

Transcript

October 25, 2024, 3:59PM

□ **Barrett, Kim** started transcription

BK **Barrett, Kim** 0:03

Alright, so that is recording and then it does transferred, yeah.
How's it going?

MC **McIlvennie, Claire** 0:25

Good.
Very sunny out, which is a nice way to end the week.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 0:32

Mm hmm.

Juliet Birch

We're just gonna take a couple minutes here to wait for folks to trickle in, because this is our first all virtual.

Meeting of the year. So maybe it'll take a couple of folks a few minutes.

MC **McIlvennie, Claire** 0:54

That sounds good.
I'm gonna go off camera and eat some of my lunch, but I am here.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:01

Sounds good.
No, that's fine.

DB **Donohue, Bob** 2:06

Hello everyone.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:08

See you, Bob. Hey, rich. Hey, Amy.

We're just gonna take a couple minutes here to wait for folks to trickle in.
I know that because this is our first solely virtual meeting, it might take folks a minute to to join, so we'll take a few minutes here at the top.
Well, for those who just joined, we're just giving folks a couple more minutes.
1/2.

Juliet Birch

OK.

So we'll get started in about a minute.

We'll just give the last folks one more minute to jump in.

Thanks so much for your patience guys.

Alright, it's 12/05.

Thank you all for joining the this joint meeting of the EJ Advisory Council and Interagency Committee.

We really appreciate you guys all being here today.

I will note at the top of the meeting that we have quorum right now for the IAC, but not for the Advisory Council and we aren't making any decisions today. So I think that it's OK that we continue.

Without Quorum, just to share some information with you all, but hopefully we get some more attendances.

We continue this meeting.

I just wanted to note that at the top.

So this is a joint meeting, so we've got the Advisory Council Interagency Committee, folks from the civil rights and environmental Justice Unit at the Agency of Natural Resources. And I think we also have some folks who are joining here as.

Either just onlookers from state of Vermont or Community members.

So, welcome to you all.

And so we typically start off these meetings with a read through of our Community agreements that were originally agreed to.

I believe in the first meeting of 2023, so if we would like to start off with someone to read number one and then we can popcorn through all five of them, is there anyone who'd like to start?

This Walter brownridge. I don't see my name in the my square, so I don't know if you all know who I am or some of you know who I am. But I don't know. I haven't figured out how to make sure I put that in there.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 7:30

We can see your name.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 7:32

Oh you can.

Great. Thank you, #1.

Be present with yourself and one another.

Be present with your body and feelings.

You need to take a break to care for yourself. Please do.

Be present for one another by listening deeply.

BM **Boomhower, Michele** 7:52

I can read #2.

I'm Michelle Boomhauer with the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

Calling in and calling out.

Assume best intent, but attend to impact.

We can stop things that are being said that are harmful and be curious and create a space for learning.

Tools include using oops Ouch. To indicate a pause is needed.

Juliet Birch 8:21

Thanks Michelle.

Would someone like to read #3?

RH **rich holschuh** 8:30

Can read #3.

My name's Rich holshuh.

Who I'm representing, Vermont Commission on Native American affairs here.

Expect and accept non closure.

We are unlikely to leave here feeling 100% ready to go or have everything on our agenda wrapped up, especially if we are committed to moving at the speed of trust.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 9:02

Thank you, rich.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 9:04

Can do #4.

Everybody, this is Susanna Davis, Office of Racial Equity on the IAC and the A/C Center.

Respect the respectful, intentional and work to build trust and create a safe space and inviting space.

Juliet Birch 9:21

Thanks Susan.

Would anyone like to take #5?

DB **Donohue, Bob** 9:27

Sure. I'll wrap up.

This is Bob Donneu with the Agency of Education.

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 wait. Why am I talking and vocalizing support for another person's comment without repeating the same points that have already been made?

Juliet Birch 9:50

Bob and thank you to everyone who read these community agreements today.

The next thing we'll ask you to do is give us some sort of visual consent to these agreements so that we're all starting off on this with the same expectations for each other.

So if you have your camera on, give us a thumbs up and if you don't have your camera on, either give a thumbs up reaction or raise your hand.

And this is for members of the A/C and the IAC specifically.

Awesome I'm seeing.

I'm seeing several thumbs.

There might be a few more people who haven't gotten yet, so I'll give you a second.

Alright, so we've consented to the Community agreements today.

The next thing that we'll talk about is today's agenda.

Next on the agenda is to approve the meetings from our last meeting on September 20th of this year.

Those are available in the public online resource library and so if you guys have had an opportunity to review those minutes, we'd like to take some time now to approve them all in favour of approving the Minutes. Please give us some sort of visual.

Approval.

Kim Barrett

And if you could hold your thumbs up, that would be helpful. Thank you.

Juliet Birch

And again, this is for members of the A/C and the IAC.

Alright, that's great.

So next we'll talk through the full agenda.

We're gonna start here in a couple minutes with a with a full ice breaker, and then we'll jump into the conversation around probably more like 12:30 or so.

Kim Barrett

Oh, so you can just put them.

Juliet Birch

OK, gotcha.

This agenda that we have here isn't currently representative of the conversations we're gonna have today.

So in order to see the agenda.

For today, check your emails.

We forgot to update this slide.

Oops, sorry, but we're gonna start with a conversation between we're gonna have one conversation with the A/C.

They're gonna talk with some folks from ANR's Climate Action Office, and we'll have a separate conversation with the IAC to talk a little bit more about strategizing how the covered agencies are gonna approach the implementation of the law moving forward.

Then we'll have a another conversation.

With just us, we're going to do a little bit of conversation about the EBSG, the environmental benefits spending guidance, and we'll first take some time to talk as a group and then we'll do a breakout session where the A/C and IAC will talk more about environmental benefits separately.

Then we'll take a public comment and a break.

And finally, we will close out the day with some conversations about the environmental justice focused populations definition.

And we are really excited to invite someone from the agency of Digital Services. His name is John Adams, and he's specifically the director of the Vermont Center for Geographic Information, who Wanna have a conversation today to learn a little bit more about.

Geography, the data that we are working with and what we can do to take next steps towards improving the definition and then we'll close out the day with some updates, next steps and a brief brief goodbye.

So as I said, the current agenda that you're looking at here isn't updated, but you can see the agenda for today either in your inbox or in the public meeting folder on the online resource library. If everyone's happy with this agenda for today, please give us a.

Thumbs up.

Awesome seeing lots of thumbs.

All right, we're all set on those housekeeping items.

So we can move on.

Kim Barrett

Thank you, Juliet, and thank you all for understanding about the agenda.

OK.

So the ice breaker that we're going to do and specifically we're looking for A/C and IAC members to share.

The ice breaker is finishing the sentence and animal relative. That means a lot to me is and for this I wanted to call back to my culture.

We believe that animals and plants.

Just all of those things are are they're a part of us. There will part of our family.

So I wanted to honor that.

Cause I'll give everyone like one minute to think, and then whoever's ready to start

on the A/C or IAC can just unmute.

Anyone ready to start?

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 15:34

I'm gonna.

I'm gonna go.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 15:36

OK.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 15:42

Didn't expect this one today, but it's OK so.

If you can see in my hands I have a box.

It's actually an earned.

This is an earn of Misty which is a nickname for Mustafa.

In 2004, we lived in Cape Town, South Africa. My family, my sons and wife, and we got to rescue a dog.

Who looked like our Alsatian, German Shepherd, Husky, whatever. But with a tough of hair on the going down her spine. Which.

I think she was actually also part of the indigenous.

Dogs of Southern Africa, sometime called hot and tot.

And she was part of our family.

In 2004 to 2021, literally six days after we moved to Vermont, she died at the age of 17.

And I want to, you know, she means a lot to me. Obviously, if you didn't notice, I just got up from my chair.

I'm at home in my Home Office today and.

Her cremains sit on the.

Back near I'm a priest, so she sits actually near where I have a cross.

Another holy things I was able to go back to South Africa in March of earlier this year and some of her cremains were scattered in the backyard of where she lived. So I was able to return her as a daughter of the soil.

And so she esses with her ancestors in Africa.

So yes, I have an animal relative.

That means a lot to me.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 17:35

Thank you so much, Walter.
We appreciate your vulnerability.

RH **rich holschuh** 17:45

Can go ahead.
Thank you for that, Walter.
An animal relative that means a lot to me is turtle.
Turtle turtle.
Seems often.
Unobtrusive and.
Not highly significant in the grand scheme of things, but.
Those aspects of turtle appeal to me.
Turtle moves between worlds between the land and the water.
Turtle lives a long time. Turtle has been here a very long time as a as a nation, they have long memory.
They remember they are steady.
They don't speak much.
They listen more than they speak, and I find that an appealing characteristic.
And so.
Total means a lot. Thank you.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 18:54

Thank you.
Free to jump in.

WA **Willard, Abbey** 19:14

I'm happy to go.
This is Abby Willard from my agency of Agriculture, Food and markets, and on the IAC, an animal relative. That means a lot to me would be the great boharan I see and have kind of moments of engagement with great blue herons on regular intervals at kind of meaning.
Moments and something about the.
Peace with which they fly and kind of occupy.

Space around the waters.
Appreciated and comic for me.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 19:55

Thank you.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 19:58

I can go.

This is Amy Redmond from the Department of Health.

I'm on the interagency committee.

What a beautiful question and.

Beautiful reflections, OK.

So my mind went in a couple different places.

One an animal.

I I'm reading an animal relative, but the first thing that came to mind was the this idea of animism and and the tree.

There's like a tree for this forest behind my house and the trees there. I'm like, oh, there's some of my best friends.

And also one other quick thing is that also in the forest where I run quite a bit, there's a there a barred owl that I see from time to time and I'm feeling deeply connected to this barred owl as well.

So thank you for listening and the question.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 20:48

OK, Jamie.

SA **Smith, Stephanie A** 20:53

Stephanie Smith, Vermont Emergency Management representative.

The the first thing that came into my head with this question, that was the ****.

I'm not from Vermont, but I'm from Wisconsin and spent a lot of summer time on lakes and really just have a strong love for hearing the sounds, particularly and and getting to be able to experience that in Vermont as well.

And places like Green River and being outside, just enjoying our lakes.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 21:26

Thanks, Stephanie.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 21:31

I can go next.

This is Susana. I think an animal relative.

That means a lot to me.

