



## **MEMO:** Climate Advisory Groups

**To:** City of Flagstaff Housing Commission

**From:** City of Flagstaff Sustainability Office

**Date:** 2/15/22

**Subject:** Building Capacity for Climate Advisory Groups

### **Introduction**

I would like to take this opportunity to share the announcement that the Flagstaff Sustainability Office is launching Climate Advisory Groups.

It is essential that solutions that address sustainability, equity, and climate change in Flagstaff are developed through collaboration within our community. Similar to a commission, Climate Advisory Groups are being initiated to offer an opportunity for community participation, involvement, and input in implementing climate initiatives.

The overarching goals of Climate Advisory Groups will be to center the voices of community members and improve how the City addresses climate change. The priority of the Sustainability Office in facilitating Climate Advisory Groups will be to build long term relationships, understand the needs and perspectives of our community members, and to activate and support many different segments of our community.

I am reaching out to our Commissions and Committees to ask for the opportunity to provide a short presentation to offer information and build capacity for Climate Advisory Groups.

### **Background**

The Flagstaff community faces interconnected and urgent challenges. Implementing shared and aligned solutions for an equitable, accessible, and connected community has clear advantages for sustainability, health, economic opportunity, housing, and equity. Similar to the housing crisis, if we do not address climate change, we will continue to have inequity, with the burden falling on our vulnerable populations.

The ambitious climate goals Flagstaff has set will only be sustained through a community effort, achieved by collaborating with residents, businesses, and organizations. Climate Advisory Groups are being initiated to bring local voices into climate action and decision making and better connect the City's Climate Program with the people, communities, and businesses it serves.

Climate Advisory Groups, which were recommended during the Carbon Neutrality Plan development process, will be essential to developing collaborative climate solutions and ensuring the benefits of climate action are fairly distributed. An important factor to reducing equity gaps and resolving climate vulnerability, is the direct participation, by impacted and vulnerable communities, in the implementation of decisions that directly impact them.

Climate Advisory Groups will be a collective of residents that represent Flagstaff's communities, businesses, and institutions. The City hopes to attract members with diverse perspectives and expertise for the three initial advisory groups; Youth, Business, and Equity. Members will provide recommendations to:

- Advance the city's climate goals and ensure equity is embedded in climate solutions.
- Identify needs, opportunities, and challenges to climate action across multiple sectors.
- Improve the inclusiveness, relevance, effectiveness, and accessibility of climate programs and services.

The Youth Advisory Group will serve as an opportunity for Flagstaff's young people to advise on climate-related initiatives and ensure youth perspectives are represented in climate planning. Youth members will work alongside City Sustainability staff as partners, while setting their own priorities to help us remain accountable to our carbon neutrality goals and future generations.

The Business Advisory Group will aim to create a bridge between local businesses and the City's Climate Program, improve communication, and support cross collaboration in climate planning. Members will advise on climate opportunities and challenges within the business sector, provide input on climate initiatives, and recommend ways the City can be a resource to local businesses.

The Equity Advisory Group will work to prioritize those who will be most impacted by climate change and include them as partners in climate planning and decision-making. The group will advise on the implementation of climate initiatives and provide recommendations to help ensure that the benefits of climate action are fairly distributed, accessible to all, and are not causing unintentional harm to vulnerable groups.

## Closing

As a commission member, you are an important part of the city process, and making Flagstaff a better place for everyone. Knowing of your dedication to serving our community, and your relationships within the community, the Sustainability Office would like to ask the Housing Commission's help encouraging interest and participation in Climate Advisory Groups. We would appreciate the opportunity to provide you with information to share with your networks and welcome them to apply.