

Notice: This document is a DRAFT outreach and engagement strategy for the Southeast Louisiana Comprehensive Climate Action Plan. As described in the Request for Proposals for this project, the selected consultant will be responsible for finalizing the draft. No part of this document should be considered final, and all sections are subject to change.

Draft CCAP Outreach and Engagement Strategy

New Orleans Regional Planning Commission

May 2024

I. Purpose of the Outreach and Engagement Strategy

The purpose of this document is to detail a strategy to ensure meaningful public involvement in the development of the region's Comprehensive Climate Action Plan. This outreach and engagement strategy serves as an internal resource for RPC staff and the consultant team, delineating the roles of each. It outlines the tactics and tools for engaging stakeholders as well as a process for incorporating public feedback into the final plan. Finally, this document details the data to be collected to track the effectiveness and reach of the effort.

II. Outreach and Engagement Goals

The public outreach portion of the CCAP will help gauge how the public, stakeholders, and local governments perceive climate risks and gather their input on implementing risk reduction strategies. This strategy is developed with the following engagement objectives in mind:

1. Inform

- To create a platform for timely and transparent information sharing throughout the planning process including relevant information on the need for GHG emissions reductions and information on potential GHG emissions reduction measures.
- To provide translated information to individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) as needed.

2. Collaborate

- To use a variety of educational tools to achieve a communal vision for the regional climate action effort
- To create inclusive opportunities for the public to provide comments and feedback for consideration at key decision-making points in the planning process.
- To employ a variety of techniques to meaningfully engage low-income and disadvantaged communities as well as youth and older adults in the decision-making process.

3. Engage Specific GHG Emission Sectors

- To identify and engage specific stakeholders from the primary sectors contributing to the region's GHG emissions including subject matter experts, private sector representatives, and government agencies to identify multiple alternative strategies for climate action with an emphasis on addressing environmental justice.

4. *Involve*

- To develop methods of gathering and incorporating feedback from all target audiences in a way that is useful in constructing and building public support for the final climate action strategy.
- To take deliberate actions to lower barriers to participation at events, in surveys, etc.

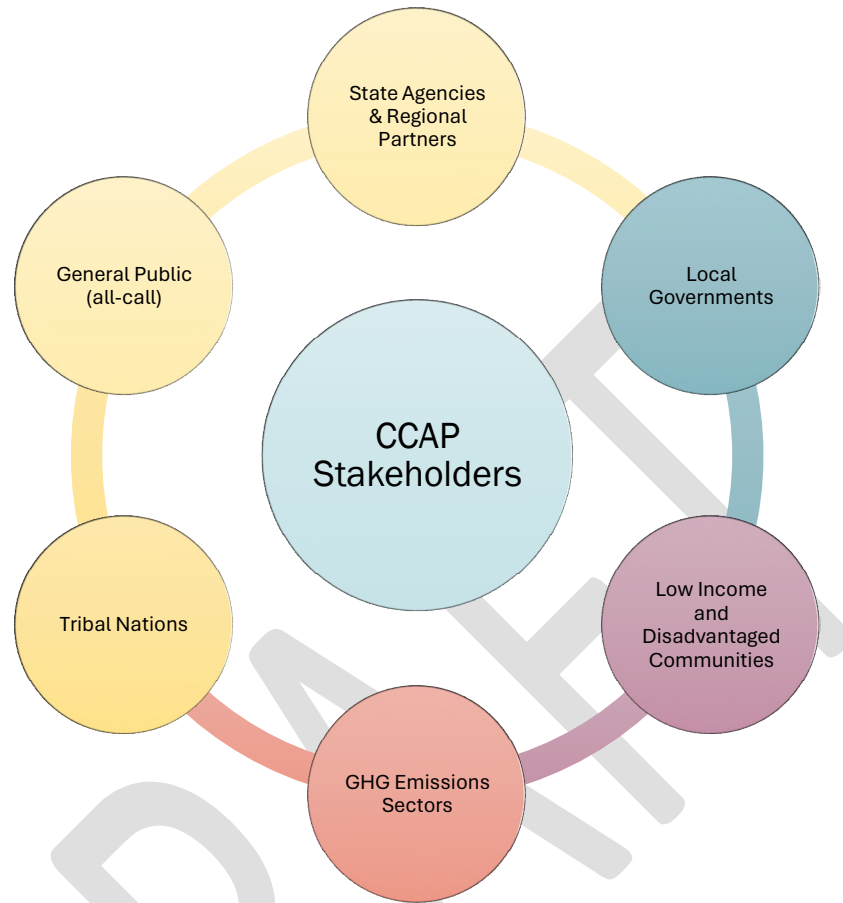
III. Identifying Stakeholder Groups

The RPC has drafted a stakeholder database which identifies stakeholders from the following groups or sectors.