Is the bee because I think our species takes it so much for granted, but we don't exist if they don't exist and.

I learned a lot of D facts last year because we have an annual conference. The second one of which will be happening in a few days.

And so I've been thinking a lot about bees because it is AB themed conference and.

And I learned from a colleague that.

In its lifetime, a bee will produce a certain amount of honey, and we all think it's such a huge amount and I think it adds up to other quart teaspoon or something.

Which is amazing because, you know, think of the volume of honey that we see or consume, and there's so much of it happening, but everybody's just doing their little part and it contributes and it adds up.

And I think that that's really great and these are really great.

So we should all open up a doctor pepper and leave it outside in their honor. Thank you.

MC **McIlvennie, Claire** 22:40

I can go.

This is Claire Mcilvanney with the Department of Public Service.

I'm on the IAC and well, I was also.

I was thinking of leaves and then I wasn't sure if they counted as animals, but Amy talked about the forest, which is also where I have been spending a lot of time and feelings surrounded by.

A larger family.

And.

Earlier this year, we lost unexpectedly, lost a member of my family, and I've been reflecting this foliage season.

That foliage seems to be our annual reminder that there is just such beauty in aging

and even passing away, you know, moving from one season to the next.
And I've just been feeling really comforted by that reminder that we get every year as we move from kind of the season of fall, which tends to be really sunny and bright and colorful into.
You know what is to come over the winter and then that will.
Regenerate and keep going.

WG Wray, Gabbie 23:44

I'm Gabby.
I am from Agency of Commerce and community development.
I the animal that came to me was a salamander because they embody the balance between ecosystems, like acting as like.
An indicator of environmental health, and they also symbolize like transformation, moving from water to land, similar to a frog.
So that's what I resonate with and I.
I'm the environmental specialist.
I work under Grace, the environmental officer.
I'm gonna be taking over more of the stuff that she's moving out of it, so.

BK Barrett, Kim 24:24

Thank you.

DB Donohue, Bob 24:28

Bob Donohue, Agency of Education and I guess I would say I don't have any particular, I I enjoy them all.
So whenever I get to see an animal, I'm happy that I live in an area where there actually are animals in the wild that aren't necessarily suffering from all the fragmentation that all urban and suburban areas deal with.
So I enjoy seeing everything. Everything has a value to me and just like people who are diverse and different, sometimes some rugged us the wrong way at some point.
But it's still great to have them in in our presence so.
I appreciate it all.

RK Raimundi, Karla 25:08

I can go. I am Karla Raimundi.

Agency of Natural Resources she her pronouns?
And I really like this question, but it really touched a fiber.
I mean, so I'm very emotional and the animal that came to mind is a butterfly.
My mother passed away recently and butterflies.
Were really meaningful to her. They reminded her of her brother.
And whenever we would see butterflies together, it was this deep sense of joy.
And when she passed, every time I see butterflies, I'm just reminded of her. And I
also appreciate.
The metamorphosis.
That butterflies go through.
So they also remind me of constant change.
And.
They also provide important.
Important contributions to nature in other great pollinators. So butterflies are are
now relatives that mean quite a lot to me. And several days ago I even got my first
piercing and it's a butterfly.
Just to remind myself of change and.
Of my mother and my family and just.
We connected with nature more deeply, so thank you for the question.

BK

Barrett, Kim 27:02

Thank you, Karla.
When I was on the A/C or I see.

BM

Boomhower, Michele 27:16

Jump in Michelle Boomhauer again from the IAC.
An animal relative that means a lot to me is.
A cow.
I used to raise cattle and show them and they.
Bring a lot of.
Food to us and.
They also represent a very.
Long legacy of.
Of the farming community in Vermont, which is important to me. Thank you.

Juliet Birch 28:08

Sure, I'm not a member of the A/C or the IAC, but I'm Juliet.

I'm an EJ coordinator with the civil rights and environmental justice unit and I really appreciate this question.

I think for me.

The first time that I remember as a child ever feeling connected to nature was seeing. An American goldfinch flying.

I used to live in Pennsylvania and so flying through flying through our local State Park.

And so I think the American goldfinch is the animal relative. That means a lot to me. It reminds me of my connection to nature.

The American gold Finch is one of the many birds that enjoys and has a symbiotic relationship with some of my favorite perennials.

Native perennials like echinacea and Black Eyed susans.

And the American goldfinch reminds me a lot of my grandfather, who really helped.

To cultivate that connection that I have with nature.

So I'm really grateful for the American goldfinch.

Kim Barrett

OK.

I can go next an animal relative.

That means a lot to me is the Hummingbird.

I remember being really young in Jamaica and having them fly like right in front of my face.

And just the the feeling, the sense of home that I felt.

And in Jamaica, they are really symbolic.

The There's so many different kinds, but there's one called the doctor bird.

And I would say that one example of how.

Close in relationship I am to them actually in Vermont.

For several for several years, if I was outside, whether it was in like a forest or wherever, if I had a thought or a feeling of remembrance of my grandmother, a Hummingbird would come really close to me.

And so they just mean a lot to me.

I'm not sure if we got to everyone on the A/C and IAC.

I'll just pause.

Thank you then.

Awesome. Thank you all for sharing and being vulnerable.

Juliet Birch

Awesome. Let's move on to next part of the agenda.

Kim Barrett

Yes, so here's a better representation of the agenda for today.

But just to recap, we have the A/C and IAC breakout groups for the A/C will connect with folks from the Climate Action Office, and then the Inc will work on some strategizing.

And then after that, we'll do a task group activity or an environmental benefit spending kind of task group activity.

Part One will be with the A/C and IC together, and then they'll break off the Part 2 and then later is John's discussion around the ejsp definition, and then we'll kind of wrap up with Vermont EJ while updates.

Yeah. So now we're gonna move into the breakout groups and then Juliet will help. Split everyone up so the A/C members. You'll stay in this main area and then the IAC will put you in the second.

Juliet Birch

So bear with me for just a second 'cause I.

I'm sometimes.

Not always. Technologically the best. So I'm gonna try and do this.

Smoothly. Let's see how this goes.

So as Kim said, we're going to put.

The IAC members into a separate breakout group and the A/C members will stay in the main room.

And for clarification on your end, Xusana, you're gonna stay with the A/C for both of our breakout groups today. I think that.

You will enjoy those conversations and we can touch base after the meeting if you wanna touch base on anything you may have missed on the IAC side of the conversation.

Let me just double check and make sure I didn't miss anyone.

I think that I've got everybody.

Not entirely sure, so we might have to do some double checking of our work, but I'm going to open up this breakout room.

The IAC will jump in there and then we will.

Have our breakout session for probably about 1/2 an hour or so.

Thank you guys.

One SEC.

We're just finishing up here.

Our friends from the IAC are gonna come back into the main meeting room for a second and we're gonna reconvene and try.

Try this one more time.

That's good.

No worries.

Hi everyone.

That was really quick. I hope you guys have a good discussion.

Just kidding.

I messed up the assignments, so we're gonna just try this one more time.

Thank you all for your patience.

So, rich, are you joining this meeting by any chance using your personal e-mail instead of your partner e-mail?

RH **rich holschuh** 35:43

Yeah, that's quite possible because teams has not been working well at all.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 35:48

Yeah, yeah.

Oh boy.

OK.

RH **rich holschuh** 35:58

Do you want me to sign out and try to try to get back in under that e-mail?

I've I've tried multiple times in the last week for other meetings and it hasn't been working.

BK **Juliet Birch** 36:09

Don't worry about it.

We will figure it out on our end.

It just means that we can't assign you to a breakout room, but we'll leave you in the main room with the A/C and we just are having some situation over here, so it's no problem.

RH **rich holschuh** 36:23

Thank you.

We'll do any.

BK **Juliet Birch** 37:46

OK guys.

We figured it out.

We're gonna open the breakout room now and we can.

We can move on.

So thanks for bearing with us through this. Yeah.

MK **Mok, Kira** 38:16

Hey Juliet, do you want me and Lauren to come back in like, 30 minutes? I don't.

I think we're the only like external people. We don't wanna be kinda making a space where people can't. I don't know.

Do you want us to, like, hop off as our time? You come back at we're also happy to sit here quietly and like just do other things in the background.

Whatever works best, but just wanna be mindful of our space.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 38:37

Yeah, it's up to your discretion.

We planned this so that the information that's being shared for this breakout group by the Climate Action Office will be, you know, in the main meeting room, cuz this is information that we want shared. You know, generally with the public as well.

So if you want to stay, feel free to stay on.

But this is a direct conversation with the Advisory Council members and.

Is Jane Laser check currently on the call here?

OK, I may have accidentally assigned her to a different or to the other meeting room.

Yes, I did.

So I'm going to just.

Fix that.

See if I can call her back here.

But to give you guys a brief introduction, you may have seen in your emails that we have some new information to share with you about the climate Superfund law.

And here's Jane laser check. Who is the director of the Climate Action Office?

Who's going to speak with us a little bit more about what that entails.

Thank you Jane for your patience.

I think I accidentally put you in the other room so.

I appreciate it.



Lazorchak, Jane 40:03

Thank you, everybody. OK, hold on.

So it's really nice to see you all and I was glad that I was able to join to hear you all introduce yourselves and get a little bit of sense of who you all are.

So thank you so much for taking time out of what I know is already a really impressive work load that you all have to allow us to talk a little bit about, what's known as the Climate Super Fund Act.

Which passed out of the legislature last year.

Act 122 Kim and Juliet worked with myself and others in the Climate Action Office to put forward some talking points for all of you about the law, and I thought I might take this opportunity just to walk through the talking points and hone in a little.

Bit of the ask and what is actually called out explicitly about the environmental Justice Advisory Council in the law.

And then hear from all of you about how you'd like to proceed with consultation on this law.

Yeah. So I will say that the climate Superfund law, which isn't indicated here, is the first of its kind in the country.

If you're familiar with litigation and accountability in the past with companies such as the over the health impacts of cigarette smoking, the climate Superfund.

Is modeled on a similar structure in that it's an attempt to hold oil companies accountable through a law for the impacts of climate change.

And not only have them pay for damages from the undue harms caused by burning fossil fuels in the past, but also create a fund to fund the correction and remedy of those.

Issues going forward and so this Vermont, there was a law that was put forward at the federal level.

By actually Vermont Senator Senator Sanders.

