

TUALATIN CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

FALL 2022 OUTREACH SUMMARY

The City of Tualatin conducted public outreach between September and November 2022 to share information about the development of the City's first Climate Action Plan (CAP) and to solicit feedback that will inform the CAP. In this phase of outreach, the City of Tualatin shared information about what Tualatin's climate is projected to be like by the end of the century and how community members can help reduce their impact on climate change. The City also solicited feedback about what help people need from the City to cope with the impacts of climate change and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Over 250 people were engaged through this phase of outreach. Opportunities for engagement, as well as highlights from the feedback received, are summarized below.

Opportunities for engagement

- **1 Online Open House** offered in Spanish and English with a total of 69 responses (67 in English, 2 in Spanish); available from September 24 – November 13, 2022.
- **3 in-person workshops** with a total of 45 participants. Spanish interpretation was available at all workshops.
 - Households and Interest Groups: 17 total participants (12 English, 5 Spanish)
 - Youth: 21 total participants (20 English, 1 Spanish)
 - Small Businesses: 7 total participants (4 English, 3 Spanish)
- **2 In-person tabling events (Tigard Farmers Market and Tualatin Public Library)** with approximately 165 people engaged.
- **4 Latino Business Network meetings** attended where information about the workshops and online open house was shared.

How engagement opportunities were promoted:

- Mailers sent to all addresses within Tualatin advertising the online open house.
- Social media posts to the City's Facebook page and Instagram account.
- An article in the local newspaper, Tualatin Life, promoting the online open house.
- Posts on the project website.
- Canvassing to local businesses.
- Tualatin Chamber of Commerce networking event.
- Emails sent to interested parties on the stakeholder list.



- Personalized emails to businesses and community groups in Tualatin.
- Promotion in the Tualatin Chamber of Commerce weekly newsletter.
- Phone calls to Spanish-speaking community members about workshops and online open house.
- Flyers promoting the open house in the Tualatin Public Library and local businesses.
- A-frame signs placed at Tualatin Community Park, Atfalati Park, the Lake of the Commons, and the entrance to the Tualatin River Greenway Trail promoting the online open house

Public Feedback Key Themes

Overall, participants expressed interest in reducing their greenhouse gas emissions and a desire for the City to do more to address climate change. Participants would like the City to **provide more information and opportunities** to learn more about how to reduce their emissions and how to prepare for extreme weather events, as well as **financial help or incentives** to off-set the costs of reducing their greenhouse gas emissions (i.e., installing solar panels or a heat pump) and adapting to climate change (i.e., weatherizing home and businesses and/or repairing damage), which can be cost prohibitive. Key themes are summarized below:

- **Access to information** is key during, and in preparation for, extreme weather situations. Information should be specific, easy to understand, and provided in Spanish and English. Participants expressed interest in a City-hosted “resource hub” as a one-stop landing place for information related to climate adaptation, emergency preparedness, and extreme weather.
- Everyone is worried about **power outages**. Students are especially worried about them if school has to go online during winter storms.
- **Hazardous road or sidewalk conditions** can make it unsafe to walk, bicycle, or drive to work or school during extreme weather.
- People need **resources to stay warm and safe** – at home or on the way to work or school.
- A City **incentivization or “green” certification program for small businesses** could be a way to encourage businesses to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.
- Homeowners and small businesses would benefit from **education and information about what to do first** (i.e., install a heat pump, go solar, install smart irrigation, etc.).
- There was overall interest in a **public Climate Action Fair** to learn about resources, gather needed supplies and ways to be proactive, and learn how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Small business owners are concerned about **how climate change will impact their bottom line (i.e., the financial impacts to their business)**, which directly affects their ability to support their families. There was also concern about extreme weather, which typically leads to a decrease in customers.
- The **City can act as conduit between community members and large entities** (like utility companies) to help Tualatin adapt to climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- Spanish-speaking participants emphasized that they would like to **actively fight climate change**, rather than reacting to its effects. They raised the concern that while individual actions to reduce climate change should be encouraged, **institutional level changes and programs are needed to make real progress**.
- Many people want to make a difference, but they need **resources and support**, and they **want to feel that they are a part of a community working together**. Spanish-speaking participants were especially **interested in how community members can work together to make a positive impact** on the environment, society, and the economy (with an emphasis on the workforce). It was especially **important for these efforts to be community focused**, possibly channeled through a school or church group.
- **Youth participants expressed interest in implementing mitigation activities**, such as reforestation and recycling.

