

Joint Meeting of Vermont's Environmental Justice (EJ) Advisory Council & Interagency Committee

Wednesday, May 29th, 2024

10 am – 1 pm EST

This is a public meeting. This meeting is being recorded and will be uploaded to the Agency of Natural Resources' YouTube page and website.

Welcome

Vermont's Environmental Justice Advisory Council

Vermont's Environmental Justice Interagency Committee

**Civil Rights and Environmental Justice Unit, Vermont Agency
of Natural Resources**

Ashira A. Pelt, Senior Associate, Consensus Building Institute

**Environmental Protection Agency – New England,
Environmental Justice**

Community Members

Relational Community Agreements

1. **Be present with yourself and one another.** Be present with your body and feelings; if you need to take a break to take care of yourself, please do. Be present for one another by listening deeply.
2. **Calling in and calling out.** Assume best intent but attend to impact. We can stop things that are being said that are hurtful and be curious and create a space for learning (tools include using “oops”/”ouch” to indicate a pause is needed).
3. **Expect and accept non-closure.** We are unlikely to leave here feeling 100% ready to go, or to have everything on our agenda wrapped up, especially if we are committed to moving at the speed of trust.
4. **Center respect.** Be respectful, intentional, and work to build trust and create a safe and inviting space.
5. **Share verbal (and other) space mindfully:** consider the balance of taking and making space (“move up, move back”). Tools to do this include the acronym W.A.I.T (“why am I talking?”) and vocalizing support for another person’s comment without repeating the same points that have already been made.

Meeting Minutes & Agenda Approval

- **10:00 AM | Welcome & Introductions:** Consent to Community Agreements; Approve [December 18, 2023 Minutes](#); Approve May 29, 2024 Agenda
- **10:10 AM | Updates:** Core Principles of Community Engagement Public Comment Period, Civil Rights and Environmental Justice Complaint Summaries Report Response
- **10:25 AM | Realigning:** Why are we working towards Environmental Justice?
- **11:05 AM | Public Comment**
- **11:15 AM | Break**
- **11:20 AM | Regrounding:** What can we do?
- **12:20 PM | Public Comment**
- **12:30 PM | Retooling:** What tools do we need to be most effective?
- **12:50 PM | Closing:** Circle Backs, Questions, Next Steps, Close-out Reflections

Updates

- **Core Principles of Community Engagement**
 - Public Comment Period: **May 4 – June 14**
 - Can you get your community involved?
 - Would you like to be involved in the response process?
- **Civil Rights and Environmental Justice Complaint Summaries Report**
 - Advisory Council response **submitted May 15**
 - Covered Agency response **due August 14**
 - ANR will offer office hours to covered agencies

Realigning

Why are we here?

What is my personal motivation for being here?

Group Discussion

What mandates brought us here?

Vermont Environmental Justice Law (Act 154 of 2022)

- Address inequities
- Improve quality of living
- Usher a cultural shift
- Impact the future of Vermont

What societal pressures brought us here?

Mentimeter activity

Instructions

Go to

www.menti.com

Enter the code

3660 8643



Or use QR code



Environmental Benefits

Environmental Justice

Anthropocentric?

Public Comment

5-Minute Break

Regrounding

Modes of Influence

- **Community Engagement**
- **Distribution of Environmental Benefits**
- **Mitigation of Environmental Burdens**
- **Annual Agency Reporting**
- **Legislative Adaptation**

Important Dates

Community Engagement

- May 1 – June 14, 2024: **Core Principles of Community Engagement** public comment period (ANR)
- July 1, 2024: Finalization of the **Core Principles of Community Engagement** (AC and IAC)

Distribution of Environmental Benefits

- October 31, 2024: Finalization of **Environmental Benefits Spending Guidance** (ANR)
- May 31, 2025: Baseline **Environmental Benefits Spending** reports (CA)

Mitigation of Environmental Burdens

- July 1, 2024: Request for proposal for the **Environmental Justice Mapping Tool** (ANR)
- January 1, 2027: Finalization of the **Environmental Justice Mapping Tool** (ANR)

Important Dates

Annual Agency Reporting

- August 14, 2024: Covered agencies' **response** to Advisory Council response to the **Civil Rights and Environmental Justice Complaint Summaries Report**, if needed (CA)
- January 15, 2025: Annual **Environmental Justice Action Report** (CA)

Legislative Adaptation

- December 1, 2024: Review statutory **definition of Environmental Justice Focus Population** (EJFP) (AC & IAC)

Environmental Benefits Spending Guidance

Environmental Benefits Spending Guidance

This guidance is to:

- Outline what constitutes as an **environmental benefit**
 - Capture the **lived experiences** of communities
- Guide covered agencies on identifying **investments** that **provide** environmental benefits to Environmental Justice Focus Populations
- Identify **what needs to be included** in their Environmental Benefits Spending Reports

Environmental Benefits Spending Guidance

Environmental Benefits Definition:

- Means the assets and services that enhance the capability of communities and individuals to function and flourish in society.