That put forward this in concept over the last few years and various states around the country have looked to model federal legislation that never went anywhere and to act independently as states. And while many states are exploring this idea, states such as Minnesota, Massachusetts, New York, California and.

Others Vermont was actually the first state to pass this as a law.

Year and this approach is sort of moving forward in parallel with other attempts through litigation.

So states through their attorney generals are also seeking retribution for climate change impacts from fossil fuel companies through litigation.

And Vermont, California, led that lawsuit and Vermont is one of the states that actually signed on to that too.

So they're sort of two parallel tracks right now.

Now attempting to hold the largest polluters accountable for the act of knowing that they were causing climate change, covering that up, and then again trying to fix it through resources directed at climate change.

So Vermont passed this law.

Our little state is the first state to attempt moving this forward, and there are a lot of different components of the work.

And.

I'll just walk through the talking points again now that I gave some of the broader context and then highlight for you all exactly where the.

Advisory Council is called out in the law 'cause. It's around one specific component, not the bigger components of the law.

I'll say so.

Again, it's act 122, also called as the climate Superfund.

It's sort of modeled after Superfund legislation.

The sort of overlap in terminology.

This will work to create a fund, ultimately to pay for climate change adaptation and resilience projects.

The idea and you know not to sort of overwhelm you with information, but it is to hold the largest polluters accountable.

So the two main components of the law are to look at how you calculate the

damages.

And the work.

And the work needed to remedy that, and that obligation sits with our treasurer's office, with the consultation and support from the Agency of Natural Resources, and then the other component is how do you hold companies liable?

What is their jurisdictional Nexus to doing business in Vermont?

And so companies first have to have public record that they pollute at a very high threshold.

That threshold is 1 billion.

Tons of carbon.

Annually and then the second is that they have to do business in Vermont based on those two things, you would issue what's called a cost recovery letter to the oil companies that won't come for two years from now. And in fact, an R will also be considering if.

The timelines are reasonable, but once that fund is created it, as the talking point highlights, it would go to fund projects as.

Envisioned and developed through what's?

Currently being led out of the Climate Action Office, which is the development of a resilience implementation strategy.

That strategy was launched by the governor and treasurer's office ahead of the legislative session last year, with the understanding that government is doing a lot to build resilience and adapt.

But we're not doing everything.

What are the opportunities and gaps in that space and what are the priorities needed to create and build a sustainable future?

Vermont so that resilience implementation strategy.

Is actually called out in the law as the plan and the priorities that will be funded with this money ultimately.

And the law signals that the Advisory Council will be consulted, not on the cost assessment and the liability component of the law, but specifically on the resilience implementation strategy.

Which is ultimately where the funds will be directed, when and if we actually are successful in pulling in those funds from fossil fuel companies.

So I understand and expect that the environmental Justice Advisory Council was written into this law largely because climate change impacts the health and safety

and quality of life in Vermonters in many different ways.

But we know for sure that it disproportionately impacts marginalized communities, communities.

And the insights that you've gained and expertise that you all bring would help us highlight unique areas in the resilience implementation strategies and particular areas of focus to ensure that the funding ultimately goes to drive improvement in the lives of the communities most impacted by climate change.

So for today, the questions that were shared with you ahead of time, I'll just bring them up here again and then highlight some additional resources that you both that you all received ahead of time and or that I could share now.

But first, I'll say the questions are really about sort of what comes to mind are the what are the issues such as health, safety, quality of life, economic security, that show up in your work that all relates to the resilience and how we build resilience and adaption.

The face of climate change.

Based on sort of the preliminary information both here in the talking points and then with the additional information provided in a memo to you, all of that gave you greater detail about.

The ACT 122, the climate Superfund law, as well as some additional background on the Resilience implementation strategy workflow. We're interested in hearing from you about what your preferred approach would be to collaborate with us on this.

Are these meetings the right venue?

Do you wanna have breakout groups?

Our whole group discussion's importance smaller groups.

Would you like to review documents?

How would you like to be consulted and then assuming that you would like to be consulted?

At what points during the development of the Resilience implementation strategy do you want the state to engage with you so?

So to that last question, I'll just say that the Resilience implementation strategy.

Has some near term, medium term and longer term outcomes. I'd be happy to share those with you.

They were highlighted in the summary document that we shared ahead of time, but I have a more succinct slide if that's something that you're interested in seeing.

But we're really in the the space right now of thinking about what the opportunities

are across government working collectively across Allstate government to hear. Where government feels like their work touches resilience and adaptation. And then trying to assimilate what those sort of clusters of gaps are and criteria to advance recommendations and priorities out in the spring. With the ultimate outcome of developing the strategy and priorities in collaboration with the Treasurer's office by July 1st of next year. So this is really no decisions have been made. We've been in an information gathering phase about the resilience implementation strategy. But there are some obvious touch points where we feel like engagement would make a lot of sense with the Environmental Justice Council as we start to think about what the criteria are that we use to determine priorities. What are those priorities and where do you feel there are? Gaps or opportunities worth pursuing so that ultimately funds can be directed to them later on. I'll stop sharing and know I have other resources that I'd be happy to share. And let Juliet lead the conversation with all of you about where you'd like to go.

BJ

Birch, Juliet 50:47

Sure. Thank you so much, Jane. So just to take a step back and summarize that information, my understanding is and correct me if I'm wrong, Jane, that there is a new law called the Climate Superfund Act. That asks the state to consult the EJ Advisory Council as it pertains to the Resilience implementation strategy, correct. Great. And so while we're here today is to talk a little bit more about. How the Advisory Council wants to be consulted moving forward and what that work is gonna look like, kind of at a high level. And so we wanna open up the floor here first and foremost for any discussion or any questions from the Advisory Council about what this really means for you guys and to hear back from you guys on how you'd like to be. Consulted and how you wanna be involved and I will say we have Kim and I have adjusted the agenda a little bit. So we have about, you know, 10 or 15 minutes to really have this conversation. So feel free to ask any questions.

We've got a little bit of time, so if there are any questions or any thoughts initially on what it means to be involved in being consulted for this work, this is the time. Thanks guys.

LJ Lazorchak, Jane 52:14

Thanks Juliet for honing that.

BJ Birch, Juliet 52:52

I've done my facilitators count for, you know, probably about 20 seconds and so. If there aren't any questions, I'm gonna go with the assumption that we're still processing right, cuz that was a lot of information and we're still getting to know what this really means for us, right?

I'm seeing.

I saw a nod from Rich.

RH rich holschuh 53:15

That's an amazing conclusion, Juliet.

BJ Birch, Juliet 53:19

It's hard to ask questions about what we don't know.

RH rich holschuh 53:22

Exactly. If I was to say anything, I was going to say wow.

OK.

I'm listening.

BJ Birch, Juliet 53:33

Yeah. So maybe we can take a couple minutes, Jane, for you to talk through. What consultation could potentially look like and what the role for the what kinds of questions the Advisory Council could be involved in answering, and of course this would all be hypothetical. As you know, this is up to the Advisory Council to consent whether or not they actually want.

To be involved in answering those questions, but just to get an idea of what it could look like and what this work could look like.



Lazorchak, Jane 54:05

Juliet and thank you, Rich.

Yeah, I will say so.

Just I have two slides that I'll share just to give a little bit of the time and workflow and where we would ask for your for you to consider where we thought it might make sense to have a more active role.

I will start by saying that the term consultation is like.

We're we're required to consult with the environmental Justice Advisory Council on the Resilience Implementation Strategy. That's a very.

Vague term, legally so. I mean this could count, I would say as like we've come to the environmental Justice Advisory Council, we've offered you information and are here and willing to take input at any time along the way and come back or there could be. A conscious statement about when and where you would like to be consulted along the way.

So I think the opportunity ranges from.

You know little to lots and we're interested to hear from all of you about what that spectrum, what, where on that spectrum feels right for all of you, so.

This is a broader presentation, but I'm just gonna share three slides actually, and let me just move you.

So I can hear.

So I'll start by saying that when the governor and Treasurer announced the Resilience implementation strategy and the development of it, it was little more than a a press release and an idea that there was a need to look across what they saw as five really important buckets of.

Work and.

Consider what the state was doing and I I say the state because.

We obviously know that building resilience and adaptation to climate change is not just the states job. It's a partnership with community based organizations. It's vermonters.

It's nonprofits.

It's it's all level of sort of action.

But the resilience implementation strategy is specific to thinking about what is states, the state role and state government role in sort of filling our gaps and supporting the other mechanisms and organizations and individuals out there to advance this

work.

So the five buckets that the governor and treasurer saw as key to moving forward and addressing meaningful work was the five as highlighted on the screen. Really thinking about this work is really important to develop from a community centric approach.

We all know that we're more resilient and if we are grounded and within our communities and have access to community members and feel safe and connected in the face of dis.

And mounting climate change impacts.

And so there's the actual systems of community centric approach.

And then there's also the grounding and how we develop this work in community with Vermonters and then in community with other state agencies.

So that's one bucket.

Nature based solutions is obviously a key component of thinking about how nature can support building climate resilience by advancing flood plain restorations, wetland restoration, things like that.

That infrastructure design and reinforcement, knowing that our infrastructure was not built for the kinds of climate impacts that we're seeing now and thinking about where we support that work and how we can do it better.

Early warning systems and emergency response being as prepared as possible in the face of imminent hazards, and knowing how to support communities to be prepared for that.

And then, of course, knowing how government can support both.

Resilient systems and response to knowing that climate impacts certainly bring economic and environmental hardships.

So how do we create?

A system that doesn't feel such a a hard hit when those things happen.

And what's come up for us as we look at all of this over the last?

Few months is an understanding that, as I'm sure, is foundational to all of your work, is that we need to think about the government systems broadly.

Not just put more money or more resources to systems that are not working right?

Like there's got to be systematic changes in government so that when we address any one of these buckets, we're doing it as thoughtfully as possible and with the right mechanisms in place and not.

Just building it on top of systems that aren't working for Vermont and Vermont or

Vermont or. And so that's about.

Redesign a government thinking about where programs make sense and how we. Collaborate more intentionally.

And so the resilience implementation strategy. I often joke with my colleague Marion Walls, who is really leading this work that long term doesn't really feel that long. I mean, we're the work is ending to be done July 1st but and it kicked off last January.

So All in all, this is an 18 month effort.

And so it's not going to be perfect.

