

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE – CLIMATE ACTION TASK FORCE MINUTES– 10.14.20

Facilitator: Lilly Irvin-Vitela, New Mexico First

Note Taker: Xavier Vallejo, New Mexico First

Speakers:

- Ryan Mast, City of Albuquerque
- Kelsey Rader, City of Albuquerque
- Laura Tabor, Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department

Welcome

- **Ryan Mast:** Welcome everybody. On behalf of Mayor Tim Keller and the city administration, I want to express our gratitude. To introduce myself, I am the Director of the Environmental Health Department with the City of Albuquerque. I am relatively new to Albuquerque and New Mexico. I'm from Louisiana and worked with the New Orleans Climate Action Plan. The Albuquerque Climate Action Plan incorporates three important themes: equity, public health, and implementation. The city administration is dedicated to work with the community and when our team distributed the Climate Action Survey, we offered home audits. We want the task force to take the lead as a diverse and empowered collective of community members. We also want to acknowledge the public health implications of climate change. Last, we want to develop a strong road map to ensure that the climate action plan is properly implemented, and goals are met. Thank you and we look forward to working with you.
- **Laura Tabor:** Thank you for the introduction and the invitation to be here. I am the Sustainability & Resilience Officer for the Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department at the state. My role is to coordinate the state Climate Change Task Force, which includes personnel from every state agency. Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham passed an executive order to develop the task force and targets to reduce emissions statewide 45%, by 2030. It also established some policy directives including the Energy Transition Act, updating building codes, and more. These directives can be viewed in the 2019 Climate Report. Several Climate Action Teams have also been developed to collect input from communities across New Mexico to inform future climate action goals. To accomplish these ambitious goals, the entire state needs to work together.

Task Force Objectives

- **Lilly Irvin-Vitela:** Hello everyone, I am the President and Executive Director of New Mexico First. We are a statewide organization dedicated to engaging civic voice through public policy, ranging from economic development to natural resources. My colleagues, Erika Robers and Xavier Vallejo are also working on this project.
- To go over the schedule, we will be meeting every 1-2 weeks. Every meeting, we will take the time to share perspectives and deliberate to develop the framework for a Climate Action Plan for the City of Albuquerque. We want you to consider if the recommendations we develop will benefit your communities and your neighborhoods. We will meet through early March. We will have two Public Comment Meetings in February, but those dates still need to be confirmed.
- To go over the agreements, we want to come into this space for diverse points of view to share, learn, and teach. The next agreement is to respect time, as we want to share time to discuss various topics and engage with speakers. You will always have the option to pass or come back when we ask discussion questions. As the facilitator, I may prompt you to wrap up your comments to ensure that our time is share among all task force members. We ask that you respect each voice. We must

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remember that we are all here to serve the community with positive intentions. Please make sure you are respectful and attentive during task force meetings. We intend to respect consensus and leave some room for dissent. Lastly, we intend to respect engagement and transparency. These meetings will be recorded and are open to the public.

- For people interested in making comments, you can submit those via email:
 - CABQClimateComments@nmfirst.org.

