



**Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative
Community Advisory Workgroup
Charter**

ADOPTED: December 3, 2024

1. Charter Purpose

The purpose of this charter is to outline the charge, composition, schedule, communications, and decision-making framework for the Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative Community Advisory Workgroup (“CAW”). The CAW provides a structured way for individual community members to share their opinions and perspectives, study issues, and develop recommendations related to climate mitigation action in Thurston County. The primary purpose of the CAW is to provide judicious advice, from a community member’s perspective to the Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative Staff Team, Executive Committee, and Jurisdiction Parties.

2. Background

Thurston County and the cities of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater worked with the Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) to develop the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan (TCMP) with actions to reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global climate change. As part of the first phase of this project, the four jurisdictions adopted a mutual emissions reduction goal, which is to:

Reduce net communitywide greenhouse gas emissions 45% below 2015 levels by 2030 and 85% below 2015 levels by 2050 to ensure that our community does its part to keep the global average temperature from rising more than 2° Celsius (3.6° F) above historic levels.

The second phase of the project focused on the development and adoption of the TCMP. The TCMP is our regional framework to achieve those goals and describes:

- A shared vision for the alignment of climate action with community goals;
- Data on greenhouse gas contributions from various sources;
- Strategies and actions to reduce emissions;
- Emissions reduction estimates based on the strategies and actions; and
- A strategy for implementing climate mitigation actions.

The TCMP was finalized in late 2020 and accepted by all jurisdictions in 2021. In 2022 and 2023 the TCMP collaborating partners restructured implementation of the TCMP to better serve our community. A new [interlocal agreement](#) among the four jurisdictions, executed in December 2023, defines the Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative (TCMC) as the umbrella term for the partnership; and clarifies roles and responsibilities of the groups comprising the TCMC including the Jurisdiction Parties, Executive Committee (EC), Staff Team, and Community Advisory Workgroup (CAW) (Figure 1).

3. Community Advisory Workgroup Role

Role: The Community Advisory Workgroup (CAW) meets regularly to provide community perspectives and input on climate mitigation progress and priorities to the Jurisdiction Parties, Staff Team, and Executive Committee¹.

¹ More details about the roles and responsibilities of the Jurisdictions Parties, Staff Team, and Executive Committee can be found in the [Regional Implementation Guidance](#).



Figure 1. TCMC Collaborative Structure.

4. Membership

Members

Up to 15 interested community members representing a variety of perspectives on climate mitigation actions. Members are appointed by the Staff Team for three-year terms or on a rolling basis to fill vacancies. The Staff Team developed a guidance document detailing the process for recruiting and appointing members of the CAW, which was approved by the TCMC Executive Committee on August 28, 2023. This guidance document will be posted on the Collaborative website and reviewed annually for potential updates by the CAW, Staff Team, and Executive Committee.

Application

All seats for members are filled by application. The Staff Team will initiate the recruitment process and application window as necessary. The Staff Team reviews and appoints members. The recruitment rubric will be added to the collaborative website.

Terms

All members² are set to serve a 3-year appointment. At least sixty days prior to the expiration of a rotating member's term, the CAW Facilitator will contact the member to ascertain their desire to serve another term. If they wish to serve another term, the Staff Team may reappoint the member or initiate recruitment. If a member wishes to serve more than two consecutive terms, they must submit a new application.

Compensation

Members who are not being paid by their employer while attending meetings may request and receive a stipend of \$50 per meeting attended. Members must attend at least 75% of a meeting to be considered in attendance and to receive the meeting stipend. At the beginning of each member's term, the CAW Facilitator will request that the member indicate their interest in receiving a stipend and provide any necessary documentation. Any changes to the member's stipend status should be directed to the CAW Facilitator.

5. Meetings

Frequency

The CAW meets 10-12 times a year on a monthly basis. Meetings typically occur on the first Tuesday of the month, and CAW members will be notified of any changes to the meeting schedule at least one month in advance.

Preference for Virtual Meetings

Meetings are generally held virtually, to support reduced emissions in line with the TCMP and to increase accessibility for members without access to reliable transportation. The CAW may choose to hold some meetings in person to facilitate greater opportunities for networking and relationship-building.

Leadership

Meetings will be hosted and led by a third party contracted through one of the partner jurisdictions. For this cycle, the CAW Facilitator is the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC).

Meeting Materials

The CAW Facilitator will send out meeting agendas and materials via email to members one week before the meeting. The CAW Facilitator will take summary notes of the meeting and post them online.

Quorum

A simple majority of the currently appointed CAW members is required to be present at a meeting in order for the CAW to conduct business and reach a decision. Meetings with less than a simple majority may be conducted; however, no official actions may be taken. This requirement applies both to decisions made by majority vote and those made via the consensus process outlined in this charter.