- Community and Faith Based Groups
- Non-profit and Advocacy Groups
- Academic Institutions (Higher Ed and K-12)
- Labor/Workforce Organizations
- Energy/Electricity Sector
- Transportation Sector
- Industrial Sector
- Building/Energy-Efficiency Sector
- Waste Management Sector
- Agriculture Sector

The RPC will share this database with the consultant team who will review, supplement where necessary, and continually update throughout the planning process. Extra attention will be given to the engagement of low income and disadvantaged communities (LIDAC), which is described in more detail below. The database can inform the development of contact lists for particular stakeholder groups. For example, a listserv of community-based organizations and faith-based groups would allow these groups to share pertinent project details and promote further engagement efforts within their communities.

Figure 1. CCAP Stakeholders



The consultant team should use the database to track the dates of communications and events conducted with each of the above-listed groups. The consultant team will oversee engagement with these groups/sectors as well as with the general public, while the RPC staff, with the support of the consultant team, will spearhead communications and engagement with the local and state government points of contact including elected officials and special department representatives including but not limited to:

- LA DOTD
- LA DEQ
- LA DNR
- LA Office of Planning and Budget
- Capital Region Planning Commission
- Parish/City/Town government elected officials (Presidents, Mayors, Councilman, etc.)
- Parish/City/Town housing agencies
- Parish/City/Town public works agencies
- Parish/City/Town environmental agencies
- Parish/City/Town utility agencies
- Parish/City/Town land use agencies
- Parish/City/Town waste management agencies

- Tribal Nations

IV. Engagement with LIDACs

The CCAP, funded through the EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program, will advance the goals of the Justice 40 Initiative which aims to deliver 40% of the overall benefits of relevant federal investments to disadvantaged communities. Providing meaningful engagement opportunities to LIDACs and individuals with lived experience of injustice is one of the primary objectives of this planning process. LIDACs have been identified using EPA's EJScreen tool and the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST). These maps will be shared with the consultant.

The consultant team will develop specific strategies to increase participation among LIDACs which may be detailed herein or in other sections of this document.

Some steps to reduce LIDAC resident's barriers to participation include:

- ✓ Host in-person meetings in LIDACs in public places such as community centers, parks, libraries, and existing events to meet audiences where they already are.
- ✓ Hold meetings after work hours.
- ✓ Provide outreach material in multiple languages based on the demographic makeup of the LIDAC and make sure bilingual staff are present at meetings to reduce the language barrier.

LIDAC engagement should also be coordinated with the development of the LIDAC Benefits Analysis which will take place further in the planning process once preliminary GHG reduction measures are established.

V. Online Engagement

In consultation with RPC staff, the consultant will develop CCAP webpage to house all CPRG-related and CCAP content. The website should include information related to outreach opportunities, contact information, and plan progress. The consultant could opt to use a third-party web platform tailored to public engagement, with the approval of the RPC staff and justification of particular benefits. The consultant will continually update the website as needed in order to enhance outreach. Website content should include the following information of which the consultant can further detail in this strategy document:

- Calendar of engagement events with event details
- Factsheets
- GHG inventory (with a description of GHG emissions processes and example methods/policies for emissions reduction)
- An online ideas platform for submission of climate action feedback
- Links to In-Depth Surveys
- Include some quick polls on the website to encourage interaction and gauge preference for certain benefits or GHG reduction strategies (See Houston & Indianapolis)

Online engagement can be further encouraged through the following. The consultant will detail how they intend to use these tools (i.e., when, where, how, etc.) to expand online interaction among the general public:

- Newsletters
- Social media
- Radio interview/advertisement
- Newspaper advertisement
- Promotion at outreach or tabling events
- Online materials available in multiple languages

VI. Utilizing Surveys/Questionnaires

The consultant team will use surveys as a tool to gather important community feedback into the development of the CCAP. The consultant team should detail a survey strategy, apart from the quick online polls mentioned above, explaining how surveys will be deployed as part of the engagement and outreach process. The consultant will detail the number of surveys being used, the target audiences for each survey, the informational objectives of each type of survey deployed, and finally the survey questions being asked. Analysis of survey responses should be incorporated into the development of the CCAP actions.

As an example, some survey objectives could include:

- Gauge participants' initial responses to climate change/climate stressors.
- Understanding the perceived risks of climate change among targeted audiences.
- Understanding a targeted audiences' preference in reducing emissions and reducing risks.
- Understanding community/stakeholders ranking of importance of the priority GHG reduction measures in the PCAP.

The consultant should detail methods for the distribution of surveys, including reaching audiences without access to computers. Some methods could include:

- Hosting surveys on CCAP website & RPC website.
- Distributing surveys through social media.
- Advertising surveys through radio/tv broadcasts.
- Having local parishes/municipalities/industry stakeholders help distribute surveys on their social media accounts or newsletter publications.
- Boost survey responses by translating it into Spanish and Vietnamese.
- Provide surveys or QR codes to surveys at outreach events.
- Partner with libraries and local community centers to gather survey responses.