Group Introductions

- **Genesis Arizmendi:** Instructor and Post-Doctoral Fellow at UNM, Affiliate of the Climate Reality Project.
- **Kevin Bean:** Member of the Central New Mexico Sierra Club: Climate Action Team, Member of the Creation Care Committee at St. John 23 Catholic Community.
- **Daniel Beaman:** Special Projects Coordinator of the CABQ Economic Development Department.
- **Molly Blumhoefer:** Sustainability Project Manager of CNM Facilities, Adjunct Natural Sciences Professor at CNM.
- **Marcus Burnett:** Chief of Commanding Control Operations of Kirtland Airforce Base.
- **Theresa Cardenas:** Chair of the Rio Grande Water Advocates, Former Representative of the Union of Concerned Scientists.
- **Amy Carpenter:** Retired Public-School Teacher, Former Peace Corps Volunteer.
- **Josue De Luna Navarro:** Co-Founder of the New Mexico Dream Team, Associate Fellow of the Institute of Policy Studies, Communications Associate of the Center for Civic Policy.
- **Helga Garza:** Executive Director of Agricultural Collaborative Network, President of the New Mexico Food and Agricultural Policy Council, President of the South Valley Main Street Board, a Robert Wood Johnson Cultural Health Leader, and a Castinea Fellow.
- **Solana Granados:** Political Science and Community & Regional Planning Undergraduate Student at UNM, Victim's Advocate at Laguna Behavioral Health.
- **Sharon Hausam:** Community Planning for the Pueblo of Laguna. Part-Time Faculty of the Community and Regional Planning Department of UNM, Member of the Griegos Acequia.
- **Karen Leming:** Vice-President of the New Mexico Autism Society, Administrator for the UNMH Department of Pathology.
- **Cassandra Miller:** Doctoral Student in the UNM Biology Department.
- **Alex Montano:** Senior Vice President of Development at Year Out Energy, Member of the Albuquerque Energy Council, Private Co-Chair New Mexico Chapter of the Energy Services Coalition, and Board Member of the National Energy Services Coalition.
- **Virginia Necochea:** Executive Director of the New Mexico Environmental Law Center.
- **Emily Phan:** Biology and Spanish Undergraduate Student at UNM, Vice President of Fight for Our Lives, Director of Communications for the UNM Leaders for Environmental Actions & Foresight, and Board Member for New Mexico Youth & Power.
- **Chas Robles:** Employee of Ancestral Lands.
- **Tara Trafton:** Master's Degree in Sustainable Energy Systems from the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm Sweden, Project Manager for Year Out Energy.
- **Erica Velarde:** New Mexico Representative of Train Technologies.

Kelsey Rader Presentation

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- **Kelsey Rader:** Thank you so much for being here. My name is Kelsey Rader, and I am the Sustainability Officer for the City of Albuquerque. A year ago, I attended a sustainability conference and talked with professionals across the country and we recognized that we need to focus on equity through climate action efforts. We wanted to bring that back to Albuquerque. This project may not be perfect, but this is the work of generations and is meant to be improved upon. The Sustainability Office was created in 2019 with an American Climate Cities Grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies. Outside of the grant work, the need to maintain the office was quickly realized, and the office was developed to maintain environmental stewardship through policy and innovative projects. We regularly engage and educate the community.
- In the last two years, we have accomplished a lot. Albuquerque was named as one of the top 3 US cities for the most solar per capita. We have also offered audits and upgrades to cut utility bills and we have updated the 2018 City Energy Conservation Code. To share some preliminary findings from our upcoming Green House Gas Inventory Report. As you can see, we emitted 5.8 million metric tons of CO2 per year. Most of those emissions come from our stationery and transportation sources. We are starting to see that there is a need to actively reduce emissions moving forward.
- The efforts of this task force are in response to the resolution that declared a climate emergency. Community-wide goals need to be set to implement cross sector collaborations. We want to shift policy development and the decision-making power is held by the task force.
- A Climate Action Plan was developed in 2009 and needs to be updated. We need to consider how to utilize economic development to reduce climate change. A climate survey was distributed to identify the priorities of Albuquerque communities to inform the decisions of the task force. We want you to reference other statewide and organizational plans to add to the conversation.
- We intend to have a plan ready by the Spring of 2021 and ready to implement by the Summer of 2021.
- **Resources to reference:**
 - [Albuquerque Food and Action Plan](#)
 - [2009 Albuquerque Climate Action Plan](#)
 - [Albuquerque Water Utility Authority Water 2120 Project](#)

Questions:

- Who will be writing the plan?
 - New Mexico First will do the writing, based on themes that emerge from task force conversations and comments. We will begin with a draft that will be available to you at the end of December of the beginning of November. We will also have a couple of meetings in January to further review and refine the document. Everybody will have the opportunity to review and comment. Once the draft is completed, the City of Albuquerque will share the document with the public for broader community input.
- I would like to hear more about the accountability of the task force to ensure that equity is truly a goal of the task force. We need to make sure we center the concept of environmental racism to address it.
 - To address environmental racism, the city has been working on an environmental equity map to identify key neighborhoods experiencing high energy burdens. We sent those neighborhood specific invitations to take the climate action survey. We also reached out to community-based organizations to engage frontline communities and those organizations can be shared if requested. When composing the task force, we really publicized the need

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for members who understood the struggles of frontline communities. We are going to rely on you all to set the agenda and direct our efforts to best work with frontline communities.