² Youth members may serve a shorter appointment.

6. CAW Norms

CAW members are asked to adhere to the following norms for participating and communicating inside and outside of meetings:

Discussions and General Meeting Norms

The CAW agrees to these meeting norms and expectations:

- Everyone’s voice is valued.
- Listen to understand.
- Be aware of how often you are speaking, with the intent to make space for all. (Step up Step Back)
- Silence is okay.
- Be open and transparent about your intentions.
- Acknowledge the contributions of others, even if you don’t agree with their perspective.
- Acknowledge and build upon the contributions of others when you agree with their perspective, but avoid repeating or rephrasing the same opinion.
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CAW Meeting Agendas

CAW meeting agendas and materials are prepared by the Staff Team and distributed by the CAW Facilitator one week before each meeting. The CAW meeting agenda will generally follow this format:

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Announcements
 - a. Staff Announcements
 - b. CAW Member Announcements
3. Business Items
 - a. Item 1
 - b. Item 2
4. Upcoming Agendas
 - a. Upcoming Agendas Review
 - b. Agenda Requests for upcoming CAW Meetings
 - c. Agenda Requests for upcoming EC Meetings
5. Adjourn

Business items may be informational (i.e., for discussion only) or for decision and will be noted as such in the agenda. When a business item is for decision, it will be noted whether the action requires a majority or consensus approval.

Brief announcements from Staff and CAW members may be shared during “Announcements” at the start of each meeting. All members can contribute to announcements by raising their hands or writing in the chat of the meeting. Business Items are generally led by the Staff Team and shall be limited to no more than two items per meeting.

At the conclusion of each meeting, any CAW member may suggest item(s) to be added to an agenda for consideration at a subsequent CAW or EC meeting. The requested items must be consistent with the

intent, purpose, and authority of the TCMC and Jurisdiction Parties. A majority of members must concur with the suggestion for the item(s) to be added to a future CAW or EC meeting agenda. The process for requesting future agenda items is detailed below.

Meeting summaries, including any action items and reminders, will be shared with all CAW members within one week after each CAW meeting.

Requesting a CAW Agenda Item

1. An individual CAW member requests a presentation or discussion item be added to a future CAW meeting. The CAW member identifies their suggested item within one of the following categories:
 - A presentation to be made by the Staff Team, a Supporting Partner, or other relevant entity or individual; or
 - An item for discussion among the CAW.
2. The member briefly describes their requested item, including the anticipated outcome, and answers the following questions:
 - Is the requested topic related to an action or strategy in the TCMP?
 - Can the action or strategy be implemented by jurisdictions and/or the identified TCMP Supporting Partners?³
3. If needed, the Staff Team may seek clarification and/or provide brief comments on the requested agenda item.
4. If the Staff Team determines that the answers to the above questions are “yes,” then the CAW Facilitator seeks majority approval for the requested agenda item.
5. If the agenda item is approved by majority vote of the CAW:
 - The CAW Facilitator documents this in the meeting notes and will work with the Staff Team to add the item to a future CAW agenda.
 - Items will be given an appropriate amount of time on a future agenda, TBD by the Staff Team. Depending on the upcoming agenda schedule, some items may take several months to schedule.
 - The CAW is asked to recognize and respect that the Staff Team will need a minimum of two months to prepare materials.
 - Staff Team may decline to present the requested agenda. Staff will provide justification for a declined agenda item.
6. If there is not a majority approval to bring the agenda item forward, the CAW member may request the agenda item again at a future meeting.

Requesting an EC Agenda Item

1. An individual CAW member requests a presentation or discussion item be added to a future EC meeting. The CAW member identifies their suggested item within one of the following categories:
 - **Briefing.** Briefings are provided by the Staff Team or Supporting Partners to update the EC on topics related to regional coordination and implementation of the TCMP.

³ The TCMP Supporting Partners include Intercity Transit, Thurston Conservation District, LOTT Clean Water Alliance, Thurston Economic Development Council, and Puget Sound Energy.