VII. Special Outreach Events

The consultant team will plan for a variety of outreach events (in-person and virtual) to help achieve the objectives of this effort. The specifics of each type of event should be detailed below, including but not limited to the date, time, location, purpose, targeted audience, staffing needs, and resource needs for each event. Some types of events which should be held are described below.

Intergovernmental Events

Intergovernmental events, such as workshops, meetings, and roundtables, should be planned to increase coordination among the local, state, and tribal governments/agencies in the 9-parish region.

They can serve to gather input and develop more implementable emissions reduction strategies. Events and meetings should take place within each Parish's locale and occur regionally to allow for intergovernmental collaboration.

Sector-Specific Events

Stakeholder input will include targeting stakeholders from ten different sectors identified by RPC which covers education, workforce, government, community groups, and industry-specific sectors such as transportation and waste management. Consultants will utilize lists created by RPC and expand on these contacts. Stakeholder outreach should center around identifying existing climate priorities and concerns for each specific sector and providing educational opportunities to help identify emissions reduction strategies. Consultants will need to make each meeting and event sector-specific and tailor materials to each subject as the outcomes from workforce groups may look different from an industry specific group. Outreach strategies could include the following formats:

- Subject-Specific Panels
- Roundtables and Listening Sessions
- Workshops
- Survey Distribution

Community Leadership Team Events

As part of its strategy to ensure meaningful engagement with impacted community members, the RPC will coordinate with local officials to engage leaders of local neighborhood organizations and community groups, who will be asked to participate in Community Leadership Teams. These teams will be organized based on geographic proximity or organizational focus and will meet periodically throughout the CCAP development process. The Community Leadership Teams will be integral to the development of the climate action plan, weighing in on the participation process itself as well as developing GHG pollution reduction strategies. The Community Leadership Teams will also provide a feedback loop between the RPC and citizens within each community they represent. These teams will serve in addition to other subject-area focus groups and the RPC's Project Advisory Team.

General Public Events with Emphasis on LIDAC Participation

Public outreach will need to include both a wide public audience that represents the 9-Parish region and targets LIDAC communities. The RPC will employ community mapping to identify strategic and accessible locations for events targeting disadvantaged communities. The consultants will put together a plan to reach out and target the public and include LIDAC communities. Events should be designed to inform, collaborate, engage, and involve participants and could include the following outreach strategies:

- Listening sessions
- Open Houses and roundtables
- Community workshops to develop and prioritize reduction strategies
- Tabling at events to inform and engage with participants
- Survey distribution

Intercept Events

To capture a wide public audience, the consultant should utilize existing public events to meet people where they already plan to be without requiring additional time commitments from the public. Events should be identified by the consultant and reviewed by RPC and include a wide variety of events such as existing community events and meetings, festivals, high pedestrian and foot traffic areas, and farmer's markets. Public outreach at these events can include survey distribution, tabling, and presentations. Outreach conducted at these events should be supplemental to additional target specific events, meetings, and surveys.

VIII. Other Communications Tools

This section describes additional communications tools to be deployed at events, online, or through other media outlets to assist with messaging and education.

- fact-sheets and informational brochures to describe GHG emissions processes and methods/policies for emissions reduction
- brief overview/fact-sheet of CPRG and the PCAP/CCAP Process (developed with RPC)
- informational material for newspaper or radio media outlets (including minority news media outlets)

IX. Tracking Engagement Effectiveness

Periodic reviews of the public involvement and stakeholder engagement process will be conducted to identify opportunities for improving the process. The consultant team will establish performance goals and track the following information throughout the planning process:

Events:

- Census tracts targeted for each meeting, workshop, or event
- Census tracts represented at each meeting, workshop, or event
- Demographic representation, as indicated by voluntary disclosure of income range, age, sex, and race
- Indigenous groups targeted and represented at each meeting, workshop, or event
- Method of advertisement for each meeting, workshop, or event
- Number of total participants at each meeting, workshop, or event
- Number of events held with resources for Limited English Proficiency in accordance with Language Assistance Plan

Surveys:

- Number of responses collected from online and in-person surveys
- Zip codes from survey respondents
- Demographic representation, as indicated by voluntary disclosure of income range, age, sex, and race

General Communications and Engagement:

- Number of and type of news media outlets engaged
- Number of website hits

— Number of communications received

X. Identifying Major Milestones

Summer 2024 – Finalize Outreach and Engagement Strategy and develop CCAP website.

Late Summer/Early Fall 2024 – Finalize initial surveys and begin distribution.

Early Fall 2024 – Begin hosting targeted outreach events.

End of 2024 – Conduct at least 50% of total meetings/events and hold GHG sector-specific events.

Early Spring 2025 – Host remainder of events to achieve “Collaborate and Involve” objectives and develop CCAP strategies.

July 2025 – Complete Outreach and publish first draft CCAP for public comment.

DRAFT