It's an attempt to really try to drive change.

With things that are likely going to have to take then decades to unfold.

Umm, where can we have those near term wins and also advance?

Long term growth and change in government, but the near term, what we're working on right now is really an inventory.

We created a tool that all of state agencies could plug into where and they could intentionally identify plans, programs, policies and funding that either.

Intentionally highlights resilience and adaptation and climate change work.

Or they think it tantentially touches that.

So all the clean water work we do in Vermont is the the primary benefit and reality of how that work is funded is around reducing.

Phosphorus and nitrogen from Lake Champlain.

However, we all know that almost all of those programs have a Co benefit of building resilience and adaptation in our communities.

So those are things we want to put in and think about where there are opportunities to re prioritize criteria or think about how resilience isn't a Co benefit or secondary benefit. But a primary benefit so.

That's what we're doing right now is really trying to get everything on the table.

Where we as government and and this is where I think like we wanna hear from other people ultimately to outside of government. But where we see our work touching climate resilience and adaptation. And then we also know that there has to be a guidepost for this work which.

Is what is a climate resilience vision for Vermont, and we're not writing that in isolation. There has been a lot of work, a lot of.

Outreach a lot of collaborative work.

In the government, but also at the nonprofit level and in the community level about

what a vision looks like for climate resilience.

And so we've been assimilating visions from around climate resilience across. I think there's like Marion, Sophie, others in her office have looked at dozens, if not 100 or more different documents or efforts to pull forward.

A vision to make sure that we'll do outreach around that, but we're also not starting from scratch.

When we know Vermonters have been talking and caring about this for a long time. So that's the near term.

And we have done outreach and engagement, which the next slide will show you along the way, but.

We really want to turn to this this next phase of the work, which is when we start to think about what are the metrics, what is the data, what how do we know we're making progress on climate resilience.

This is something we really know. We want to go out to Vermonters on because.

This is something that is not for government only to say, but all of us to say, like, if we every town has a town planner. If every town has access to a CBO to help build capacity in certain areas, is that what?

What is the data and how do we track that and think about building metrics around climate resilience?

That's the next phase, along with categorizing and prioritizing.

The opportunities in service of identifying solutions.

And then finally, the last step is to understand the costs and prioritize the funding associated with the policies and programs that we all put forward as.

Collectively as a priority for the strategy.

So there's one more slide.

I'll just put it up, which shows.

The actual space around engagement.

And where we really see key opportunities to touch points with different people.

And I'll stop talking knowing that I can talk a lot.

And Juliet has her hand up, so hopefully there's some comment or assimilation for you all to think about.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 1:03:44

Yeah. Thank you so much for that, Jane.

I think that this is a really.

Thorough, but you know, brief summary of sort of what's going on.

Thorough and brief. It's like an oxymoron, but I really appreciate the you taking the time to speak with us today. And I also recognize for Advisory Council members that this is a ton of information. And I also want to note that we have, I think, 3 Advisory Council.

Members on the call of the nine who are currently seated.

So this is definitely going to be an ongoing discussion and there are gonna be tons of touch points for you guys to ask questions.

Get the information that you need to feel secure moving forward with this. I think this is kind of just an initial touch point and we will continue to revisit this conversation.

So thank you all for your patience and you know for your time taking the time to digest this information.

Walter will take your comment and then we'll.

You know, prep to bring the rest of the group back into this into the room.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 1:04:54

I guess my question is you, you all.

You all sent a a document before the meeting last week, I think.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 1:05:00

Mm hmm.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 1:05:01

And so I I just wanted to a first.

Thank you, Jane.

I commend you all for this work and for Juliet.

And the slides you show, but I've got. So there are three questions.

I think it's three.

Bullet points that I wanted to.

If this is an appropriate time for me to just comment on what I think.

I think one of the biggest ways this is just my experience living in Burlington.

I but I now work in Montpelier. When I'm I'm assigned to Christ Church Episcopal, which is across the street from the capital. I think one of the the issues and but my wife, who teaches in the Burlington schools, there are a lot of health issues,

particularly for young.

People, but I'm sure also for adults.

To environmentally, I mean you. I'm sure everyone knows asthma allergies particularly. You know, there's a large significant population.

The north side of Burlington.

Of students from the global majority.

For bipac.

And so a lot of these health issues are out there, but they aren't often connected to and you know.

Environmental climate change issues. Although doctors will tell you that although they can't specifically.

Refer to you know, particular patients will tell you that in the increase in this so.

But I'm interested.

So for me, somehow being able to get.

Input from the affected focus and marginalized communities.

Who have health issues or, you know, other kind of quality of life.

I'm not.

I'm not as adept in thinking right now about economic security, but I think that's just really important.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:07:13

Mm hmm.

BW Brownridge, Walter 1:07:14

And and I think maybe public meetings or public health professionals.

In the state, who can help?

Look at this and you know, so that'd be my per method.

And you know, I don't.

You know, I think at every point that you wanna make something, you know, if if we who are part of the environmental Justice Advisory Council.

Would be made aware of what you're looking to do, but my last point, this is my last point.

The metrics that Jane talked about.

I.

I don't know as much about the state structure. I mean, do they have, for example,

does the state already have a data analysis?

Or analytics.

Department or office that does this in general or and if they don't have it, or if what they have is.

Doesn't have the capacity to take this on.

Will there be funding through this act to?

In my opinion, we're gonna need data and analysts who can help.

Collate the metrics and give clear guidance.

To not only the Advisory Council, but you know the interagency group and and the state.

So that's those are my comments. I don't know if that makes sense what I'm saying, but I just wanted to raise these issues.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:08:50

That totally makes sense.

I think that you brought up a lot of really important points and issues, Walter.

So thank you, Jane. If you'd like to speak to any of those, please feel free, but if not, we can also continue to have this conversation.

You know, if you guys want to respond via e-mail or in maybe a future meeting, I just know that we would love to take a couple minutes to transition into the next part of the agenda whenever we're ready. So Jane?

L Lazorchak, Jane 1:09:21

You I'll just say that public health is one of the number one priorities in our update to our climate action plan for the state because and we're thinking a lot about how to get out and talk with Vermonters about it, because the state's initial climate action plan.

Didn't have a lot on public health and the impacts of climate change because we wrote it during COVID and everybody was dealing with COVID and not.

Supportive of that?

So it's a big focus.

I'd love to talk with you more about that, Walter.

Offline or helps like engage. Any ideas in that space which relates to the resilience implementation strategy as well?

And then second, I'll just say around data.

We in the climate space also and talk a lot about this with Juliet and Kim and Carla around the overlap are required to develop a measuring and assessing progress tool that looks at how we communicate out metrics around climate change, to Vermonters and that includes equity.

And climate communications as well as resilience.

And so we have the funding and capacity to do that and are coordinating very closely with the EJ office on that work to ensure.

That we're representative of the work that's happening in their knowledge and pulling that in.

So all really great comments and things that we're thinking about and would benefit from further talk and discussion about.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 1:10:52

And could I just say, Jane, I think Juliet and Kim.

Have my contact details I'm available I I for me I I.

And it best.

Call.

Occasionally I sometimes miss emails that are sent through teams to my Vermont partner. But.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 1:11:15

Mm hmm.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 1:11:19

They so they usually just send it to my regular Gmail account, but I would be glad to, you know, through e-mail we can set up a time to talk if you have time.

Probably better after the election, but yes, that would be.

LJ **Lazorchak, Jane** 1:11:32

Really that's happening, I forgot.

Yeah, good point.

Thank you for all you're doing probably.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 1:11:39

Well, this is really awesome guys.

I'm sorry that the conversation has to be kind of cut at an abrupt end, but I know that this is something that we're gonna just keep touching back on.

So I appreciate you all taking the time to just digest this information with an open mind.

I'm gonna pull the IAC members back into this main room, and then we're gonna reset and have a little bit more of a conversation about.

Environmental benefits spending guidance.

Thank you so much, Jane, for taking the time to meet with us today.

And hopefully we'll be able to bring you back if that sounds good to you.

L **Lazorchak, Jane** 1:12:16

Sounds great.

Thank you so much for your time.

Have a wonderful day.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 1:12:23

Hi everyone.

Welcome back to the main room.

We are gonna take a moment to just like transition focus.

I hope everyone had a really good conversation wherever they were.

So we're just gonna take a moment and we'll transition to talking about EBSG.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:13:15

Just from a slide, Yep.

OK.

Thank you everyone.

So now we're gonna switch gears. Like Juliet said to you know, the the area of influence or the deliverable that that we're talking about is the environmental benefit spending guidance, but in actuality.

I just realized my camera's off.

In actuality.

We want to zoom out for a second.

One observation that we've had just even in internal conversations is sometimes these benefit spending conversations get so.

Narrowly focused.

On like one aspect of what?

The environment means and so.

I wanted to Createspace for us to go back to what environmental justice as a movement as a framework asks us to do.

And then from that perspective, look at all of the different elements and dimensions of our environment, what that looks like.

Alright, so environmental justice, we looked at all of the different things that keep communities healthy, safe, happy and thriving.

And so here's a list of I see some hands up.

Does anyone have anything that they need to share before we continue?

OK.

So here's a list.

Obviously not exhaustive, but safe neighborhoods, green spaces, transportation, nutritious food, affordable and safe housing, exercise quality. Affordable health care.

I'm wondering if folks can think of some other examples of just what keeps communities healthy.

BM Boomhower, Michele 1:15:34

I would add clean water and also.
Public safety.

WA Willard, Abbey 1:15:47

And I would add something around like opportunities for connection.

BK Barrett, Kim 1:15:53

And so one of the other observations in like talking about environmental benefits is that narrow focus sometimes really does come down to just like clean air, clean water, those types of things. But public safety is not something that we might associate with that.

And So what was the example you gave, Abby?

WA Willard, Abbey 1:16:17

I just said, like opportunities for connection, but that could mean a lot of different things I guess. But just so that people are not isolated in their own world but connected to their neighbors.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:16:20

Connection, yeah.

Yeah, connection is really important.

That highlights sort of the social dimension of of what our environment looks like and how we experience it.

There we go.

Yeah. So and it was.

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 1:16:44

But.

Sorry, this is part by Mundi.

I would add in the previous slide.

Effective communications.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:16:56

Definitely.

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 1:16:58

Thank you.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:17:02

So again, these are all those were just a few examples of some of the different dimensions of of what the environment looks like.