- **Discussion.** Discussions typically involve a request for feedback or guidance from the EC on a work product or initiative.
 - **Action.** Actions involve a request for formal approval or recommendation by the EC. Note: Any request for formal actions by the EC must fall within the EC’s decision-making authority and will require significant coordination with the Staff Team.
2. The member briefly describes their requested item, including the anticipated outcome, and answers the following questions:
 - Is the requested topic related to an action or strategy in the TCMP?
 - Can the action or strategy be implemented by jurisdictions and/or the identified TCMP Supporting Partners?⁴
 3. If needed, the Staff Team may seek clarification and/or provide brief comments on the requested agenda item.
 4. If the Staff Team determines that the answers to the above questions are “yes,” then the CAW Facilitator seeks majority approval for the requested agenda item.
 5. If the agenda item is approved by a majority vote of the CAW:
 - The CAW Facilitator documents this in the meeting notes. The Staff Team will work with the EC Chair to add the item to a future EC agenda.
 - The EC Chair may decline to include the requested agenda item or request to move the agenda item to a later meeting. The Chair will provide justification for a declined or delayed agenda item.
 6. If the agenda item is scheduled for a future EC meeting:
 - CAW members will determine if they want to prepare formal materials and/or a formal recommendation from the CAW to the EC. If needed, then CAW members will prepare the following to support their agenda item⁵:
 - i. A memorandum detailing the agenda item and the action/discussion request.
 - ii. Any attachments including all relevant documents in their final form.
 - Any materials/recommendations by the CAW to the EC must achieve consensus approval during a regular CAW meeting.
 - i. Any CAW materials requiring consensus approval must be provided to the CAW Facilitator for distribution to the CAW, at least one week prior to the CAW meeting during which the item will be reviewed and approved.
 - ii. If consensus on the CAW materials and/or recommendation is not reached at least two weeks before the EC meeting, the agenda item will be rescheduled to a future EC meeting.

Attendance and Participation in the CAW Meetings

- All members will review pertinent meeting materials on a timely basis and provide timely feedback. Members are not required to conduct additional research outside of reviewing meeting materials.

⁴ see footnote 3

⁵ The Staff Team will provide a template memorandum for EC agenda items. If the agenda item involves an external partner or action by the Executive Committee, the Staff Team may prepare meeting materials on behalf of the CAW.

- Members will come to meetings prepared to discuss items on the agenda.
- CAW members must attend nine (9) meetings per calendar year to remain on the CAW or request an excused absence from the CAW Facilitator in advance of the meeting. An excused absence will be considered “in attendance” for the purposes of determining CAW eligibility.
- Meetings will begin at the scheduled time. Participants who arrive late will catch up on what was missed during breaks or as other opportunities allow.

Expectations Outside of Meetings

- CAW members (as individuals) may provide public comment and input at EC meetings, at public meetings hosted by individual TCMC jurisdictions, and/or at other public meetings outside of the TCMC.
- If the CAW wishes to make collective public comment at public meetings of individual TCMC jurisdictions, or at public meetings outside the TCMC, the CAW will follow the consensus process described in this charter.
- When an individual CAW member fills the ex-officio CAW slot at an EC meeting, they will provide their perspective as an individual community member. They do not represent the views of the CAW as a whole.
- Members will direct questions and comments about the CAW, EC, and agenda items to the CAW Facilitator.

7. CAW Facilitator Norms and Expectations

The CAW Facilitator is expected to adhere to the following norms for facilitating meetings and administering the CAW:

- The CAW Facilitator will facilitate discussions with the intention of allowing all members an opportunity to share their perspectives.
- The CAW Facilitator recognizes that members communicate in different ways and will work to provide multiple ways of participation in discussions, including but not limited to smaller group discussions and allowing members to provide written feedback in addition to verbal.
- The CAW Facilitator will be responsible for communicating the consensus or lack thereof from CAW discussions.
- The CAW Facilitator will ensure, to the best of their ability, that accessibility needs are met for all CAW members.

8. Conflicts of Interest

The CAW is expected to discuss and provide feedback and recommendations on a wide range of climate action proposals, some of which may overlap with members’ professional careers or financial interests. Members will, to the best of their ability, adhere to the following norms to prevent conflicts of interest from interfering in Workgroup business:

- a) Members shall disclose to the CAW Facilitator all known or potential conflicts of interest that could influence or appear to influence their judgment prior to making a recommendation on a topic.

- b) Members will abstain from voting on a recommendation if they believe their relationship to the proposal would impair their ability to fairly and impartially judge the proposal.
- c) Members who will benefit financially from a decision shall abstain from voting on a recommendation. This rule does not apply to financial benefits that will be provided to the public at-large, but rather benefits that are provided to an organization that the member is affiliated with.
- d) Members are allowed to discuss and vote on policies that will affect organizations they are affiliated with, so long as the proposals do not directly affect the organization (or for large organizations, the specific department) in which a member works.
- e) If in doubt, members shall talk with the CAW Facilitator prior to the meeting to discuss a potential conflict of interest.