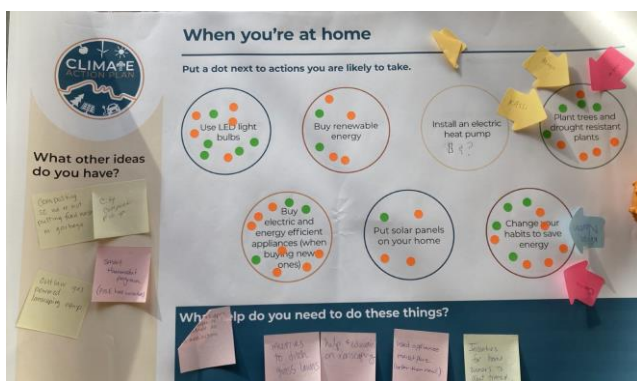
The workshop activities and online open house questions were both organized around “tools for adaptation” (how to deal with climate change impacts) and “actions for mitigation” (how to reduce your impact on the environment) and followed a similar line of questioning. The following summarizes the feedback from online and in-person participation around these themes.

Mitigation: Actions people can take to help slow climate change

Participants were asked how they would be willing to help reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and contribution to climate change by making changes at home, when traveling, and when buying things. During the in-person workshops participants were asked to put a dot by the actions they thought they could complete. Online participants selected the actions in each category they were likely to take.



When you're at home or your business



Poster from Households and Interest Groups workshop.

Participants expressed eagerness to make adjustments to their daily lives to mitigate climate change. The most frequently marked options in this category were to **use LED light bulbs, change your habits to save energy, and buying more energy efficient appliances**.

- **Top for Households:** Use LED light bulbs, change your habits to save energy, buy energy efficient appliances, and plant trees. For Spanish-speaking participants, using LED light bulbs and planting trees and drought resistant plants were top choices.
- **Top for Youth:** For both English and Spanish participants, use LED light bulbs, change your habits to save energy, heat or cool your space using clothes, shade, or fans, reduce food waste, and plant trees.
- **Top for Small Business:** Install an electric heat pump or solar panels, and buying renewable energy. For Spanish-speaking participants, installing solar panels was the top choice.
- **Top for online open house:** Use LED lightbulbs, buy energy efficient appliances, and change your habits.

When you buy things

At the workshops, most of the actions in this category had a similar number of dots and check marks, and all had been selected by nearly half of all participants in that group (except in the Small Business group). **Recycling was a very popular option, as was eating more plants, and buying fewer new things. Buying local and buying more used or durable items** were both the top selections in the Small Business group.

- **Top for Households:** Fairly even distribution across all choices, with eat more plants slightly higher. For Spanish-speaking participants, recycling, eating more plants, and meal planning were top choices.
- **Top for Youth:** For both English and Spanish participants, there was a fairly even distribution across all choices, with recycling slightly higher.
- **Top for Small Business:** Even distribution across buying few new things, more used or durable items, repairing broken items, and buying energy efficient appliances. For Spanish-speaking participants, buying local and adapting sustainable purchasing policies were top choices.
- **Top online open house:** Recycling was the most popular option, followed by buying fewer new things and repairing broken items.

When you travel / Getting to and traveling for work

Responses to the “when you travel” category were less consistent than the other two. In the Youth workshop, **most participants were willing to carpool or walk, bike, roll, or skateboard when possible**, but only a few marked the other options. **Youth participants were also hesitant about using public transit** due to not feeling safe, routes and schedules being inconvenient, or not having parental permission.

- **Top for Households:** Walk, bike, roll, or skateboard when possible, buy an electric or hybrid car, carpool, and take public transit. For Spanish-speaking participants, carpooling and taking public transit were top choices.

- **Top for Youth:** For both English and Spanish participants, carpool, and walk, bike, roll or skateboard were top choices.
- **Top for Small Business:** Working remotely (selected by all participants), coordinate carpooling, and electrifying the business vehicle fleet. For Spanish-speaking participants, working remotely was the top choice.
- **Top online open house:** Walk, bike, roll, or skateboard when possible, and buy an electric or hybrid car.

