Sounding the Call for Community Climate Shift

Strategic Compass

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Project Vision

What do we want to be true in 5 years as a result of this investment?

Building Equity in Climate Solutions (BECS)[1] envisions the end of the climate crisis through a Just Transition.[2] Towards that vision, in the next five years, frontline organizations and coalitions in more than three dozen places are expanding frontline community[3] control of resources. They are equipped with the funds and capacity to drive collaborations with government that reduce emissions in the built environment while redressing systemic racial inequalities and advancing frontline community priorities.

Note: This content was collaboratively developed by the partners and participants in this project and is still a work in progress as the Strategic Compass is a living document that guides our work.

1 Building Equity in Climate Solutions (BECS) is the smaller group of the Sounding the Call participants who co-developed this strategic compass by which the planning and implementation of Community Climate Shift is guided by.

2 Just Transition: A set of unifying principles and practices supporting a just society has shifted from an extractive economy to a waste-free, regenerative economy. It must be equitable and must redress past harms. Its process must be just, or the outcome will not be. (Climate Justice Alliance definition).

3 Frontline Communities: Frontline communities are the communities experiencing the first and worst of climate change consequences, specifically those most impacted by the energy system and the resulting pollution. Frontline communities include, but are not limited to communities of color, low-income communities, indigenous communities, and communities surrounded by extractive energy production. Historically harmed communities; black, indigenous, people of color, low-income, the elderly, disabled, the detained, formerly incarcerated, youth, immigrants, veterans, renters, unhoused, women and LGBTQIA+ communities that we all work to uplift. Renters; multi-family housing, housing projects, transitional housing, etc.

Project Purpose

What unique role does this collaboration play in advancing the vision?

Develop and enact an aligned strategy and evolve it grounded in the Just Transition Framework to direct funds to ensure frontline organizations and coalitions have the capacity to lead partnerships with government to reduce emissions while advancing BIPOC community priorities for climate equity and justice.

- Short term strategies: navigating constraints of how money flows to BIPOC communities by organizing trusted, values-aligned orgs that can manage and distribute funding and capacity building resources to frontline organizations directly practicing community-owned infrastructure

- Long term strategies: how we leverage that money to get more funding for this work

Principles and Practices (Methodology to Practice)

- What fundamental values, or propositions, asserted by grassroots efforts must form the foundation of this initiative?

- What specific practices (related to decision-making, capacity-building, resourcing, etc.) will help us put the vision, purpose, priorities, and principles into action?

COLLABORATION

- Share resources

- Leverage resources and share leveraging strategies

- Build case studies

- Storytelling and communications

- Inclusive, shared decision-making

- Organizing

- Coalition building

- Bridging strategies between communities and built environment sector

- Strategic partnering

- Expanding conversations, insisting on other community partners in the room

- Working with unions, worker centers, tenant rights organizations, affordable housing advocates, legal aid/law centers, community groups etc. to identify loopholes, enforcement issues, and policies and provide education on the health impacts of benefits of clean energy .

- Operate from abundance, not scarcity (zero sum)

- Full transparency and accountability

- Ask what and who is missing

LANGUAGE & ACCESSIBILITY JUSTICE	· Liberating language that is grounded in respect and deference in view of lived experiences · Translation and interpretation services · Accessible language in presenting technical information · Breaking things down in ways that people can relate to (i.e no more technical presentations that are unclear) · Minimizing technical and institutional acronyms · Letting everyone speak for themselves · Asking communities what they need to engage and providing it understanding needs vary and can be emergent (language, childcare, care taking, compensation, mental health, etc.) · Food and drink provisions · Resource community members beyond stipends but with capacity to engage over time: money/salaries, transportation, childcare, food, bill relief, internet/phone stipends , etc. · Community outreach at high levels and prioritizing underserved and vulnerable (i.e. youth, seniors) communities · Authentic community involvement all the way from the beginning (procedural equity) · Community meetings first, removing barriers to participation · Seeking out the people who need the help · Provide space for community stakeholders to dream · Provide accurate information · Dispel common myths and mis-information and use real-world examples · Practice persistence

LANGUAGE & ACCESSIBILITY JUSTICE	• Engage and provide community with resources on how to use existing legal tools
	
	• Expand conversations, insisting on other community partners in the room
	
	• Communicate relevant issues and solutions
	
	   > IF in-person engagement: consideration of timeframe, locations, meals, COVID protections, what are people sacrificing to be there and participate?
	
