



**To: CC4CA Policy Committee**

**From: CC4CA Equity Working Group**

**Date: May 10, 2021**

**RE: Recommendations to Policy Group**

Developed by the CC4CA Equity Working Group: Michelle Finchum, Chair (City of Fort Collins); Lisa Knoblauch, Vice Chair (City of Longmont); Karen Kaminski (Town of Dillon); Jonathan Koehn (City of Boulder); Camille Pollan (City of Broomfield); Lilly Steirer (City of Edgewater); Collin Tomb (Boulder County)

**Bottom line:** The Equity Working Group recommends the following:

- Utilize the provided equity and climate justice definitions as a means of consistent reference.
- Utilize the equity evaluation questions outlined when making policy decisions.
- Consider the formation of a rapid response racial equity team to support members in equity evaluations.
- Update the CC4CA Policy Statement to remove what is currently #28 (and is marked as #29 in the current “Proposed Policy Statement Updates” document) and update the overarching General Policy Principles language.

## **Introduction**

The purpose of the ad-hoc Equity Working Group was to review the 2020 Pandemic Recovery Working Group (PRWG)’s three equity-related recommendations and to recommend a plan for implementation. This was done with an emphasis on reviewing and integrating existing resources and dovetailing with efforts occurring at other scales. This memo to the Policy Committee is our deliverable.

The three PRWG recommendations on equity include:

1. Develop a coalition-specific definition of equity and delineate how it relates to other priority concepts such as just transition and environmental justice.
2. Use that definition to develop a framework or tool to meaningfully evaluate equity considerations in CC4CA’s policy positions.

3. Determine appropriate next steps (such as piloting the framework in policy engagement processes, and engaging partners that have experience addressing equity in policy positions).

Although the PRWG 2020 Final Report included other equity recommendations, these three serve as the foundation for operationalizing equity in CC4CA's policy advocacy work.

This aligns with what has simultaneously been a growing operationalization of equity into CC4CA's work. The existing commitments and integrations include:

- The CC4CA Policy Statement includes explicit commitments to equity.
- The CC4CA Legislative Group explicitly considers equity when assessing bills.
- CC4CA is actively advocating for improved equity elements in the regulatory proceedings at the AQCC and other state rulemaking bodies.

The Equity working group convened three times from March to May of 2021 to follow through on equity recommendations from the 2020 PRWG.

**Background:** Recognizing the unprecedented impact of the pandemic on local and state governments, the CC4CA Board of Directors assembled the PRWG in the spring of 2020. Consisting of 16 individuals from 14 member communities, the PRWG convened four times during the summer of 2020 to develop response and recovery recommendations related to member needs, organizational health, policy advocacy and statewide leadership. The full set of 25 recommendations was assembled in a Final Report and presented to the CC4CA Board in October 2020. Since then, the Board, Executive Committee and Policy Committee have reviewed the Report, identifying a process for identifying and implementing priority recommendations. Operationalizing and centering equity is one of two areas prioritized for additional action. [Full report can be found here.](#)

## **PRWG Equity Recommendations**

### **1. Develop a coalition-specific definition of equity and delineate how it relates to other priority concepts such as just transition and environmental justice.**

Recommended definition:

Equity: When everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from, has the opportunity to thrive. This requires eliminating barriers like poverty and repairing injustices in systems such as education, health, criminal justice and transportation.

Equity applied to climate action:

\*Climate Justice: The acknowledgement that communities of color and low-income neighborhoods are disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis as a result of systemic racism and class discrimination both here and abroad. Climate justice supports a just transition for communities and workers away from a fossil fuel economy. By leading with race and prioritizing BIPOC communities and individuals that suffered the most from racist and discriminatory policies and outcomes, it focuses on making the necessary systemic changes to address the unequal environmental burdens on these communities as they are forced to adapt to a changing climate.

*\*Adapted from the Climate Justice Alliance*

Source: [Office of Health Equity](#)

## **2. Use that definition to develop a framework or tool to meaningfully evaluate equity considerations in CC4CA's policy positions.**

### **CC4CA Racial Equity Assessment Questions**

The set of questions identified as the racial equity assessment tool for CC4CA communities is designed for CC4CA and its member communities to better understand how to apply a racial equity lens to policies, priorities and budget decisions. We encourage CC4CA members to consider the following equity questions when making process, budget, activity and policy decisions, to help avoid disproportionate impacts on communities of color. These set of questions can also be applied to other underrepresented groups of people in our communities to ensure equity is the focus for all decisions regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status and abilities.

Progress must be swift and we acknowledge this is an imperfect tool. However, in order to minimize harmful impacts as much as possible, CC4CA members and committees are encouraged to utilize these questions to dive into a more nuanced and thoughtful dialogue with as much collaboration and inclusivity as is reasonable.

1. Who is impacted by this action negatively and positively?
2. How can we ensure that underserved populations benefit from this action and are unburdened by this action?
3. How can we use this action to meet the authentic and culturally appropriate needs of underserved populations and build their capacity?
4. How can we engage and empower underserved populations in the planning and implementation of this action?
5. How does this action foster relationship-building and trust with community partners?

Additional recommendation:

- Create a rapid response racial equity team to support local jurisdictions in using the equity assessment tool and their broader equity-based efforts
  - This rapid response racial equity team could potentially develop and maintain a library of resources, trainings and policies associated with advancing equity in our Colorado communities.

## **3. Determine appropriate next steps (such as piloting the framework in policy engagement processes, and engaging partners that have experience addressing equity in policy positions).**

In addition to the recommendations of consistent use of the equity definition, utilizing the equity evaluation questions and a rapid response team to assist in that evaluation, we recommend the two updates to the CC4CA 2021-2022 Policy Statement.

1. Recommend removing Policy Position #28 and incorporating that language into the General Policy Principles and definition of equity. We think a stand-alone policy statement is not as powerful as similar language within the general guiding principles.
  1. Policy Position #28 currently states: “Incorporate equity, accessibility, and just transition considerations into climate policies and actions.”
2. There are 5 General Policy Principles including an existing principle on equity. These guiding principles apply to all of the policy positions and guide the specific policies that CC4CA supports. We recommend the following language update.

Current language in the General Policy Principles (2020):

Prioritizing policies that put people at the center of decision-making, minimizing disparities in growing the clean economy, especially for historically marginalized communities, and enhancing equitable outcomes for all.

**Proposed Language in General Policy Principles (2021):**

**Prioritizing policies that put equity at the center of decision-making by addressing systemic environmental and governance inequities based on race and socioeconomic status and by justly transitioning and growing the clean economy.**

### **Next Steps**

The Equity Working Group presents recommendations outlined in this memo at the May 13, 2021 Policy Committee meeting for review and approval.

The Equity Working Group appreciates the CC4CA’s vision and leadership in creating this Working Group, as well as the opportunity to submit our findings for consideration. We believe that the recommendations in this memo provide an opportunity to embed equity into the work of CC4CA both from a process and an outcome perspective. We would also like to recognize that the work of equity is a long-term goal, and these are only starting steps. Embedding equity into processes and outcomes will be an iterative journey that will need to be periodically revisited. We recommend revisiting these recommendations in one year (May 2022).

Thank you,

**CC4CA Equity Working Group**

Michelle Finchum, Chair, City of Fort Collins  
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