What help people need from the City to mitigate climate change

The City asked participants what help they needed to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The most common suggestions revolved around **education** or **providing financial incentives and/or assistance**.

Many participants highlighted that **many of the options are cost prohibitive and that finding the funds to complete these actions is an equity issue**. Any support the City could provide in stipends, incentives, or discounts towards actions would be helpful. An online commenter also brought up that many of these actions are impossible if you rent your home.

Many participants would be willing to take transit, walk, or bike if transit service and active transportation infrastructure were improved. Many felt that public transit is often not safe nor convenient, and dedicated paths for biking or walking are needed to encourage both.

Adaptation: How a changing climate impacts people

Changing climate patterns mean that Tualatin is seeing (and will continue to see) **more hot days per year, more wildfires and smoke, more severe rain and flooding, and more severe storms in the winter**. In this round of outreach, the City sought to understand what the community needs to deal with these severe weather conditions.



During the in-person workshops, participants discussed how they cope with each extreme weather event and what help they need from the City to stay safe. Online participants were able to choose between a list of concerns about each climate impact and asked to select the top five things that made it hard to deal with each impact.

Key themes across all extreme weather scenarios

Across all four extreme weather scenarios, **needing to stay home (indoors) or not being able to get to work or school**, were the biggest concerns for workshop participants. People were particularly concerned about the **potential loss of income and feelings of isolation and depression** (especially for older community members). In the online open house, **loss of electricity** was the top concern in all but the Wildfires and Smoke category, where the top concern was **difficulty breathing or dangerous air quality**.

Below is a summary of the highlights from the feedback received:

- **Loss of work and income was a top concern, especially for Spanish-speaking participants.** Farmworkers were specifically mentioned as bearing this burden as they may not only have to work in unsafe conditions but may also have to forgo work (and thus income to support their families) if weather conditions make it unsafe to work.
- Inclement weather can make it hard or **unsafe for employees to get to work and/or work outside**. This was especially important to Spanish-speaking participants in the Small Businesses workshop.
- **Amplified negative impacts for certain populations** (particularly in terms of financial burden, risk of death, and safety). These included: People living in poverty, people with fixed incomes, hourly wage earners (may have to miss work and not get a paycheck during severe weather situations), farmworkers, and those without shelter or housing.
- **Damage caused by flooding or storms, and the resulting repairs** is a further financial concern, especially for those with limited resources. Many people also noted that they do not know what to expect during these types of events, and **more information is needed during and in preparation for them** (i.e., creating an emergency kit, plan for evacuation or reunification, etc.)
- **Transportation to school was a key issue at the Youth workshop.** Many participants walk to school, which extreme weather conditions can make difficult or even impossible. Participants suggested **adding bus routes to pick up students who live within a mile of school during inclement weather events** (as they are not served by school buses). Alternatively, **better service from public transportation** (i.e., more frequent service, more stops, or better stop shelters) would be useful.
- Youth workshop participants were very concerned about the **wellbeing of those most vulnerable to extreme weather** and what they need to cope and survive. Participants were eager to help each other and **create community systems of support**. Several participants were interested in working with the City to implement portions of the final CAP, which could include creating systems for mutual aid and care.
- Many participants expressed concern about **increased cost of electricity during peak times during the day**. Spanish-speaking workshop participants noted that excessive heat requires more use of energy to prevent food spoilage and create a safe working environment.

What help people need from the City to adapt to a changing climate

The City asked participants what help they needed to cope with the impacts of climate change. The most common suggestions revolved around **financial assistance, information sharing, and improving or expanding City services**. Below is a summary of the key suggestions and requests:

Provide financial assistance

- Provide access to supplies and money needed to **cope with and prepare for extreme weather**. This included air conditioners, generators, air filters or masks.
- Help people pay **electricity bills**, business and home **repairs** (after damage), and **rent** (especially important if people are not able to go to work). Spanish-speaking workshop participants suggested creating **programs to help businesses who are forced to reduce or close due to wildfire smoke**.
- Provide **blankets and warm coats**.
- **Support for low-income people** who may not be able to make expensive repairs or prepare/recover from extreme weather events.