- When considering frontline communities, we need to consider the integration of economic development into the conversation about climate action. Otherwise, companies will come into our communities and invest in unhealthy development. If we do not establish a framework, frontline communities will continue to suffer.
- Where will we find referenced documents?
 - Referenced documents will be accessible in the minutes and the City of Albuquerque and New Mexico First websites.

Lilly Irvin-Vitela Presentation

- **Lilly Irvin-Vitela:** Now, we are going to present the findings from the climate action survey distributed by the City of Albuquerque. The analysis was done by New Mexico First as a third-party organization. The full report can be found on the City of Albuquerque and New Mexico First websites.
- There were 3,112 individuals that responded to the climate action survey. 63% identified as White or Caucasian; 17% declined to answer; 13% identified as Hispanic, Latinx, Chicanx, or Mexicanx; 3% of people identified as multi-racial; 2% of people identified as Native American/Indigenous; 1% of survey respondents identified as Black/African American; and 1% of respondents identified as Asian.
- 625 participants were from the NE quadrant of the city, 451, were from the NW, 610 were from the SE, and 363 were from the SW. 407 participants responded with Other and 656 left the question unanswered.
- 45 participants were under 18. 15% of participants were between the ages of 18-35; 32% of participants were between 36-55; 37% of participants were between 56-75' and 5% of participants were over age 75. About 300 participants left the question unanswered.
- 3% of respondents reported an annual household income of less than \$10,000; 3% of respondents reported an annual household income between \$10,000 and \$25,000; 12% of respondents reported an annual household income between \$25,000 and \$40,000; 10% of respondents reported an annual household income between \$40,000 and \$55,000; 12% of respondents reported an annual household income between \$50,000 and \$70,000; and 39% of respondents reported an annual household income of greater than \$70,000.
- The city asked participants what could improve their neighborhoods and the top three options selected by survey takers were more tree and vegetation, more solar panels, and safer streets and paths.
- This question also allowed for open ended responses, which we coded and found reinforces themes related to Public Green Spaces, Green Stormwater Infrastructure, and the Expansion of Recycling Programs.
- Participants were also asked which of the following policy related actions they would most likely take and 33% of respondents said that if there was an incentive to allow for appliance upgrades, they would prefer that. 25% of respondents supported incentives for electric vehicle upgrades and 14% for solar energy, climate education, and home upgrades across the board.
- We also asked a question about transportation and how people get around the city. 96% of survey participants said cars were their primary form of transportation, 37 % said that they walked, and 27% said that they biked.
- This was another subject that we asked people to expand and we left open ended. After coding the open-ended answers, we heard a lot from respondents about using multiple forms of

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transportation, electric vehicles, or friends and family to get around the city. We also heard a lot about safety obstacles experienced around transportation and wanted to highlight the quote: “I hobble with a ski pole sometimes a wheelchair thru dangerous streets and badly designed curb cuts that are designed to actually throw the disabled into the dangerous traffic...” These equity concerns will need to be kept in mind.

- The next question we asked was about which changes would improve how folks get around the city. The top three answers to the question were sidewalk upgrades, bike lane upgrades, and faster bus services.
- With this question the open-ended themes that emerged included safer bike and pedestrian infrastructure, the enforcement of speeding laws, and road and sidewalk maintenance.
- We asked folks which of the following actions would increase or improve the time that they spend outside. 55% said that they would prioritize building parks, trails, and other recreational spaces and 30% said they would prioritize better information on facilities and programs. 56% of respondents provided detailed narrative about maintenance needed in recreational areas.
- We asked participants what would help them to decide what to throw away and what to recycle. Of the top answers, 35% said they would use the recycle coach smart phone app, 35% said they would use social media posts/city website information, 41% said they would use recycling promotional materials, and 51% said they would use recycling cart advice tag.
- To make change, we need to not only know what we need to do, but we also need to feel like we can do it. We asked a question around self-efficacy and whether people felt that they could make an impact on climate change. 83% of respondents stated that they felt sure or fairly sure of their ability to impact climate change, painting a picture of Albuquerque as a mobilized city.