Examples Include:

- Access to a healthy environment and clean natural resources, including air, water, land, green spaces
- constructed playgrounds, outdoor recreational facilities and venues; affordable clean renewable energy sources; public transportation
- cultural resources; environmental enforcement; and training and funding disbursed or administered by governmental agencies.

AC: What are specific examples from your community?

IAC: What challenges would addressing these issues pose?

How can we address these challenges?

Task Group: Environmental Benefits Spending Guidance

Weigh in on priorities and concerns regarding **equitable distribution** of environmental benefits for Environmental Justice Focus Populations.

Write guidance for covered agency **Environmental Benefit Spending Reports**

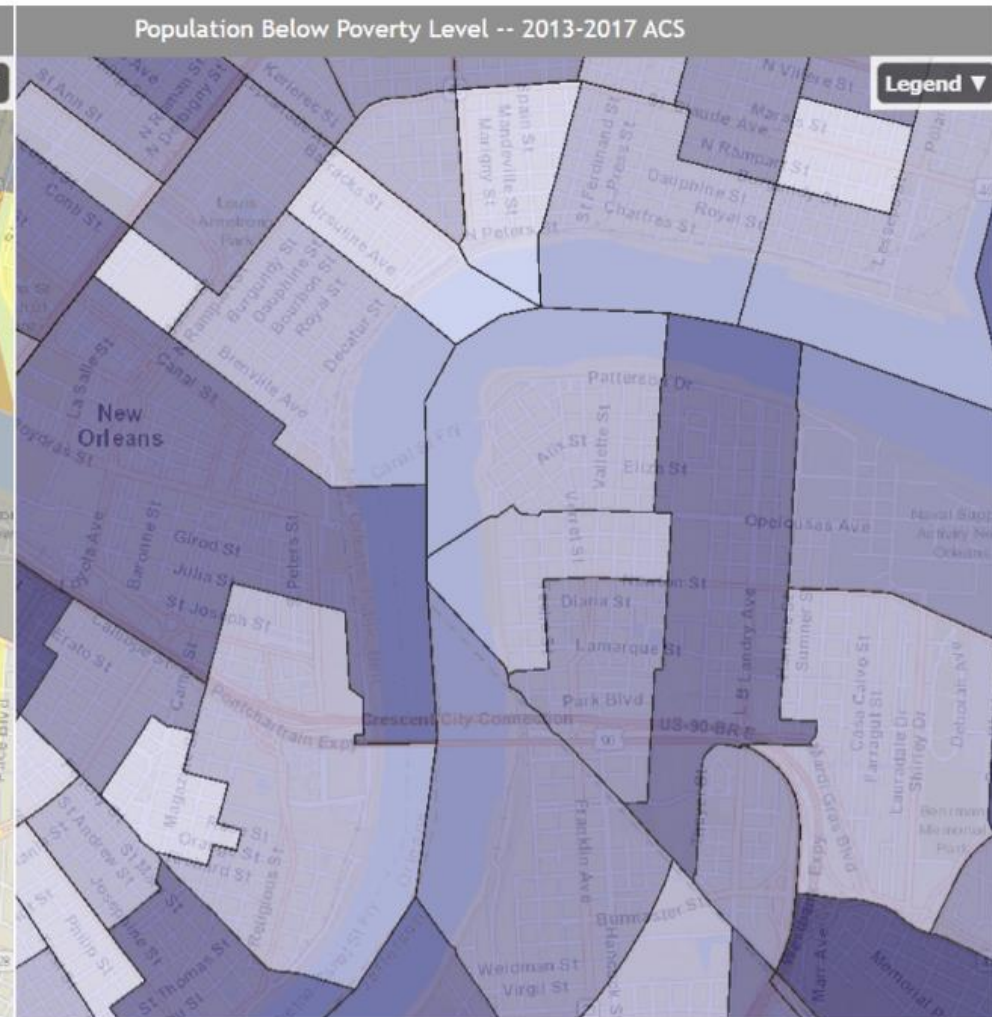
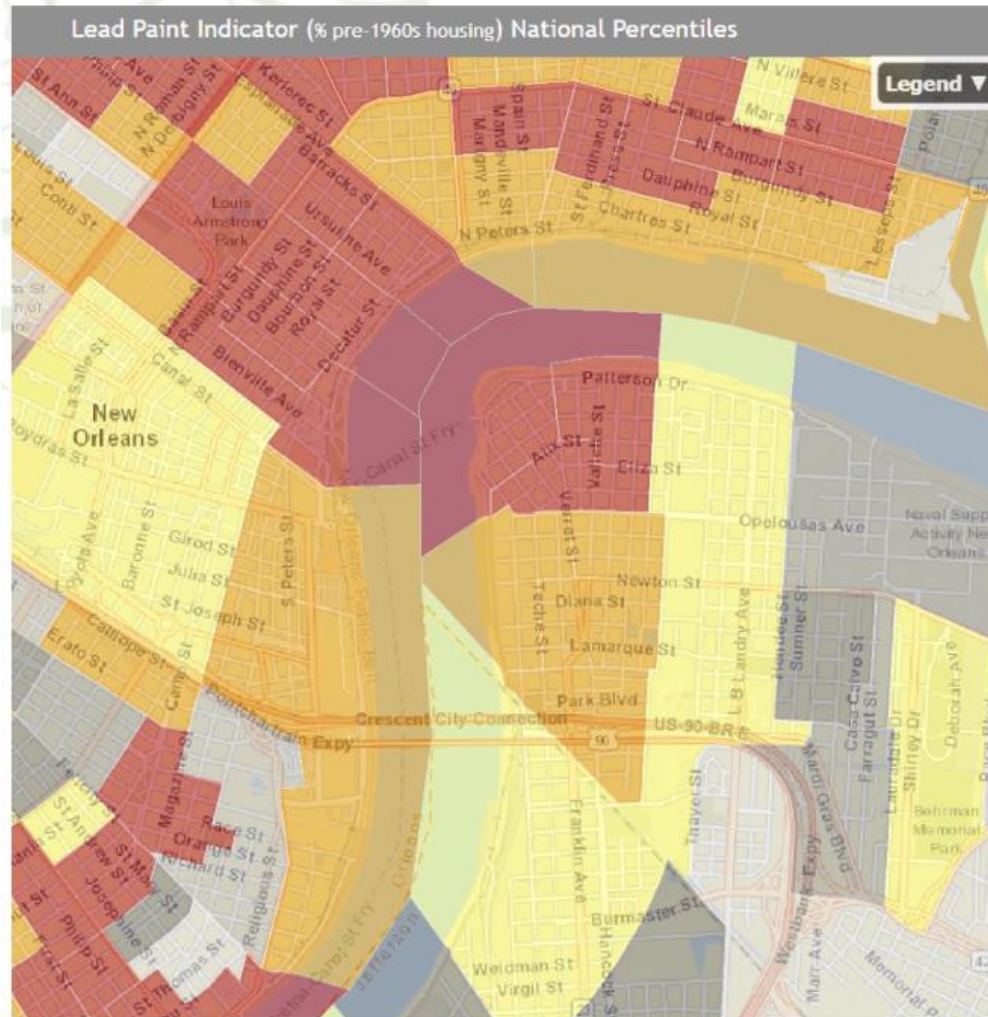
Milestones:

- **August 5 – Sept 13 (goal)**
 - Environmental Benefits Spending Guidance public comment period
- **October 31 (Statutory Deadline)**
 - Final guidance made public

Structure?

Request for Proposal: Environmental Justice Mapping Tool

Mapping Tool



Mentimeter

Opportunities

Concerns

- Priority populations that do not show up
- What needs to be done so they show up?

What to look for in a contractor?

What are we missing?

Instructions

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Or use QR code



Task Groups: Mapping Tool

Purpose is to **advise on the creation** of a mapping tool to **depict Environmental Justice Focus Populations** and **environmental burdens**

Determine **criteria, variables**, and **priorities** for mapping tool

Weigh in on the **qualities desired** for a contractor

Milestones:

- **July 1**
 - Request for proposal (RFP) for mapping tool contractor due
- **Mapping tool to be finalized by 2027**

Public Comment

Retooling & Reigniting

What tools do we need to be most effective?

What do you need to make this process more fulfilling?

How else can you participate?

- **Sign up for updates** on the implementation of the Vermont Environmental Justice Law!
- **Attend a public meeting** of the Advisory Council and/or the Interagency Committee!
- **Reach out to us** with questions or to discuss your comment!

Next Steps & Feedback

Appreciation & Closing