9. Decision-making Process

The Staff Team will endeavor to honor and include the feedback, guidance, and recommendations provided by the CAW. The Staff Team will report back to the CAW regarding how CAW recommendations were (or were not) incorporated within final TCMC work products. When deemed appropriate by the Staff Team, CAW recommendations and feedback, including conflicting points of view, will be provided to the EC, either as a part of a staff report or memo. Guidance and recommendations from the CAW are advisory and do not bind the EC, nor any of the jurisdiction parties, to a specific decision or action.

To support efficient, respectful decision-making, CAW members are expected to adhere to the following consensus process.

Consensus Process

Consensus decision-making is a way of reaching agreement among all members of a group. Instead of using a simple majority vote, a consensus-based process considers all viewpoints and commits to finding solutions that all members actively support—or at least can live with. Consensus is not required for all CAW decisions or recommendations. When consensus is required, the CAW will follow the zero-to-five method outlined below to facilitate discussions.

Note: The CAW may also follow the zero-to-five method to facilitate voting and discussion on other complex issues that do require consensus.

Zero to Five is accomplished by rating your level of agreement with a decision or recommendation.

- **Zero:** No way! I will block this.
- **One:** I see major issues we need to resolve, and I'm not comfortable with this moving forward.
- **Two:** I see minor issues we need to resolve, and I'm not comfortable with this moving forward.
- **Three:** I am not in full agreement but I feel comfortable moving forward.
- **Four:** I'm fine with this as is.
- **Five:** I love this! I will champion it.

Zero to Five Process

1. After briefly discussing a proposal, action, or recommendation, a consensus vote is taken.

2. Individuals rate their degree of agreement (0-5) with the proposal.
 - a. If all individuals rate their level of agreement as a three or above, the proposal will be considered approved by consensus.
3. If consensus is not reached during the first vote, individuals who rated their agreement as zero, one, two, or three will be asked to speak to their objections and offer possible solutions.
4. After further discussion, a second vote is taken. The second vote is generally the final vote on the item.
 - a. If all individuals rate their level of agreement as a three or above, the proposal will be considered approved by consensus.
 - b. If consensus is required: If consensus is not reached on the second vote, the matter will be considered not approved.
 - c. If consensus is not required: The CAW facilitator will record the outcome of the final vote and document any conflicting points of view. A vote of three or above will be considered “in favor” of the proposal; any vote less than three will be considered “opposed”.
5. If consensus is not achieved after the second vote, a CAW member may request a vote to extend the discussion for a third and final vote⁶. The request to extend the discussion must be unanimously approved in order for the CAW to proceed with a third round of discussion and voting.

Applicability of Consensus Process

The following types of decisions require consensus:

- Collective recommendations or requests from the CAW to the EC or jurisdictions
- Collective public comment to the EC, individual TCMC jurisdictions, or at public meetings outside the TCMC
- Other similar collective requests or recommendations

The following types of decisions require a majority vote:

- Approval of future CAW agenda items (as described in Section 6 of this charter)
- Approval of future EC agenda items (as described in Section 6 of this charter)
- Other simple decisions or yes/no questions, as determined by the CAW Facilitator or Staff Team
- Formal recommendations or other actions requested by the Staff Team or the Executive Committee
- Other decisions regarding complex or significant actions or commitments, as determined by the CAW Facilitator or Staff Team

The following does not require consensus or a majority vote:

- General feedback or guidance from CAW members

⁶ Extending the discussion on consensus items may result in removing or delaying other scheduled business items on the CAW meeting agenda.

Lack of Consensus

The CAW includes members from a variety of backgrounds, and it is not expected that the CAW will always be able to achieve consensus. When consensus is not reached, the CAW Facilitator or Staff Team will document the decision outcome, including any different viewpoints shared by CAW members, in the meeting summary. The CAW Facilitator or Staff Team will report the outcome of CAW discussions and decisions, including different viewpoints, to the EC and jurisdiction partners as needed.

The CAW Facilitator, Staff Team, and CAW members will work together to foster a safe and trusting environment where all CAW members and staff feel comfortable sharing thoughts and perspectives. We will respect and value the diverse experiences, viewpoints, and participation styles of all CAW members. If any CAW member or Staff Team member observes behavior that they interpret as bullying, disrespectful, or inappropriate in any way, they are encouraged to report it to the CAW Facilitator.

Decision documentation

CAW recommendations should be made during regular meetings and documented in the meeting notes. If consensus over a decision cannot be reached, the conflicting points of view will be documented in the meeting notes.

Conflict Management

Members will resolve issues within their power to solve and re-direct those issues that cannot be solved in a timely manner. If issue resolution is necessary, the CAW Facilitator will step in to help resolve conflict which cannot be resolved among CAW members.

10. Amendments

This charter may be periodically reviewed or amended or repealed and a new charter adopted, by decision of the CAW.