	   > IF online/technology-supported engagement, consideration for who does not have consistent broadband/WIFI and/or access to technology hardware–computers, laptops, smart phones, media, and familiarity/comfort-levels with use of technology

BUILDING TRUST	• Address early on trust issues when working with community members • Bring people along by working with them to enable them to identify what matters to them • Navigate bureaucratic silos by building trust with those in the rooms and delivering on promised actions • Practice persistence and patience • City/gov officials listen, make themselves available and actually implement priorities • Do not allow community members to be rushed, silenced, or dismissed by a "sense of urgency/expediency/checking the box" by governmental, institutional, or other stakeholders • Making space for grief, emotional support and care within our movement spaces • Allow or suggest networks or coalitions set aside some funding to support time and effort for this trust building • Full transparency and accountability • Welcoming and consideration for all voices

COMMUNITY EXPERTISE, LEADERSHIP, AND GOVERN	• Community governance [4] • Community oversight [5] • Community involvement [6] • Community benefits [7] • Participatory decision-making • Community led regulatory design and decision making i.e. providing financial opportunities for community members via employment and participation stipends for their expertise and work • Embed community priorities directly into the policy • Community-led/informed Program Design and Implementation • Identify who has power, build people power, power mapping • Move towards shared-power and leadership towards community-led engagement to Ownership (ala the Spectrum) • Multi-stakeholder engagement • Regular (weekly meeting) with base and city staff/gov't with the city staff/gov't presenting representatives who have decision-making authority Expand conversations, insisting on other community partners in the room • Storytelling • Provide space for community stakeholders to dream and finding ways to realize ideas into action

[4] Community governance: a multi-stakeholder practice (government, business, funders, community groups, residents, etc.) to work together and share power to reach consensus based decisions.

[5] Community oversight: community representatives ensuring accountability in planning, implementation and decision-making (progress, challenges, recommendations).

[6] Community involvement: individuals/communities in a place or effort have the opportunity to actively participate and inform decision-making.

[7] Community benefits: communities have access to the social, political and economic benefits of a place in ways that meet or exceed their basic needs and human rights to thrive.

RACIAL JUSTICE, EQUITY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Addressing utility debt-bills, including immigrants and other low income communities.

- Have the dominant social group support and encourage the leadership of BIPOC led involvement

- Storytelling

- Center those directly impacted disproportionately and most cumulatively

- Be explicit about harmed and impacted communities

- City staff/gov't will be accountable by: meeting agreed upon deadlines, showing up at scheduled meetings ready to Listen more/ talk less, timely returned calls and emails,timely producing documents and information, delivering on promises and providing reasons why it cannot engage in the aforementioned conduct.

- Full transparency

- **Make violators pay for noncompliance and make sure these funds go to those most impacted**

    > Ex. instead of the EPA giving small, one step further and say "Polluters may be held accountable for cleaning up their messes beyond fines and with the toxic clean-up in hazmat suits, pay reparations for the health harms they have caused to Low Income and BIPOC communities

- Pushing back against false solutions (nuclear, offsets)

- Accept no checkmarks

- Holding firm bottom lines

- Identify who has power, build people power, power mapping

RACIAL JUSTICE, EQUITY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY	- Regular meetings as capacity allows (weekly, twice/month, etc.) with base and city staff/gov't understanding that can vary - Codify equity in BPS by integrating fair housing act in the ordinance - City/gov officials listen and actually implement priorities, and if unable to do so, agree to determine with collaboratives, acceptable alternatives. - Expanding conversations, insisting on other community partners in the room - Do no harm - Money moves directly to grassroots or trusted intermediaries - Community-led planning, design, implementation, and decision-making, accountable to the communities they serve, with govt and traditional institutional larger partners in more of a resource support, TA, data provider, and capacity-building role
VISIONARY INTERSECTIONALITY	- Comprehensive, bottom-up approach to the problems we face and solutions we need, not jumping to a trending business-as-usual market-based policy approach (i.e. BPS) - Talk about energy burden to talk about bldg standards - Talk about relevant issues and connections - Transformative work - Highlight reclaimed buildings that benefit communities as a needed outcome rather than focus on energy reduction - Storytelling - Create long term family-sustaining jobs & intergenerational wealth - Support long term job advancement; thinking of what jobs already exist within BIPOC communities and building them into the need/vision.

