

Community Engagement and Climate Justice Working Group, Climate Change Advisory Committee
March 5th, 2025
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Subject: Recruiting Additional LRT Sub-Committee Advisors in Order to Facilitate Consideration of Climate Justice

Review of the four proposed governance options for the recruitment of additional LRT Sub-Committee Advisors:

Option 1: Recruit Additional non-voting Community Advisors to the LRT Sub-Committee

- Recruitment of Non-Voting Community Advisors is limited to 6. It is important to note that there are 10 Frontline Communities listed, and the diversity within these communities cannot be sufficiently represented by only 6 individuals.
 - Increasing the cap to 10 advisors would allow for better representation and coverage of the diverse Frontline Communities
 - No evidence that a cap of 6 advisors is “best practice” for engagement.
 - This forum can be intimidating and a potential barrier to participation from persons who haven’t had experience serving on committees or boards, and therefore not reflective of the diversity that is needed on the LRT Sub-Committee
 - These representatives do not have real power.
 - Non-voting status might affect their level of engagement.
 - Compensate non-voting members.

Option 2: Establish a Working Group

- While working groups can meet at their convenience, their effectiveness depends on members’ commitment. Active scheduling and engagement strategies are necessary to maintain high participation levels.
- The success of a working group in retaining members will depend on the perceived impact of their work and the support provided to them.
- Working groups have a step-removed influence since they report to the LRT Subcommittee. However, well-documented reports and recommendations can still significantly impact decisions.
- Working groups often meet regularly, which requires advisors to commit a significant amount of time to attend these meetings.

- Advisors are often responsible for drafting reports, summarizing discussions, and documenting decisions. This administrative work can be extensive.
- Working groups may require advisors to conduct research on specific topics, analyze data, and develop recommendations. This research can be time-consuming and demands a high level of expertise.
- Multiple workgroups might be needed to address various focus areas within the LRT project, such as environmental impact, community engagement, and technical aspects. Each group would require specialized knowledge and expertise.
- Having multiple workgroups means that advisors with expertise in multiple areas might be involved in several groups simultaneously, leading to a higher overall workload.
- The barriers to participation and high workload might lead to low levels of diversity representation, and high levels of burnout.
- Compensate non-voting members.

Option 3: Recruit additional Non-Voting Community Advisors to LRT Sub-Committee and establish Working Group in future if deemed necessary

- Non-voting advisors can participate actively, but their engagement might be influenced by their non-voting status.
- While non-voting advisors cannot directly influence votes, their input can still significantly impact discussions and decisions. The success of this option depends on how well their contributions are valued and integrated into the decision-making process.
- This option supports procedural equity by including diverse voices in the advisory process. It aligns well with the Climate Justice Framework, ensuring that climate justice considerations are integrated into LRT decisions.
- If needed, a working group can be established in the future based on the effectiveness and feedback from the non-voting advisors.
- Questions: Is there flexibility to the number of advisors as 6 advisors is not enough to capture the diversity in the community for an LRT sub-committee
- Compensate non-voting members.

Option 4: Strike a Task Force

- Representation of frontline communities and marginalized groups in the advisory process
- Establishing a Task Force can effectively enhance inclusivity by involving representatives from frontline communities and marginalized groups. This option ensures that diverse voices are formally included in the discussions.
- Task Forces typically have a strong influence on decision-making processes. Their structured approach and formal reporting mechanisms ensure that their input is considered in the LRT Sub-Committee's decisions.

- Alignment of LRT Sub-Committee actions with the Climate Justice Framework, ensuring that climate justice considerations are systematically integrated into LRT decisions.
- The formal nature of a Task Force can enhance community trust and support. Regularly seeking and addressing community feedback can further strengthen this relationship.
- Compensate non-voting members

We like this option, and suggest the following to create a task force that would enhance consideration of climate justice:

- Ensure that Task Force meetings are scheduled at various times, including evenings and weekends, to accommodate community members who may have daytime commitments.
- Make it more accessible for new advisors by simplifying the application process and providing clear, easy-to-understand guidelines for participation.
- Offer resources and support for volunteer members, such as training and logistical support for attending meetings.
- Actively engage with frontline organizations and residents to ensure diverse representation on the Task Force. This could involve targeted outreach efforts and partnerships with community groups.
- In addition to formal Task Force meetings, establish informal spaces (e.g., community forums or workshops) where community members can discuss issues and provide input in a more relaxed setting.
- Provide behind-the-scenes information to the community to enhance transparency and build trust.
- Strive to get input and participation at the neighborhood level to ensure grassroots perspectives are included.