Values Discussion

- I like equity as a core value. I grew up on food stamps with a single mom. I did a bit of that as a single mom in college as well. I think it would benefit a lot of people.
- Both of my parents grew up working on apple orchards. I like the idea of supporting local agriculture. Speaking to equity, the idea of urban gardens is a great way to meet all their needs in a fair and equitable way. To support the idea of a sharing economy, not everyone has to have everything, if we can share.
- Equity and accessibility are most important for me. Seeing the demographic of respondents and a higher representative of higher income and certain demographic folks, it is important to make sure that going forward this information is accessible to everybody. We need to make sure to represent the underrepresented in this forum.
 - Of course, and that is where relationships and coming together in this task force is going to be so important.
- I do not have much to add, but I am excited to be a part of this group and learn from you all as mentors.
- My greatest value is ensuring that there is authentic accountability to equity and especially addressing environmental racism and how it is a major part of climate change and sustainability.
- One of the things that was encouraging from the survey that I saw, was that we live in a beautiful place and I think we need to take better care of our outdoors.
- I think I want to see ways to combine science and policy through action. Sometimes there isn't always action and I am excited to help with that process.
- I lived many years as a single mom with a son that is on the spectrum. With that in mind, I think we should focus on the ease of accessibility. An example in my own life, I couldn't afford solar until I got

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married and we could do that together. There are many people in the boat of being a single parent and not being able to afford it. We want these resources to everyone. We also want to make sure that these things are available to people with disabilities.

- I think we need to consider feasibility. There are a lot of ideas that are great, but not feasible to implement and we need to consider that reality check. I think place and the distribution of resources is also going to be important in this.
- I think we need to work with empathy and gratitude.
- My values are rooted in my Native American spirituality. I believe in the Jemez principals of environmental justice. I am a water protector within Standing Rock for my family. I bring the voice of many who have not had the same opportunities and have not received higher education. I come with lived experience and a bottom up approach.
- The values want to promote equity and justice. We need to keep corporate polluters who lead ecological destruction accountable. We also need to promote intersectionality with our various identities. We need to make sure that any climate action isn't owned by outside corporations but owned by our communities. How do we balance the narrative of climate crisis and recognize that corporations drive climate change? As a person of color, we need to think about what the point of a park serves, if streets are over patrolled by cops.
- We need to hold predatory corporations accountable and we need to promote intergenerational action. I know what its like to be a single mother and to not have my degrees until an older age. We need to use these experiences to help others.
- I want to see the word regenerative to address agriculture and our water shortage. Water needs to be addressed. In the plan, we need to bring to light the inequities that often go unseen.
- We all want to be green, but we need to make sure that the things we are instituting are not going to engage in business to rip people off.
- We need to consider people first. Reality and accountability need to be considered to truly promote social justice.
- The value I want to promote is the quality of life of the people our work will affect.
- I would like to note that the survey results reflected a large percentage of high income, older, white folks. Maybe we can re-analyze the survey results. People who have time and money are more likely to participate. I am guided by Pope Francis' Church Teachings. We need to address the root problems of climate change. We need to consider the green house emissions avoided through alternative meeting forms, including zoom calls.
- I am from a small border town in Arizona that is primarily low income and Latino/a. The biggest things to me are education and accessibility to the most marginalized populations. Climate change is not something that should be political.

Public Comment

- **Natalie Duncan:** I'm in awe of the wonderful representation here.

Next Steps

- Please complete this survey within 48 hours of the end of the meeting: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WP7Q798>
- Please send resources you want to share with Xavi Vallejo at xavier@nmfirs.org.
- For future meetings, we will include one-pagers to read and familiarize yourselves on discussion topics.