VISIONARY

INTERSECTIONALITY

- Meet communities where they're at. Ex: develop/establish real partnerships that respect different kinds of expertise -- both technical and lived experience by working with them to understand what matters to them

- Provide space for community stakeholders to dream

- Talk about buildings, housing justice, health, energy democracy, and climate justice and their interconnections

- Allow for healing and the transformation of lives and livelihoods of those most harmed by extractive industries while resourcing the communities to transform their own built environments (where people live, work, learn, and play, especially in the public realm) to beautiful, healthy, affordable, high performance, zero carbon, regenerative and resilient communities

- Community ownership in their solutions to social, economic, environmental and education/health/well-being issues

- Build community resilience in both people and place

Priorities

What specific priorities are we seeing across frontline communities that we want to ensure this effort advances? How does this inform the priorities of this collaboration?

EQUITY

- Easier career placements in Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) centric org to prevent traumatic workplace harms

- Energy bills/burden/access/EE/energy independence-democracy - address what matters to people

- Workplace/Minority and Business Enterprise (MBE) and development + advancement

- Uplifting women and youth in education; equal pay especially for care workers and green jobs

- Safeguards for tenants and low-income homeowners who may be impacted negatively from BPS, or other unintentional consequences of decarbonization or gentrification

- Creating Highroad jobs

- Enforcement of existing environmental protections and equal civil rights

- Equitable building decarbonization

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

- Breaking down barriers to participation

- Outline an accountable practice (conditions for engagement when collaborating with local government

- Build strong coalitions

- Working to inform and engage base

TARGET UTILITIES/FOSSILY FUEL INDUSTRY/ENERGY JUSTICE

- Put pressure on utilities to be accountable to communities

- Learn how to advocate as a community with Utilities Commissions [include local government]

- 1:1 community engagement

- Storytelling

- Educate communities on complex frameworks and operational programs of utilities and the current energy systems

- Emphasize and move toward Energy Democracy

- Educate communities on Energy Democracy and what it can mean to them in their context (i.e. that it is possible for them to get off gas/oil/propane, generate and own their own renewable energy, and greatly reduce their utility bills)

LAND STEWARDSHIP, BUILDING OWNERSHIP, COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

- Reparations, land return and community land trusts to build community ownership/power as well as indigenous rematriation

- Put pressure on landlords to be accountable to communities

- Address gentrification without harmful displacement and how to allow development while also protecting BIPOC community members' land and wealth.

  > Finding ways for BIPOC communities to not experience gentrification while also enjoying community improvements; such as sidewalks, parks, greenways, bike lanes, etc. An idea might be to freeze property taxes for historic BIPOC members.

- Talk about investments in the public realm

INFRASTRUCTURE (PHYSICAL, STRUCTURAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, CULTURAL)

- Publicly reclaiming community resilience hubs

- Microgrids + battery storage for emergency power and community-owned distributed energy generation

- Community solar

- Decarbonization and democratization of our existing built environment and systems of energy, water transportation, food and communications

- Universal free broadband/equitable access to internet connectivity

- Decarbonized and equitable public transportation

- Safe streets/routes to schools, Human-powered mobility options

- No urban heat islands / access to cooling centers, shade trees

- Green infrastructure (nature-based stormwater management/flood protections)

- Clean drinking water systems

- No outdoor or indoor air pollution, especially protecting vulnerable populations like children, seniors, or folks with disabilities

- Community emergency planning / mutual aid

- Safe, Community public spaces–both open spaces like parks, community gardens,   and indoor, like teen, senior centers, free libraries

- Regenerative urban agriculture/ community farms

- Preservation and support of local community assets such as schools, mom-and-pop businesses, groceries/ restaurants, banks, green open space

Places

Where do we see or experience work to reduce emissions while advancing the priorities of frontline communities?

MIDWEST

- Rural Minnesota

- Minneapolis/St. Paul

NORTHEAST

- Boston

- New York

- New Jersey

- Philadelphia

- DC

PACIFIC NORTHWEST

- Oregon (Eugene, Portland)

- Seattle

SOUTH

- Atlanta

- Texas

- Mississippi

- New Orleans

SOUTHEAST

- Florida

- Baltimore

- Orlando

SOUTHWEST

WEST

People

What are the critical roles and capacities needed to ensure frontline organizations and coalitions have the resources, tools, T.A. and capacity needed to lead partnerships with government to reduce emissions?

