

Environmental Justice Council

September 17, 2026 Meeting Materials

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Consejo de Justicia Ambiental (EJC)

17 De septiembre de 2026

De 12:30 p.m. a 2:30 p.m.

Para unirse al webinar, haga clic en el siguiente enlace:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81747864781>

ID. del seminario web: 817 4786 4781

O únase por teléfono: +1 253 215 8782

ID. del seminario web: 817 4786 4781

Números internacionales disponibles: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kd6MqgTvTL>

Objetivos de la reunión

1. Debatar y, posiblemente, adoptar las recomendaciones presupuestarias del Consejo para 2027 dirigidas al gobernador y a la Legislatura.
2. Debatar y, posiblemente, adoptar el calendario de reuniones del Consejo para el período de octubre de 2026 a enero de 2027.
3. Analizar el borrador de las posturas políticas del Consejo para la sesión legislativa de 2027.

Orden del día

Les invitamos a acompañarnos a las 12:20 p.m. para una presentación sobre cómo activar los subtítulos y conectarse al canal de interpretación en español o Lenguaje de Señas Americano (por su sigla en inglés, ASL).

DE 12:30 P.M. A 12:40 P.M.	I. Bienvenida y pase de lista para verificar que haya quórum	Copresidenta Tatiana Brown El honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson Miembros del Consejo
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DE 12:40 P.M. A 12:45 P.M.	I. Aprobación del orden del día por parte del Consejo II. Aprobación por parte del Consejo de las notas de las reuniones del 29 de enero, 10 de abril y 23 de junio de 2026 - Posibles medidas del Consejo	Copresidenta Tatiana Brown Miembros del Consejo
DE 12:45 P.M. A 12:55 P.M.	II. Comentarios del público	Miembro del Consejo David Mendoza
DE 12:55 P.M. A 1:30 P.M.	III. Debate y posible adopción: recomendaciones presupuestarias para 2027 Objetivos: debatir y, posiblemente, adoptar las recomendaciones presupuestarias del Consejo para 2027 dirigidas al gobernador y a la Legislatura. - Posibles medidas del Consejo	Miembro del Consejo Cristina González Torres Personal del Consejo Christy Hoff Miembros del Consejo
Receso de 10 minutos		
DE 1:40 P.M. A 1:55 P.M.	IV. Debate y posible adopción: calendario de reuniones de octubre de 2026 a enero de 2027	Miembro del Consejo Cristina González Torres Personal del Consejo Jonathan Chen Miembros del Consejo

	Objetivo: debatir y, posiblemente, adoptar el calendario de reuniones del Consejo para el período de octubre de 2026 a enero de 2027. - Posibles medidas del Consejo	
DE 1:55 P.M. A 2:15 P.M.	V. Debate: borrador de las posturas sobre políticas para 2027 Objetivo: Analizar el borrador de las posturas políticas del Consejo para la sesión legislativa de 2027.	Copresidenta Tatiana Brown Personal del Consejo Christy Hoff Miembros del Consejo
DE 2:15 P. M. A 2:25 P. M.	VI. Comentarios del público	Miembro del Consejo David Mendoza
DE 2:25 P.M. A 2:30 P.M.	VII. Agradecimientos y cierre	El honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson Copresidenta Tatiana Brown

Información importante

- El día de la reunión, el Consejo puede reordenar los puntos del orden del día.
- El número de contacto de emergencia durante la reunión es 360-584-4398.
- Para solicitar este documento en otro formato o en un idioma diferente, envíe un correo electrónico a Sierra Rotakhina en cualquier idioma a envjustice@ejc.wa.gov o llame al 360-584-4398.

Environmental Justice Council (EJ Council)

September 17, 2026

12:30pm – 2:30pm

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81747864781>

Webinar ID: 817 4786 4781

Or Join by Phone: +1 253 215 8782

Webinar ID: 817 4786 4781

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kd6MqgTvTL>

Meeting Goals

1. Discuss and possibly adopt the Council's 2027 budget recommendations to the Governor and Legislature.
2. Discuss and possibly adopt the Council's meeting schedule for October 2026 through January 2027.
3. Discuss the Council's draft 2027 Legislative Session policy positions.

Agenda

Please join us at 12:20pm for a presentation on how to turn on closed captions and join the Spanish or ASL interpretation channel.

