAGE**

The impact of climate change on low-income and disadvantaged communities can exacerbate existing inequities but can also be an opportunity to level the playing field through intentional interventions that address climate impacts on these communities directly.

The Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group would like the State to adopt an Equity Framework to work in conjunction with the Guiding Principles of the Advisory Group set forth in the Charter of the Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group. The Equity Framework can be applied across all climate related policies, bills, proceedings, requests for proposals, etc. to ensure that equity is front and center when considering any climate investment/intervention in the State.

This Equity Framework is intended to guide the Advisory Group as it moves forward in discussing and commenting on various proceedings and programs before the CPUC and CEC ensuring that access and adequate resources reach the implementation stage and benefit communities in a meaningful and measurable way. This is the second draft of this document that incorporates all comments made at the August 21 Advisory Group meeting.

### ***DEFINITION OF DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES***

As defined in the Energy Equity Indicators tool, the Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group (DAC AG) will adopt as the definition and advocate for equitable programming to reach all of the following communities (including community residents, workers, and businesses):

- CalEnviroScreen, as defined by Cal EPA,
- Tribal Lands,
- Census tracts with area median household income/state median income, less than 80%, and
- Households with median household income less than 80% of Area Median Income (AMI).

### ***FRAMEWORK***

#### **1. Health & Safety**

Energy policies and programs should be observed through the lens of public health to identify impacts and utilize findings to optimize the health and well-being of California's most vulnerable communities, as well as, advance health interventions related to climate change by educating Disadvantaged Communities about disproportionate health impacts related to climate change and providing ways to value health benefits and impacts, build resiliency, mitigate climate related illnesses, injury and deaths and reduce climate related healthcare costs.

## 2. Access & Education

Access and Education are key to ensuring that Disadvantaged Communities benefit from clean energy technologies, energy efficiency, and other environmental investments by 1. focusing on special outreach efforts, 2. ensuring that these interventions are applicable and that the communities' interests and needs are represented, and 3. communities receive culturally relevant and sensitive education to prepare for climate resilience. The Advisory Group strives to remove barriers to participation, as identified in the SB 350 Barriers Report and other barriers, through means such as training, funding and support for CBO and educational institutions rooted in disadvantaged communities, ensuring community based businesses are competitive in solicitations, adequate information is disseminated regarding careers and education, and tracking and evaluating progress of such efforts is necessary for these interventions to be successful.

## 3. Financial Benefits

All investments in clean energy technologies, energy efficiency, and other environmental investments, should benefit all disadvantaged communities directly providing financial benefits, incentives and cost savings while also considering affordability and rate impacts.

## 4. Economic Development

Climate policies and programs should invest in a clean energy workforce by ensuring California has a trained and ready workforce prepared to improve our infrastructure and built environment as well as bring green technologies to market by: 1. promoting and funding workforce development pathways to high-quality careers in the construction and clean energy industries, including pre-apprenticeship and other training programs, 2. Setting and tracking hiring targets for low-income, disadvantaged, and underrepresented populations (including women, re-entry, etc.) to enter these industries, 3. ensuring that these careers are high-road, with a career-ladder, family-sustaining wages and with benefits, 4. training the next generation of climate leaders and workers for the clean energy economy, and 5. supporting small and diverse business development and contracting.

## 5. Consumer Protection

Climate related policies and programs should not create incentives for predatory lending or exploitation of communities for financial gain. Programs should have adequate consumer protection measures, disclosures, and accountability measures to ensure that financially vulnerable customers are not taken advantage of or otherwise compromised.