What presently exists in frontline organizations and coalitions that are reducing emissions and/or climate work?

ROLES

- Advisors
- Agitators
- Alliances/Coalitions/Networks
- Building Trades/Labor
- Caretakers
- Community Banks
- Convenors
- Culture keepers/preservers
- Decisionmakers

- Artists/ Graphic Designers
- Built Environment/ Sustainability Technical Advisors & Design Practitioners/ Technical Resources
- Facilitators
- Financers
- Funders & Fiscal Sponsors
- Fundraising, Market Policy, Legal or Academic Resources/Data/Research Technical Experts
- Grassroots Organizers
- Implementers
- Intermediaries / Community Engagement
- Interveners
- Legal Council
- Policy makers/Influencers
- Researchers
- Storytellers
- Strategizers
- Workforce Trainers & ImplementationCapacity Builders
- Translators/Interpreters
- Workforce Contractor Training Support
- Youth Organizing
- Education, Communication and Outreach Partners

Structures

What structures are needed to organize this network and ensure resources flow to the right people?

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE MODELS

- Design, Engineering, And Construction Trades

- Finance

- Funds

- Intermediaries/ Community Engagement

- Legal Council

Leaps

- Think bigger than the box of oppressive systems and extractive coalition spaces

- Abundance and strategic alignment

- Not be limited by what is feasible – be audacious!

- Compassionate innovation

- Build trust with each other

- Get out of our own silos of expertise

- Shared learning

- Connection across all of the things that separate us. Mainly geographically location!!!

- Better connection with more BIPOC Sustainability practitioners

- Bridging govt with CBOs

- Encouraging a diversity of voices to be heard and building a shared culture of understanding

- A stronger sense of commitment to the whole, the purpose and the next steps coming out of this

- Define equity metrics that can be used for govt implementation

- Clear objectives and implementation of ideas to objectives. Clear directions on how to accomplish objectives.

- Clear steps

- Equity - Success on climate.

- Moving from a funder directed system of policy development to a community-led system

- Community led

- Connecting across communities to build resonant strategy

- Expanded collaboration

- Proactive grassroots vision, not reactive intervention/damage control

- Openness to doing this work at all levels of govt.

- Creative concepts for engagement

- Culture of care

- Authenticity

- Building attainable* of unified force between community labor gov. And more

- Develop accountability practice (beyond policy change)

- Collaboration/building solutions that reduce harm and get us closer to the world we want to see - no more trying to make capitalism/extractive systems better as the goal

- Move the needle on what is politically possible through storytelling, relationship building and "outside" actions such as demonstrations, sit ins, pickets, holding our own hearings, etc.

- Coordination to avoid big greens or academic institutions "shopping around" for a an equity partner without us knowing who else is being approached

- Identify definitions (which communities, and define"benefits") and/or alignment with Justice 40 and federal and state funding

- Prioritization of funding and ACTIONS

- Stop the waste of public monies now spent on perpetuating HARMFUL and distracting actions and SHIFT to fund Climate Justice, leveraging the Call

Longer-Term Process Review

FUNDRAISING

- $100M philanthropic call to action

- Community Climate Shift leverages WH National Building Performance Standards Coalition opportunity to prioritize piloting a community-led approach

PRE-PLANNING

- Convene partners and participants

- Co-develop strategic compass

PLANNING

- Refine and evolve strategic compass

- Apply strategic compass

- Plan coordinated strategies

- Strategic planning, leveraging and partners identification, etc.

FUNDRAISING

- Identify, organize, secure aligned investors, funders and other needed resources

- Support partners to move resources as needed

- Leverage alignment with federal and state /local funding

PLANNING/ IMPLEMENTATION

- Capacity-building

- Community engagements, Needs and assets assessments

- Community political and economic infrastructure

- Training

Longer-Term Process Review

- Strategic Implementation Planning

- Documentation

- Storytelling

- Replicability

- Case studies

SCALE RESOURCING STRATEGY

- Investment

- Infrastructure building

- Reinvestment

- Wealth building

- Sustained resources for place-based projects

- Ongoing peer learning and support