12:30 PM – 12:40 PM	I. Welcome and Roll Call for Quorum	Co-Chair Tatiana Brown The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson Council Members
12:40 PM – 12:45 PM	II. Approval of Agenda by Council	Co-Chair Tatiana Brown Council Members

Meeting notes start on page 7 .	III. Approval of January 29, April 10, and June 23, 2026 Meeting Notes by Council -Possible Council Action	
12:45 PM – 12:55PM	IV. Public Comment	Council Member David Mendoza
12:55PM – 1:30 PM Materials on page 41 .	V. Discussion and Possible Adoption: 2027 Budget Recommendations Goals: Discuss and possibly adopt the Council's 2027 budget recommendations to the Governor and Legislature. -Possible Council Action	Council Member Cristina González Torres Christy Hoff, Council Staff Council Members
10 Minute Break		
1:40 PM – 1:55 PM Materials on page 50 .	VI. Discussion and Possible Adoption: October 2026 – January 2027 Meeting Schedule Goal: Discuss and possibly adopt the Council's meeting schedule for October 2026 through January 2027. -Possible Council Action	Council Member Cristina González Torres Jonathan Chen, Council Staff Council Members
1:55 PM – 2:15 PM	VII. Discussion: Draft 2027 Policy Positions	Co-Chair Tatiana Brown Christy Hoff, Council Staff

Materials on page 57 .	Goal: Discuss the Council's draft 2027 Legislative Session policy positions.	Council Members
2:15 PM – 2:25 PM	VIII. Public Comment	Council Member David Mendoza
2:25 PM – 2:30 PM	IX. Appreciation and Adjournment	The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson Co-Chair Tatiana Brown

Important Information

- The Council may move agenda items around on the day of the meeting.
- Emergency contact number during the meeting is 360-584-4398.
- To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact the Council, in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov.

Draft Minutes of the Environmental Justice Council

January 29, 2026

Virtual ZOOM Platform

Due to limited staff capacity, Environmental Justice Council (Council) staff are working to streamline the Council meeting notes. The notes now include only very high-level points and the final decisions made along with voting records. The full meeting recordings can be found on the Council's website: [Environmental Justice Council Meetings | WaPortal.org](https://www.wa.gov/EnvironmentalJusticeCouncilMeetings). However, it is important that meeting notes are useful to the Council Members and the public. Please share feedback with Council staff on how we can make these notes most useful to you by emailing envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or by calling 360-584-4398.

Council Members present:

- Tatiana Brown (Co-Chair)
- David Mendoza, joined at 4:26pm and left at 5:00pm
- Esther Min, joined at 3:47pm
- Todd Mitchell, left at 6:08pm
- Faaluaina Pritchard
- Running-Grass
- Maria Batayola, joined at 3:49pm

Council Members absent:

- Cristina González Torres
- Nichole Banegas
- Maria Blancas
- The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Co-Chair)
- The Honorable JJ Wilbur

Agency Ex Officio Liaisons present:

- Rowena Pineda for Jennifer Grove, Department of Commerce
- Lauren Jenks, Department of Health
- Nicole Johnson, Department of Agriculture
- Jerry Rivero, Department of Natural Resources
- Emilie Litsinger, Puget Sound Partnership
- Ahmer Nizam, Department of Transportation

- Millie Piazza, Department of Ecology

Council staff:

- Jonathan Chen
- Angie Ellis
- Christy Curwick Hoff
- Dana Myers
- Sierra Rotakhina

Guests and other participants:

- Cooper Garbe, Department of Ecology
- Martha Hankins, Department of Ecology
- Andy Hayes, Department of Ecology
- Tamara Jones, Department of Ecology
- Stephanie Potts, Department of Ecology
- Adrian Young, Department of Ecology

I. Welcome and Roll Call for Quorum

Tatiana Brown, Council Co-Chair, called the meeting to order. She announced that Council Member Raeshawna Ware has resigned from the Council after serving past the end of her term in order to support the Council while vacancies were filled. Co-Chair Brown thanked Council Member Ware for her service. She said Member Ware had suggested holding a “Theo Moment” at each meeting where a Member could share how they have affected change, witnessed good, or done something light and beautiful in the name of environmental justice.

Christy Curwick Hoff, Council Staff, facilitated roll call. At the time of the initial roll call, there were 4 voting members present, not meeting quorum (see table).

12 Members / 4 Vacancies / 0 Leaves of Absence / Current Quorum = 7		
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	Absent
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	Present
Faaluaina Pritchard	Community Representative	Present
Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	Present
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	Absent
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	Absent
Cristina González Torres	Community Representative	Absent
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Co-Chair)	Tribal Representative	Absent
Tatiana Brown (Co-Chair)	Community Representative	Present
Maria Blancas	Community Representative	Absent
Maria Batayola	Community Representative	Absent
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant

Note: The Council moved to the Legislative Session Update while they waited for a quorum of Members to arrive.

