

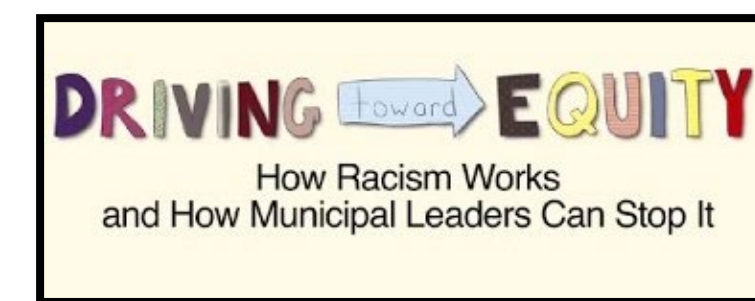
Context: Climate Action for County Services

The Alameda County Climate Action Plan for Government Services and Operations (CAP) was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2010. The Board adopted 16 Commitments to Climate Protection and 80 recommended actions. With the plan coming to a close at the end of 2020, the Office of Sustainability is researching and developing strategies for how to proceed for the next phase of climate and resilience planning.



Cover page of the Alameda County Climate Action Plan for Government Services and Operations and the Building Blocks of Climate Resilience.

More than ever it is apparent that climate action, climate resilience, and racial equity are deeply intertwined. Frontline communities have and will continue to be disproportionately impacted by climate change. Governments have a responsibility to address systematic failures that have resulted in growing inequities and to use public dollars responsibly by equipping communities to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. By uplifting the most vulnerable, we uplift everyone.



Several organizations, such as GARE and USDN, offer free or low-cost trainings for government employees on applying racial equity tools. We are applying these organizations' models along with the 4 building blocks of climate resilience to ensure equitable resilience projects are included in climate strategy planning. While this phase of climate strategy planning is focused on the County's services and operations, with impacts such as heat and smoke, developing resilience for county services increasingly involves consideration and planning for frontline and vulnerable communities.

Incorporating Equity

I supported the Office of Sustainability to incorporate equity into the next phase of climate action. Some examples of my efforts include:

- Facilitated USDN equity workshop and applied lessons to projects;
- Participated in BayCAN Equity Working Group to apply equity in adaptation;
- Created comprehensive guidance for newly remote County employees to design accessible virtual meetings;
- Researched equity in other CAPs so that best practices could be incorporated into the County's next climate strategy.



The Office of Sustainability brainstormed equity at a climate strategy planning meeting.

Recommendations for Next Steps

My recommended next steps to continue using an equity lens in the development of Alameda County's next climate strategy:

Continued application of resilience project successes, such as community engagement during smoke communications.

Continued training of new Office of Sustainability staff members and interns in racial equity tools.

Continue to start with an equity lens when selecting resilience projects.

Continue to raise equity considerations when partnering with other departments to develop next climate strategy.

Continued collaboration with counterparts in other County agencies to promote use of racial equity tools.



Melissa has a B.S. in Environmental Management and is pursuing a M.S. in carbon management. Prior to Climate Corps she worked in local government water conservation as an AmeriCorps Fellow. She is passionate about urban sustainability, efficient resource use, and decarbonization. She is looking forward to taking the skills she learned as a Climate Corps Fellow and applying them to her next role as a climate professional.

Melissa Brownlie, 2020 Climate Corps Fellow



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