Improve and expand City services, ordinances, and infrastructure:

- Quickly **restore services** during and after weather events (i.e., clearing roads, restoring power, etc.).
- Help accessing **alternative power sources**, such as generator, during power outages. This was especially important to Spanish-speaking participants in the Small Businesses workshop.
- **Change City zoning ordinances** to limit development in flood plains.
- Provide a **safe place to go** during extreme weather (especially important for people who can't afford or do not have heating and cooling).
- Provide **places to charge phones and devices** during a power outage.
- Provide **extra transit and school bus routes** when it is too dangerous to walk outside.
- Plant more **trees** to provide shade and mitigate climate change.
- Create **regulations that protect employees and distribute information** about how to access safety equipment (such as masks).

Provide more information:

- **Opportunities to learn** about how to prepare an emergency kit, create an evacuation plan, prepare your home or business for disasters, what to do during an emergency, etc.
- How to **landscape with drought resistant** plants to reduce water use.
- Which **energy-saving improvements** (installing solar, heat pumps, pervious pavement/etc.) should people do first and how.
- **Stormwater management** for your home, business, and neighborhood.
- How to **reduce natural gas use** in a business.

- Information about **how business owners can protect their employees** during extreme weather events, which was especially important to Spanish-speaking workshop participants.

Create and leverage communication channels:

- Need for **emergency communications** so that people can help each other during emergencies, know where to go to access (i.e., food, water, etc.), and get updates.
- **Youth participants suggested using school communications**, Instagram and Facebook, signs in stores, mail, text flash alerts to communicate with them and the community.
- **Spanish business owners mentioned that radio is a useful tool for their community** as they often have the radio playing in the background.
- **Religious institutions or other community leaders** were suggested by Spanish-speakers as a good way to distribute information. Finding a trusted leader to share information with the Latino/a community is especially important as some community members may mistrust the government.

Additional feedback

In the online open house, participants had the opportunity to participate in an **interactive map**. Top comments revolved around a development in the southern Tualatin, where people were **concerned about trees being cut down**.

Related, people suggested that the City create **clearer permitting and rules around how people remove and plant trees**.

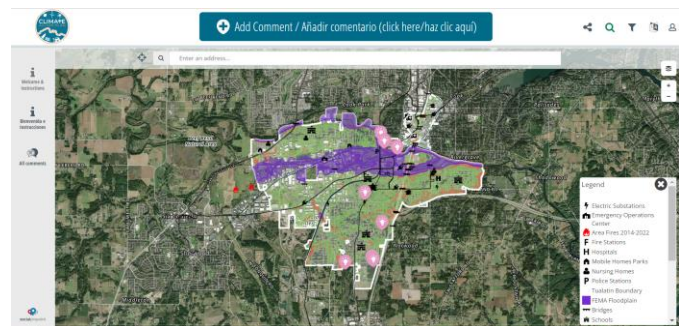
There were also location suggestions of where to place **water filling stations, ebike charging stations, and shade structures** (mostly near Tualatin Community Park).

Participants noted that many solutions to extreme weather (e.g., using AC, needing more electricity to control the temperature indoors, driving instead of walking because of heat/ice, buying more items to protect from weather), also contribute to climate change. Participants also suggested that City staff coordinate with other nearby cities and entities.

Spanish-speaking participants expressed **interest in learning about the root causes of climate change** and suggested a workshop focused on the topic. This was similar to a suggestion made by Youth workshop participants, who were interested in sharing information about climate change with their parents and guardians.

Who we heard from

Online Open House: Of the 74% of all respondents to the open house who shared their demographic data, the majority identified as white. The second largest racial or ethnic identity selected was Latino/a



or Hispanic (12%). About half of participants were between the ages of 25 to 64 and just over a third of all participants indicated that they were 65 years of age or older. About a third of participants had a household income between \$40,000 to \$99,999, a little over a quarter had a household income of \$100,000 or above, and 20% indicated an income of less than \$40,000. Most participants (38%) hold a postgraduate degree, 26% have a 2-year degree, and another 26% have a 4-year college degree.

Workshops: Of the 44 total workshop participants, 21 were 18 years old or younger and approximately nine (9) were either bilingual in Spanish and English, or predominately spoke Spanish.

What's Next?

The City of Tualatin will use the information gathered during this phase of outreach to inform the development of the draft Climate Action Plan, which will be shared with the public in a second online open house in Spring 2023.