And so.

Environmental justice, like one kind of phrase that you'll hear sometimes, is that the environment is where we live, work and play.

And so another thing that I wanted to share as well is that it's obviously more than that, right?

It's where we worship. It's where we connect.

Build community and so keeping that in mind when we're trying to look at benefits right there are these different environments.

So like I live in a cottage, a really, really old cottage. I work in an office building and sometimes I play at the playground and those are all three different spaces, but they're all part of the environment that I live in.

And the benefits of, you know, the things that that keep.

Spaces healthy, happy and thriving.

You know there's some similarities, but there are also some differences.

Bless you. And so when we think about that and we think about it in our personal lives, but also in our professional lives as well.

It's kind of easier to think through what the benefits are and then eventually connecting some of those benefits to investments.

OK.

So we're going to do an activity where all of us is, we're going to be in one room.

No break up groups this time, but we're going to expand on the live, work and play framework.

And these questions are pointed towards our personal lives.

So where do we?

Where do you live, work and play?

You know, I gave examples of how some of those spaces may be different.

What are some similarities and differences between those spaces?

What are some of the environmental benefits and another way of saying that is what are the things that keep you know these communities or where you are?

Happy save thriving.

So I'll give you maybe a couple of minutes to think and then.

We'll we'll come off. You and everyone can share.

OK. And we're just gonna take maybe 5 minutes just to do a quick share out.

Would like to start.

RH **rich holschuh** 1:21:23

Start, Kim, this is rich, rich oshio.

Struggle with questions like this.

And I I apologize if I'm coming in from.

Left field, so to speak.

I I see live places where I live, work, and play as all being the same thing.

They're all part of the same thing.

And so the next question answers itself.

They're all the same.

They are completely interconnected.

Any.

Way of of separating them out is an artificial division.
And so environmental benefits.
It is all of benefit and it's all a gift.
And I just kinda have to sit with that for a while.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:22:24

Thank you for that.

RH **rich holschuh** 1:22:25

Umm.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:22:28

But are there any?
So in in, are there any things in particular that?
Support for like.
Create health you know? Like how does.
How do these spaces or this one space?
Because it's all connected, it's all the same as you're saying.
What aspects are supportive if that makes sense?
It's all a gift.

RH **rich holschuh** 1:23:13

Yeah.
I think where we need to put a lot of our focus is on.
Looking for those connections and and and.
Finding ways to.
Umm.
Gosh, I I don't know.
Stop. Stop putting things into separate categories.
And.
And chasing the illusion that we can actually control these things.
I don't know how else to say it right now.
We need to be participants.
In the totality of, for lack of a better word, right now, I'll just say creation.
This is a completely anthropocentric framing and I keep saying that, but that's just

where I keep going back.

The place.

The place where I.

The place where I live is also where others play.

And and it's. I don't know you can just.

See the connections endlessly.

I I'm kind of like getting way out way out into space here, but.

I.

I find this.

I've said it before.

Environmental justice is often so limited in its we give you an example we the phrase.

And again, I apologize if I'm out of line here, but.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:25:08

No, no, no.

RH **rich holschuh** 1:25:09

The phrase that that climate change disproportionately effects marginalized communities.

Excellent observation.

Who are the marginalized communities?

Everybody other than the humans.

They come first.

They are disproportionately affected.

So I I'll I'll stop there and I'll let somebody say something.

It's a little more helpful.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:25:40

No, that's helpful, Rich, Walter.

Oh yeah, municip.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 1:25:55

Said thank you, rich.

Well, I live and play in Burlington.

I work in Montpelier now.

And in my opinion, I work right in.
Town. So it's more built up.
So it's it's.
But it still has even there.
You're not far from where I live, which is a lot of green space.
Relatively relatively, I say clean air and a little in a little stream or Creek nearby.
But as you all know.
Downtown Montpelier.
And Christ Episcopal Church in particular is in this floodplain between these two
rivers, the North branch.
And winooski?
And so while you're close to, you know, even though you're downtown, you can be
near nature and all of that.
That's one of the differences which of course, when we're talking about climate
change, it's a place that, you know.
About 14 months ago was terribly flooded, a little flooding a a year to the day later,
earlier this year, summer in July.
So that's just for me.
That's where I see both environmental benefits and sometimes challenges.
And and and I will say that I hear which talked about about our tendency sometime
to be anthropocentric but.
Even within.
Human beings, because this is what I see a lot now.
In Montpelier, but anywhere else.
There are hierarchies within the human community, and so it and to me humans who
are.
Lower hierarchy.
Suffer particularly when.
They have less resources to be resilient.
To be frank, that's an issue around climate as well as other challenges such as the
need for housing and so on.
So that's where I'll drop finish my comment.

So we are going to split up into breakout groups where the A/C will kind of continue this conversation, but more pointed towards the communities that they're working with they're advocating for.

Or part of and then the IAC will do an activity where you're kind of connecting this framework to.

The understanding the the definition of environmental benefits in the context of the law.

So.

Just give us one or two minutes to to do that.

All right, I'm opening the breakout groups now.

This time it'll go smoother. Have practice.

OK.

Well, everyone.

Looks like everyone.

I'm not sure everyone made it into the OR maybe a couple of people got put in the other Group One second.

Now my computer is being super slow.

Alright, cool.

Can you also my screen and walk through your hands up with that from before?

DX **Davis, Xusana** 1:31:33
You can see.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:31:35
Where?

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 1:31:36
Written is why.
Sorry, I couldn't hear exactly what we were saying.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:31:44
Oh no.
Your hand was.
Your hand was upside.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 1:31:46

Oh, let me take it down.

I don't know. I'm sorry.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:31:50

OK, OK.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 1:31:50

How do I OK, here we are.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:31:53

No worries.

Let me just. Yep. OK, we're good.

So here are the questions that we've kind of outlined and rich, I totally hear what you're saying.

If you have any suggestions on how to you know.

'Cause the thinking for me is just that.

It seems like people.

Partition out how they think about.

A what?

The environment is and then also be.

They kind of partition out what?

Makes the environment like healthy and.

And so if we're trying to work on better balancing.

These benefits, and the way that I think about those are just naming like what makes everything like stronger and more healthy. If we're trying to work on that.

But we're only looking at our environment as one thing and we're only looking at what makes our environment healthy as one thing. Then we're kind of missing.

A lot.

And so I certainly don't want to.

Further create like separation.

I'm just recognizing that a lot of our conversations are really, really limited.

Which is? It sounds like it's partly what you're saying as well.

So if you have any suggestions on how to have this conversation in a way that's less

enticing, please just let me know.

And other than that, some of the questions that we have, we wanted to point them more towards the communities that you're working with or the areas of focus that you work with.

So what are examples of places?

Folks in these communities live, work and play.

Can you identify and maybe a more important question is can you identify the things in those spaces that?

Make the environment healthy.

And then can you identify any environmental burdens and then with those burdens in mind, what could be done to improve them?

I think we have until maybe like 155 I would say.

Yeah, go ahead. And I'm gonna step back and let you all kind of, like, have this conversation on your own.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 1:34:51

I'll jump in.

I've been really leaning into the the why am I talking approach this whole meeting so I didn't participate in the last two discussions on purpose, but.

la Lot was was lighting up for me in them and I was particularly thinking about the last set of questions we had about where we live, work and play. And I was thinking about it kind of contrasting my life now versus my former life when I lived and.

Worked in New York and the differences between that ecological that that ecology.

This one and when I'm looking at these questions about the communities we serve, I'm really seeing a lot of parallels to that.

So in our work, where the Office of Racial Equity and so our work is designed to advance equity across racial and ethnic groups in the state and it's it's often the case that we are concentrated in the state's more quote UN quote urban.

And I'm saying that with such a grain of salt because it's Vermont, but.

Our our quote UN quote urban areas of the state.

Which I think has benefits and drawbacks, right?

So for example, what are some environmental benefits?

Well, you know the sense of community and connectedness that we talked about earlier absolutely contributes to your social and emotional health, but at the same time, the level of crowding that we often see in quote UN quote urbanized spaces

also has health deleterious effects.

So you may say, Oh well, you know, living in a rural area or or being in a rural area has.

Benefits of not being overcrowded or not having greater contributors to smog or poor air quality.

Or what have you.

But then, of course, there's things like isolation or loneliness, or just the feeling of not being safe.

Right. If if you're outside, I mean, I have family members who come to visit, and one of the things they say is I had so much trouble sleeping because there was no no sound outside.

So I think that depending on who you are, how you were raised and where you were raised, you could see the same thing as a benefit or a drawback. I know a lot of white folks in Vermont who say I don't feel safe when there's no cops. I.

Know a lot of us in Vermont say I feel safe when there's no cops.

So.

Yeah, those are just some of the things that are that are coming up for me. Thanks.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:37:53

Thanks sana.

I did want to say as well that.

We're hoping that some of the answers to these questions will help us identify.

Be back to get the environmental benefits pending guidance group, the task group.

Like input to inform their work, you know that that I think that.

Is deliverable and this area of influence is.

Something that they're needing your expertise for and so.

You know, if you need more time to think, some of these things through, that's totally OK.

But I did just wanna share that part of the the.

Impetus for this was to was the need for more engagement around this.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 1:38:55

Thank you for saying that, Kim.

Can I then add something and make what I just said a little bit more actionable?

I think one thing that might be helpful then for us is to a lot of times in Vermont

when we want to seek input from communities of color, we we tend to take the easy route and just go to sort of the northwest part of the state and.

Try to get as much saturation as we can, but I think that maybe for this exercise it might be helpful if we are intentional about looking for people from communities of color who live in the more rural parts of the state.

Because I think that those are perspectives that often get drowned out because.

We're so diluted throughout the state, so that might be one one way that we can do intentional outreach that gets at perspectives that aren't necessarily.

You know the same the same parts of the Venn diagram always lighting up in terms of the type of the type of environment where you live and the community you you like, the demographic and the geographic. If we could get a little more variety in that.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:39:53

I'm very much agree with that.

I appreciate that.

I think another observation I have is that.

In Vermont, there tends to be this assumption that you know.

Most of the folks of color or a lot of them are kind of in Burlington or wherever else.

And it really does make it even harder to address the needs, or even have visibility for those folks who are in super rural environments and don't have vehicles.

Speak different languages or just don't have community.

And so I appreciate you sharing that.