2026 Legislative Session Update and Possible Associated Council Actions

Christy Curwick Hoff provided a briefing on legislative session to date. She shared information about Governor Ferguson's proposed supplemental operating budget, including a proposal to reduce funding for the Department of Health's HEAL funding (including funding for HEAL implementation, the Environmental Health Disparities Map, and the HEAL Interagency Workgroup) and the EJ Council's funding by \$500,000 for the upcoming fiscal year. She also highlighted a few policy bills for the Council's awareness.

Public Comment

Co-Chair Brown opened up the public comment period.

Maricela Santana-Walle, EJ Coordinator for ELLA, said they have been working with the Department of Health and have been using the Environmental Health Disparities Map for a lot of their outreach and as a tool to advocate for the community. There is a risk that funding for the project will be cut. They are hoping to increase the data used in the map to bring up the voices of farmworkers who face exposures from pesticides, chemicals, and environmental impacts from CAFOs. They are using the map in the documentary they are working on. Cuts in funding will pose a risk for communities. They asked the Council to advocate for the funding, so it is not cut in the budget.

Sierra Rotakhina, Council Manager, said the Council has submitted letters to the House and Senate budget committees advocating for funding to be included in the final budget. She said hearing personal stories from the community is very important. Co-Chair Brown thanked Maricela for sharing how the map is being used in new ways.

Continuation of Council Budget Values and Principles: Cover Letter

Member Batayola, Council Member, said the Budget Workgroup drafted a cover letter (see [meeting materials](#), starting on page 23) in response to Governor Ferguson's proposed supplemental budget and the proposed use of Climate Commitment Act (CCA) revenue to fund the Working Families Tax Credit. Sierra Rotakhina shared the letter on screen and there were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Sierra Rotakhina said they have heard from Tribes and communities that the terms "overburdened communities" and "vulnerable populations" are not preferred terms. She said they will often use the term frontline communities. Millie Piazza, Ex Officio Liaison, said they are

terms of art that are statutorily defined and from her own experience, they do not align with how she or her community identify. The terms overburdened and vulnerable do not call out community resiliency. Lua Pritchard, Council Member, said those terms are still being used in her community and she has not heard any concerns. Jerry Rivero, Ex Officio Liaison, said in his past work in California (where the term “disadvantaged communities” is used) they acknowledged terms used in statute, and they would use language that highlights the strengths of communities. He recommended using the term frontline communities. Emilie Litsinger, Ex Officio Liaison, agreed that when using the terms, they should provide clarity that they are using legal terminology and added that they welcome the opportunity for communities to identify the terms they prefer. Member Pritchard said sometimes agency staff are afraid to use terms and they overthink things. Member Batayola said words will always be evolving and added that they need to think this through and consult with Tribes and communities.

Members discussed and agreed to add language to the cover letter to reference statute for the terms “overburdened communities” and “vulnerable populations” and they edited the cover letter. They discussed how the letter was trying to articulate three points about the CCA funding and how they are in line with the Council’s adopted values and principles. Todd Mitchell, Council Member, said the cover letter gives context to the values and principles.

Proposed Motion: The Council adopts the cover letter for its Budget Values and Principles as submitted on January 29, 2026, with any changes agreed to by the full Council.

The Council directs staff to combine the cover letter with the table of contents and the values and principles and submit to the appropriate committees of the Legislature, the Governor, and the Office of Financial Management to inform the development of the 2026 supplemental budget.

The Council will follow its procedure for “Advocating for the Council’s Budget Recommendations” adopted by the full Council on November 21, 2024 when advocating for positions outlined in the adopted cover letter.

Motion: Second: Todd Mitchell/David Mendoza

Motion Passed

A: Yes, I approve.

B: Yes, with reservations.

C: Not voting until we have further discussions.

D: I don't approve, but I won't block.

E: I block, have serious concerns.

F: I stand aside, recuse myself.

12 Members / 4 Vacancies / 0 Leaves of Absence / Current Quorum = 7		
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	Absent
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	A
Faaluaina Pritchard	Community Representative	A
Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	A
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	A
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	A
Cristina González Torres	Community Representative	Absent
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Co-Chair)	Tribal Representative	Absent
Tatiana Brown (Co-Chair)	Community Representative	A
Maria Blancas	Community Representative	Absent
Maria Batayola	Community Representative	A
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant

Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant
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Approval of Agenda by Council

Co-Chair Brown, facilitated adoption of the [agenda](#).

Motion: The Council adopts the agenda.

No objections noted. **The Motion passed.**

Approval of December 4, 2025 Meeting Notes by Council

Co-Chair Brown facilitated adoption of the meeting notes (see [meeting materials](#) on page 10).