I'm gonna just hold the space and let you all kind of share whenever you're ready.

Walter, I did have a question.

You mentioned you know the church.

I'm wondering if there are any.

Benefits or burdens that folks?

At the church are dealing with.

That you've noticed.

May not be here.

Is rich here.

I can't really see everyone who's.

Who's on the call right now? OK.

RH **rich holschuh** 1:43:54

I'm here.
I'm still here.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:43:58
OK.

RH **rich holschuh** 1:43:58
I.
I I don't really have.
A way to approach this right now.
I apologize.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:44:15
Is there anything that you'd rather talk about or share?

RH **rich holschuh** 1:44:24
No, no.
Happy to let just listen. Thank you.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 1:44:48
If we're looking at those questions, I'm sorry. Could you put the questions back up on the?
I'm just thinking if if we're trying to just discuss.
This part too.
And someone may have mentioned this but to me.
Where folks in communities.
Actually.
Examples would be being out in nature trying to go to a park playground.
Kids playing games sports.
People taking walks.
Are examples in any kind of exercise?
This provides certainly.
Health benefits and.
A clean environment.
Need space.

Is helpful for that and I would say an environment.

Either an environment that is not clean is a burden and and also probably within this probably has less to do with.

Climate. But it does have to do with, I think, environmental justice is that in certain communities.

Environmental burdens could be the way cities and communities are designed.

If families live near.

Streets that have heavy traffic that may prevent them from, you know, kids safely, you know, walking or getting to a park or school.

I would say the those are you know the environment.

The physical in the natural environment, it's of course the the human created.

And I don't know enough about the history saying the two towns I know the most Burlington and Montpelier, but in many cities.

Physical human made environment is actually designed to create barriers to enjoying the environmental benefits of.

Green space and healthy space.

That would be my only comment to these this part to these four bullet points, if that makes sense.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:47:26

Thank you.

I would say one environmental burden that I'm thinking about.

Has more to do with.

Some of the.

Different fish communities and populations and.

Seeing the impacts of really intense logging throughout different parts of the state and what that did to their habitat.

Literally removing areas that they spawn or.

That they need to to keep driving and and.

One of the ways that I've seen that improve is by creating habitat.

And so part of me is thinking about things from that perspective as well and also wondering how.

Those concepts can be applied here.

Is keeping the the questions up helpful?

Or would you be OK if I if I stop sharing the screen?

It might be better to have a better conversation and connect a little bit more, but also if having this visual is helpful, we can move it up.

RH **rich holschuh** 1:50:51

I think it's fine to leave the questions up, Kim.

Something that comes to my mind when you brought up.

Habitat.

Umm.

Preservation or protection and.

Buzzword that comes up often in these type of endeavors is.

Is fragmentation.

As things get chopped up.

It affects the the integrity and the overall health of.

Of the interconnections and and.

When we do something about that fragmentation, it promotes connectivity and.

Various participants in the in the overall community can interact with each other in a more in a freer way because they're not blocked or obstructed or stopped.

And and.

A way that we often.

Umm.

Limit that is in terms of of fragmentation and preservation of.

The other than humans around us and what we're leaving out of that equation is ourselves.

We fragment ourselves, we separate ourselves.

We we do not promote connectivity between ourselves and the humans. The other than humans.

It kind of gets neglected.

So it your your example of, excuse me, habitat.

Protection.

Could be expanded in that direction as well.

We see ourselves as very separate from that, and we're not.

In in my lexicon, there is no nature.

We are nature.

So it's it's just a different way of looking at things, but I I like your example 'cause it.

It brought that up for me.
I hadn't really thought of it that way.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:53:15

Yeah, that resonates a lot.
So we are going to.
Come out of the breakout rooms at 1:55, so we just have a couple more minutes.
Yeah, before we end, I just wanted to thank you for sharing.
I think that embracing silence is really important.
So I just appreciate what you all have shared, but I also appreciate the assignments and Rich, I really wanna connect with you more.
I think a difficulty just being vulnerable that I have is.
My culture.
My indigenuity.
In just different parts of who I am, there's a lot of connection.
And it's also difficult because the.
That orientation.
To the world and to my life is not is not representative of the system that I work in, right?
And so I and I know folks on the A/C and the IAC want to engage.
With you. And so I just want to like, brainstorm how to better support those conversations.
Yeah. So that you are involved.

RH **rich holschuh** 1:57:13

Hey, I trust that we will get there eventually.
Yeah.
Thank you.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:57:31

Walter, I just saw your message.
No problem.
Thank you for letting us know.
When the other group comes back, we're gonna do see if there's any folks from the public that wanna share, and then we'll take a a 5 minute break.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:59:01

I'm gonna pull the IAC into the main room and then we're gonna open up the floor for public comment.

Does that sound good?

BK Barrett, Kim 1:59:12

Yep, we're ready.

DX Davis, Xusana 1:59:12

Yes.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:59:15

Thank you.

Hi everyone.

Welcome back.

We're gonna take some time now to open up the floor for public comment. If there are any members of the public who are interested in weighing in on some of the things that we're discussing today.

So the floor is open.

OK, I did.

My little facilitators count.

I'm not sure that we have anyone on who would want to give a public comment at this time, so I'm going to close the floor.

And we're going to take a 5 minute break.

Thank you all for your patience.

We have less breaks in the schedule as per as usual, so we'll return at 2:05.

Thank you all. See you then.

BK Barrett, Kim 2:06:54

Alright, everyone, let's come back.

You can.

Come back on camera.

That'll help us know.

Hey everybody, if you are back on either, please turn on your camera or give us some

sort of like fun reaction.

We want to see that everybody's on. If you find anything creative in the React bar, definitely hit that button.

BJ

Birch, Juliet 2:08:27

And I might have to.

All right.

Thank you guys for joining us again.

I'm gonna share my screen. We're having a hard time seeing everybody on our computers. So thank you all for turning your cameras on.

It's much appreciated.

So the next part of our discussion is gonna be talking, returning to the conversations we've been having about the ejfp definition. As we know, we've had tons of questions over the last couple of months grappling with this definition, especially as it pertains to the nature of the data.

Geography and what it means to have a definition.

That's geographically tide and you know, all kinds of other things about having a definition that accurately represents the population's. We're hoping to serve.

So we're really excited to introduce John Adams, who is the director of the Vermont Center for Geographic Information at the Agency of Digital Services.

John is gonna talk to us today about.

Some things related to geography, the data and other things related to the definition. And we're gonna have a great. We're gonna have a good conversation, I think.

So we're having some technical difficulties on our end, but.

Kim Barrett

Oh yeah, I just wanted to add one other thing, which is especially for the any of the A/C members who are still on the call.

That another portion of this, this discussion with John is about exploring ways to actually improve the e.g. FP definition. You know, after understanding and using his expertise to understand the data.

So I just wanted to share that context as well.

So the floor is open to you, John.

AE

Adams, John E. 2:10:29

Thank you, Juliet and Kim and thank you folks for inviting me.

We also have Chevali Miles here from our team who's our technical liaison to the census and our boundaries.

Manager and I will share.

My team and a slide deck and I will share these slides with folks after the presentation as well.

Let's see.

So as Kim mentioned, I put some of these slides together with the idea that they could be notes used as reference for consideration with an eye towards maybe improving the existing current definition and.

I'll just briefly go over the existing one and since this geographies, some of the challenges at least that I see with the existing definition, particularly as they relate to margin of error and those census geographies.

Race in the the 2020 census and the challenges that has posed for the existing definition and then some of the alternative options such as changing the geography to improve reliability, modifying some of the variables.

Perhaps considering alternative ones and then specifying a data source or a specific update process period.

Very briefly on the screen, here is the existing.

EJFP definition that I believe.

Most people on this call or many of you should be.

Familiar with it says a census block group in which the annual median household income is not more than 80% of the state median household income.

That persons of colour and indigenous peoples comprise at least.

6% or more of the populations.

Or at least 1% or more of households have limited English proficiency.

So any census block group where one of these criteria are met would qualify as an EJFP definition.

A key part of that is the the geography. So the unit of geography we're dealing with here is the census Block group on the screen.

You have, uh, the census geography. So those are the these are the areas by which the census reports out.

Statistics about our population here on the the left, you got the the state with the

counties.

On that top row are the geographies that are nested within each other.

So the tracks fit into the counties.

The block groups fit into the tracks and the blocks fit into the block groups.

On the below them, you'll have two other geographies that are reported on.

One being county subdivisions, which we typically refer to as municipalities or towns, and then places and places are just statistical areas.

Oftentimes they can be historic villages, but they don't necessarily need to be.

They the county subdivisions in Vermont, do fit into the counties.

But they may not have any relationship to the other geographies.

So the the two that will will mainly be looking at today are the tracks and the block groups.

Tracks are typically made-up of two or three block groups. As you can see here, we're looking at Lamoille County and the tracks within Lomoile County, and then the block groups within those tracks.

In these geographies can vary significantly in land area across the state depending on population density.

Some more urban areas, the blocks and groups are smaller in land area and in more rural ones they are larger.

We'll look at just a couple of examples to illustrate that.

So this is Winooski.

This is or. This is rather one tracked in Winooski and that track is made-up of.

Two block groups separated by that line in blue there, and you can see the the track has its population of a little over 2200 people.

The block to the north has a population of 1400 and the.

Block group to the South is.

The southwest corner is 813.

People.

Risky. So the county's subdivision and the town of Winooski or the City of Winooski has three tracks in total and seven block groups.

With a total of 8 total population of around 8000, so a town can have multiple tracks within it.

On the other end of the the spectrum, in terms of size and track groups in Vermont, this is Vermont's largest census track in the Northeast Kingdom.

This has a population of.

Close to 1700 in that entire area and two block groups.

As well.

And you can see some of the statistics on those block groups.

You can see that.

Significant difference in population density here, where we have 1.2 people per square mile compared to.

Where we're in in Winooski at greater than than 4500 people per square mile in that small block group there.

So.

Example of a single block group with 11 towns and a total of 797 people, and several of these towns have a population of.

About zero.

In terms of what a typical block group has in terms of population, so each one of these points represents a block group and this is their distribution across.

How many people that each of these have so you can see most of them have between 500 and 1500 people within them.

And in terms of block groups?

I mean, in terms of tracks, here's the distribution of tracks.

We have 193 in total in the state and they have median population of three 3000 people around 3000 and most have between 1500 and 5000.

People within them.

One other important thing to note here is the difference between the the census surveys and the decennial census. In the American Community Survey, which often. Just refer to as ACS. The decennial happens every 10 years and it's a count of where every resident lives on April 1st.

And this includes data on race and ethnicity. It does not include data on income and language, which is included in the American Community Survey, which is a census program.

The ACS is a.

Ongoing sample of the population and they release those data in one and five year estimates in Vermont.

We typically use the five year estimates, the one year estimates.

Are released and often more useful for.

Populations or areas with populations of 65,000 or more of which we have no places or municipalities in Vermont.

Although it is.

The one year data at the statewide level can be useful.

Another thing to note.

So so this line here shows the sample size of the American Community Survey in Vermont.

And you can see it in a typical year. It's usually around 8000 households and in 2020 that number.

Dropped down to around 5500 due to the pandemic which resulted in a higher margin of a error.

Census did release a statement saying, you know, this didn't meet their.

Quality standards in May normally have not released some of the data, but they did.

Choose two with these caveats and.

Information hoping that people would take this into account when making use of these data that include 2020 in the year in particular, which you can see here, that the bottom bar in green is showing the most recent ACS five year data, the 2020 data that includ.

2020.

What do I mean?

Or what is a margin of error?

So the margin of error shows how much an estimate might vary and.

Includes a a confidence interval.

So ACS uses a confidence interval of 90%.

So they are confident to they're 90% confident that the numbers that they are reporting are within the margin of error that they are reporting.

Since block groups are smaller in sample sizes and tracks, they have larger.

Margins of error and we'll walk through a few examples of what what that looks like.

So in terms of a median household income?

The median for the five year 2022 data is for statewide is around 74,000.

\$74,000 and 80% of that median is 59 two.

The median margin of error for a block group is around \$21,000, or little over \$21,000.

So you can see the significant range you have there with the margin of error.

It is reported out so each census block group will have a different.

Margin of error depending on the response rate.

So what we're looking at here the those the white dots.

Those represent what the median household income has been reported for each block group, and the green bars or the dots are the the margin of error added and subtracted.

So that's the range of which we're 90% confident that the median household income falls in that group. And you can see that it.

It is a fairly large margin of error for block groups, and on the far right we've highlighted one with the particular.

Large one where the census is saying we're 90% confident that the household median income is somewhere between 8267 thousand dollars.

Just essentially saying, we really have no idea what the median household income is for this census block group.

Additionally, there are 25 block groups which they have no data and and have not reported anything out on so that there's just no information on those block groups in the state.

Comparing that to tracks, you can see the the margin of error.

There is still one that is sizable, but but much smaller than it is for block groups, and that's at give or take \$12,700.

Here's that same graph looking at tracks and what the distribution is there, and you can see that there is.

Relatively higher degree of confidence by which.

You'd be able to say that a block group is.

Does meet the definition ejf P definition?

Umm and and folks should feel feel free to, you know, stop me or jump in if there are any any questions as I go through some of this.

I realize it can be a little bit little bit dense and A and a bit much for you know this this Friday afternoon here.

So feel free to to stop me if there's any clarification needed.

Here, we'll we'll transition over to looking at.

The percentage households in block groups who speak a language other than English, and it's a graphic. It will show similar concept to the other one, but we'll we'll be moving horizontal instead of vertically here to keep us keep us on our toes the.

These these points here are all represent different block groups, and it's a little hard to follow.

Here as you can see on the far left, it actually looks like a line, but those are all different block groups that are all stacked on top of each other.

And that's because most block groups they report out on as having zero population. That's peak language other than English, the orange bar, much like in the other graphic, represents that that threshold.

So all block groups to that side of the line qualify as an echf population.

And when looking in at the margin of error, we'll we'll look at the the what it looks like on the low end and the high end.

When accounting for the margin of error on the low side, there are actually only three three block groups that end up over that 1% number.

Now the inverse. When you you look at it on the on the high side.

Every single block group would qualify as having greater than.

1% so with with the threshold being that low.

There's really a high degree of uncertainty, almost to the extent that we're essentially adding maybe some random.

Random block groups that may qualify as.

Ejfp populations.

Moving on to the the two race in the the 2020 Census.

So.

WA Willard, Abbey 2:26:11

Can I just interrupt for one quick second?

So just like for this is Abby for like clayperson extrapolation from what you just shared, is it accurate to say John that using?

AE Adams, John E. 2:26:15

Thank you.

WA Willard, Abbey 2:26:26

Census blocks with the margin of error doesn't meet the intention.

Of the like, that's that's not going to be a workable.

Measure.

AE Adams, John E. 2:26:42

I guess I guess what I'm saying is that there is a very high high margin of error.

When looking at median income and.

WA Willard, Abbey 2:26:54

Yeah.

AE Adams, John E. 2:26:56

In and then even I don't know if it's even higher, but there's a combination of an issue with of threshold and the margin of error that is problematic for.

For the language barrier.

It ultimately this one may have less of an impact because.

There's overlap with the other other variables.

But at the same time, I I think the idea of or looking at what the intent of the law is and where the threshold is and the margin of error that this does pose some some challenges. And we'll look at it a bit later in these slides. But.

Either you know considering alternative variables or.

Geographies could help improve the margin of error or in this variable in particular.

Perhaps changing the the threshold could be warranted, and I believe in places like New Jersey it is 40%.

In Massachusetts, it's 25%. So that's, you know, one in four people are in Vermont.

We're looking at one in 99 or one in 100.

People and it's it's just essentially we have no that information is not available like there's no confidence in terms of whether or not a block group has meets that 1% threshold.

WA Willard, Abbey 2:28:33

So my next question is in the example of looking at.

Income.

Moving it to the track level, there's a more reasonable margin of error range.

Would that same outcome be the case if looking at?

Households and and most spoken language if we went to the track level.

AE Adams, John E. 2:29:02

Will certainly improve.

It will still nap with any degree of confidence.

Indicate whether.

Attract is has a 1% or more yeah below or above or below 1% and one of the the things we did to verify that was we took the 20.

WA Willard, Abbey 2:29:14
OK.

AE Adams, John E. 2:29:23

11 to 2016 census data and then the 2017 to 2022.

So there's no overlap in those and then compared and you would expect.

That there would be some a good degree of overlap, right?

Like if if one of those tracks qualified or blocked groups qualified.

In that earlier in the 2011 to 2016 group, there should be a higher likelihood that they would qualify in the.

2017 to 2022 and the result was that.

Statistically, it was the same as if you would randomly select them.

The overlap.

There's there's, there's very little in terms of the block groups.

I think we found that there was an overlap of 13 and and.

Statistically, there, there should be at least one of 10 if there was. If you had had just randomly selected them. So it may not be completely random, but it's pretty pretty close.

To race racing the 2020 census.

Why do these these maps look so different?

On the right we have.

A map I believe was created by the Conservation Law Foundation and this is I think, what was used in considering what looking at the existing or or creating the current definition which has that threshold of of 6%.

And for bipoc populations and.

The areas in green there are those that qualify with that definition. On the left is are the areas that qualify using the 2020.

Census definition and the reason for that that that significant difference is related to. The count.

And and how the decennial census.

Raised that percentage of of bipod population to 10.2% as opposed to.

Previously we were looking at around 6% for the state for the.

I have numbers here on comparing the 2010 to the 2020 Census, and this largely has to do with improvements to the design of the survey and the way the question was asked.

So while there was certainly an increase in.

That population, it was really.

An undercount happening before, and we are now just more accurately counting.

The population, particularly those that identify as two or more races.

So here you can see by broken out by county.

The increase in percentage of population identifying.

As two or more races and far fewer people identifying as white only in population.

Here's another another graph showing each point as a a block group, and you can see the distribution by block groups for the 2016 to 2020 ACS.

The on the far left you can see the block groups estimated with A0 bipod population and then the median and then.

The existing height FP 6% threshold there, so all block groups on that side of the line qualifies EJF P population.

Here you can see the 2021 and then 20225 year ACS data and you can see that median is starting to drift to the right and then when we add the the 2020 census numbers you can see a significant percentage of the state.

Would be to the right of that line and we can expect that the five year ACS estimates will eventually catch up to the 20.

20 census.

So another way of of looking at this.

Here is the jfp definition in terms of block groups using the 2022 ACS five year data.

So those those points in green represent an EJF P block group and and the lighter colour ones not EJAJFP.

Here is the.

Breakdown by category of how a block group qualifies so it can be.

By race alone.

By income alone at 58, language 15 race and income.

Together 41.

Race and language together 28.

Income language 10 and then for under all three criteria we have 14 block groups.

Now when we compare that or when we.

Use the 2020 census data.

You can see here that we have around 92%.

Of Vermont's population, that would fall into an EJP.

P Census Block group and you can see the breakdown.

By category there as well.

Are there any?

Any questions around?

Around that.

In some ways it's.

I mean, there's a lot there, but in some ways it's it's it's somewhat simple or straightforward.

In terms of, you know, alternative options to consider, there's changing the geography. So using tracts instead of block groups would significantly reduce the margin of error, increasing the confidence that each AFP qualifies would meet the definition. The trade off there being that.

They are less granular in area so.

You have the higher degree of confidence, the lower degree of of.

Decision when going from Block Group to tract.

An example here using the the 2022 ACS data of what it would look like going from Block Group.

To track.

And Chapel also put together a list, looking at a few other states.

And there are links here.

Some redistribute this. If anyone is curious in checking out.

Various definitions, some of which do use block groups, others of which use use tracts.

So if anyone is curious, they can.

Have a look at what other states are doing, what those, how those geographies look across their various applications.

Aside from geography, there's modifying the threshold.

So this one I think is one that seems a bit more straightforward.

So again, going from looking at the 2019 ACS data where we're at 6.3%.

And the 2020 data, which is more accurate at 10.2%.

Of Vermont's population, identifying as as persons of colour or indigenous people.

Using.

Six current 6% threshold is is likely end up in a scenario where over 90% of Vermont's

population will live in an EJP block.

I can't make any recommendations or I'm not qualified to suggest any numbers as to what that appropriate threshold is, but for the sake of just illustrating.

What that could look like? Here's an example of a map of using a 10% threshold. The track level.

So on the left you have the.

Existing definition and the using 2020 decennial data at the track level and then on the right. What that would look like if that threshold were to change from 6 to 10%.

You can see a pretty significant difference there by moving that that number from 6:00 to.

10%.

The language one I think is is maybe a little.

A little trickier.

And.

Getting an accurate count of the households that that speak languages other than English and Vermont is very challenging to start with.

And then the ACS estimates are simply just not not reliable at that geography. And when we're dealing with a threshold of 1%, we sort of risk introducing random areas as EJFPS.

Which is maybe a good segue to thinking about potentially alternative variables.

So depending on the use case it's it could be possible that some of these these ACS variables are just not a good fit and.

It's it's possible that we have, you know, local knowledge and and service organizations have maybe much better information or or accurate understanding of where populations.

Where populations live and.

You know, we were talking earlier a little bit about we we often hear talking about data-driven decisions and I think this is a situation where we wanna think of it more as data informed decisions and how we don't need to be sort of beholden to these.

These census numbers, if they don't meet the needs of our goals or what the the programs or the definition, is trying to accomplish and.

And sometimes you know the information we already we already have or we just need to.

To look internally to our programs, to people working with these communities to help us identify where they are on a map.

Here I just put an example of two readily available data sources. The directory of Affordable Rental housing managed by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency. You know, these are the the points in blue set size by number of units. As well as the CDOEO directory of of mobile home parks, both of which we have relatively decent information around and the makeup of populations in these areas and and which is available at a fairly high granular level. And I don't know whether or not.

It's appropriate or not to use these data sources, but I thought there were a good example of.

Something that could be potentially considered or what's what's currently out there and existing.

And then finally, I think considering specifying the source and the of the data and the update period.

Could help.

It be a practical way to ensure sort of predictability and help with any administration of the the definition or anyone using it.

And one example here for that is that of the new market tax credits and the new market tax credits is a federal program that provides.

Tax credits for investment in low income communities and they update their eligibility areas every five years using using ACS data so that for the past two periods they used.

2011 into 2015 and then 2016 to 2020 and they have a transition period. So that was last year where the definition would qualify under both and they do this.

Simply because of the the cost.

Complexity of changing the definition and a lot of these sort of the the projects and investments and people working with it are dealing with projects that spend you know multiple years and how challenging it would be to to have sort of a moving. Definition every year for them them to work with.

So that's something else to.

To consider and and could avoid situations like we see here.

The 2020 census.

Data resulting in in.

EJFPD population or or areas that I don't think met the the intent of the law which believe it was not to have almost the entire state qualify as an ejsp population.

So if that the data source was specified and there was a fine specific period of time, I

think that could be avoided as well.

And there'd be a certain amount of.

Predictability of what?

And and shared understanding of where those areas would be.

I will.

I'll stop now and stop sharing my screen here, but I'm happy to pull up any slides if anyone has specific questions around any of these.

Put everyone to sleep.

WA Willard, Abbey 2:44:02

No, no, I think this is really interesting. And and I I guess my comment is.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:44:02

Yep.

WA Willard, Abbey 2:44:10

I I want to think through like it.

It seems pretty clear that the the metrics and the thresholds aren't.

A feasible.

Set of data that we can or or or measures that we can use and so.

And yet I know there was a lot of impassioned hard work that went into suggesting those.

And so just like being sensitive around, if there were suggested changes, how do we bring in the folks that were a part of establishing those 3 criteria originally so that it doesn't feel like we're not.

Being sensitive or being, you know, appreciative of those measures, but that there's like a true data-driven rationale for why we have to find some other proxies or set different thresholds or do something differently.

MC McIlvennie, Claire 2:45:25

And I'll, I'll just echo Abby.

It didn't put me to sleep.

I actually thought it was really helpful to see all of that laid out in like very to me understandable chunks and it it makes me wonder.

More broadly, like what?

The extent to which we have good local data sets on areas where we know there is vulnerability in Vermont like I.

And I know we have a lot of or some Vermont specific tools and I feel like many of them reference federal data sets, which I so that just makes me curious if there is kind of an inventory that lists somewhere of like data sets on Vermont that we.

Know are collected locally that have like good reliability that we may wanna consider otherwise 'cause I feel like other States and other federal tools similarly use like a very consistent set of data sets that everyone.

Doesn't like but doesn't.

Think of anything better to use.

AE

Adams, John E. 2:46:28

And I I do.

I did try to present this in a way of thinking of those.

You know that that the work and maybe consensus that went around went into the the the previous ones.

You know the idea of if you do, say change to tracks and simply.

Adjust the.

The 6% bipac threshold to 10 to account for this the same difference.

I think that would be a way of addressing the issues related to the margin of error and then the change in the more accurate.

Population counting, while essentially I think.

Meeting the same spirit or using those same.

Those same criteria.

I'll be at at a a slightly.

Wider geography than block groups.

BJ

Birch, Juliet 2:47:36

Yeah, something that has come up behind the scenes when we've been working with John.

To give you guys this information.

Is and also this is something that has come up with the Ebsg task group as well.

Is that a lot of these kind of data related?

I guess obstacles that we're we're having are due to the fact that the definition is geographically tied.

And there are.

Benefits in for some of the deliverables and there are good reasons for some of the deliverables.

Why the definition should be geographically tied, but for example, when it comes to reporting on environmental benefits and ensuring that the benefits are being received by the target population who are not?

Localities. They are human beings. They're individuals.

That also starts to make me reflect on if it's possible to have more.

Definitions if it's possible to have a definition that is geographically tied, that can be used for the purposes that you know a geographically tied definition could benefit us with, and the definition that reflects the same variables. The same kind of indicators of whether or not you're a you.

Know environmental justice Community member, but isn't geographically tied and is just dependent on those particular variables.

And therefore can.

Be applied to individuals, such as something I've been thinking about.

BM

Boomhower, Michele 2:49:18

That was an interesting point, Julia.

Thinking about, you know, kind of the difference between being provided a benefit through a food program.

Food distribution program versus the benefit of being able to walk in a park. You know, it's just.

Very, there's a lot to think about here.

The one thing that came to mind for me and listening to John's presentation and then Abby and Claire's comments was.

Have do we know if the parties who proposed to the legislature these parameters have contemplated the?

Disparities that John is describing, and if not is that.

But is that a organized sort of group or group of parties who we could provide this information to and?

Is there a mandate to go back to the legislature?

To.

To confirm like, I feel like the the, the, the methodology we are to use is described in statute, but was there any?

Sort of leeway in terms of us being able to come back and report to the legislature on what the ramifications would be if we used those parameters versus another parameter.

And should there be consideration potentially of returning to the legislative committees to discuss this?

And I don't even know if we. I think we have more time, but not a lot more time.

But I don't know it's it's a super complicated and I guess I think about the.

Climate work we're doing and.

Sort of.

The the data confab we've gotten into in terms of some of the discussions with some of the stakeholders and.

I'd hate for us to go forward with our work, make just make a decision of how we're going to interpret the statutory criteria and and then.

And then be found to be on the wrong side of the decision.

Also the other thing I was thinking about was.

If we use proxies.

The we need to be, we need to be able to assure that the proxy information we use is collected or identifiable across the entire state.

In other words, if we use like.

A service agency's information does that service agency operate in every part of the state?

So just a few thoughts.

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 2:52:27

And that last part, Michelle, this is Carla from the agency of Natural Resources.

That last part has to do with alternative sources of data.

Fill the gaps, yeah.

BM **Boomhower, Michele** 2:52:42

That's right, Carla.

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 2:52:51

So with regards to the first part of your question.

The act.

Mandates that if there are any recommendations to.

Modify the definition that they be submitted to the General Assembly.
There is no language in the act with regards to consulting the legislature or.
Engaging in discussions with them. This is.
This is this was delegated to the Advisory Council.
Mostly in in conversations with the IAC.
So it really.
Sits with the two bodies. Whether or not there will be recommendations, and then
you know recommendations as we know do not mean that they will be adopted or
that those recommendations will amend 154 the way.
It's it's the way it reads right now.
And so I think another part, another important part of this conversations of this
conversation is the purpose of the definition.
What is intended?
What is the intent that use of definitions I think.
I think the the answer.
May.
Depending on the purpose, the answer may.
Lean towards.
1.
Alternative path for recommendations for definitions over other if it's guiding agency
action to ensure that.
Benefits are flowing and invest investments are flowing to the areas that need those
resources the most then.
A path would be desirable, but if it's to allow more community.
Access benefits certain benefits by meeting certain criteria.
Then perhaps the Fast forward may be a different one.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 2:55:31

These are all a lot of big considerations, definitely, and things that we're gonna have
to continue grappling with.
You know, as we continue these conversations.
So thank you all for being so engaged in digesting this information. So we can move
forward.
I also want to just take a moment to acknowledge that this we we have one Advisory
Council member on the call right now and and we had a few earlier as well, so.

This is information that we want to ensure gets dispersed to all of the Advisory Council members and we want to ensure that this conversation can continue to be had with the Advisory Council centered.

So that's something that we will work on.

But thank you so much John for sharing this information with us and hopefully we can continue this conversation potentially in future meetings, not to slip that in there at last minute considering we haven't talked about it, but we really have appreciated. Everything that you've done for us to help us to digest this information.

So thank you.

AE

Adams, John E. 2:56:39

Definitely. And you, you know where to add me. If there's any anything I can do to help or if there are any follow up questions.

Kim Barrett 2:56:48

Thanks so much, John, and thank you, Chevelle as well for your contributions and if anyone else has questions, please send them to us or to John directly.

We definitely want that conversation to continue.

We have about four minutes left in the meeting.

And so one of the things that we had wanted to share about was the mapping tool.

We can share that via e-mail.

Also, the core principles of community engagement.

The last meetings on September 20th, you are.

Voted to approve the final version of the core principles and so from there our team internally we were going to do some formatting changes and make sure that it passed for accessibility, which it did. And then we also have a responsive summary that will also be going out.

And will also be shared.

Directly with some of the folks who commented at the.

Public meetings that we held for the public comment period for the principles.

So yeah, that's pretty much it.

We'll follow up via e-mail, so thank you so much.

Have a great day everyone.

MC **McIlvennie, Claire** 2:58:08
Thanks guys.

BM **Boomhower, Michele** 2:58:09
Thank you.

WA **Willard, Abbey** 2:58:09
Thank you.

□ **Sadowski, Lauren** stopped transcription