Motion: The Council adopts the December 4, 2025 meeting notes.

No objections noted. **The Motion passed.**

Discussion and Possible Adoption 2026 Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 Council Meetings

Co-Chair Brown said they hoped to adopt a March 2026 meeting date and to use that meeting to discuss the Council's workplan and if adjustments are needed. She said the Council encourages Tribes, community members, and agencies to reach out to the Council with their priorities to inform the Council's discussion in March. Members discussed different dates for the March meeting.

Motion: The Council adopts the following tentative meeting dates: March 13, 2026 from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm and March 10, 2026 from 3:30 pm – 6:30 pm, with the final date to be determined based on member availability.

Motion/Second: Maria Batayola/David Mendoza

No objections noted. **Motion Passed**

Sierra Rotakhina shared considerations for possibly co-convening the Council's in-person meeting with the Health Disparities Council and the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and

Accountability Committee. She asked the Council to share their goals and priorities for the in-person meeting.

Member Pritchard, offered the Asia Pacific Cultural Center in Tacoma as a meeting venue. She said she favored meeting solo to focus on EJ Council business. Member Batayola liked the idea of having shared time with the other Councils. She said it is important for community to understand how the Environmental Health Disparities Map is being used. Running-Grass, Council Member, said that in this political and fiscal environment, he encouraged opportunities to partner with natural allies. He supported having space to maximize sharing, even informally. Nicole Johnson, Ex Officio Liaison, said she also serves on the Health Disparities Council, and she supported cross-connection to identify communities that haven't been engaged across the work, and alignment of priorities. Millie Piazza, Ex Officio Liaison, suggested involvement with other partners like the Office of Equity and a need to focus on goals and metrics and how to hold agencies accountable to process as well as meaningful longer-term metrics. Co-Chair Brown said she wanted to know more about how to determine if we're yielding benefits for the communities we're serving. She said she'd like to have a conversation about how the Environmental Health Disparities Map could be used to track health disparities outcomes. She said they could focus a day on the map as a tool and another as a forum, along with having some dedicated EJ Council time. Sierra Rotakhina proposed working with Council Members who volunteer to be on a planning group.

EJ Council Community Connect

Jonathan Chen, Council Staff, shared that the scheduled presenter was unable to make it.

Briefing on Climate Commitment Act (CCA) Projects

Co-Chair Brown introduced the agenda item. Jonathan Chen encouraged Members to think about how these CCA projects could be included in upcoming work planning. He introduced staff from the Department of Ecology: Cooper Garbe, Martha Hankins, Adrian Young, Stephanie Potts,

Andy Hayes, and Tamara Jones, who shared a [presentation on CCA projects](#). The presentation covered the Air Quality in Overburdened Communities rulemaking, the Emissions-Intensive, Trade-Exposed Industries (EITE) report that was recently submitted to the Legislature, and the future of Cap and Invest program linkage.

Sierra Rotakhina said it was helpful to see the areas where they would be looking for EJ Council input in 2026 and asked if they could share timelines so the Council knows when their engagement would be needed. Member Running-Grass asked if there was research to estimate impacts on health that could be gained from reductions in air pollutants. Martha Hankins talked about the well-established link in the scientific research and said they would be able to analyze the cost-benefit of their proposal as a part of the regulatory analysis. Council Members discussed and shared suggestions for how this information should be shared with communities in plain language to encourage critical thought and meaningful engagement so communities can best advocate for their needs. Tamara Jones said they now had a dedicated position for community engagement.

IX. Discussion: EJ Council Update to the Public, Governor, and Legislature

The Council did not have time to discuss this item.

XI. Public Comment

No comments were shared during this agenda item.

XI. Appreciation and Adjournment

Co-Chair Brown adjourned the meeting.

Draft Minutes of the Environmental Justice Council

April 10, 2026

Virtual ZOOM Platform

Due to limited staff capacity, Environmental Justice Council (Council) staff are working to streamline the Council meeting notes. The notes now include only very high-level points and the final decisions made along with voting records. The full meeting recordings can be found on the Council's website: [Environmental Justice Council Meetings | WaPortal.org](https://www.wa.gov/EnvironmentalJusticeCouncilMeetings). However, it is important that meeting notes are useful to the Council Members and the public. Please share feedback with Council staff on how we can make these notes most useful to you by emailing envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or by calling 360-584-4398.

Council Members present:

- Tatiana Brown (Co-Chair)
- Cristina González Torres (joined at 1:20pm)
- David Mendoza (present from 1pm-2pm and from 2:35pm-4:00pm)
- Esther Min (joined at 1:15pm)
- Faaluaina Pritchard

Council Members absent:

- Nichole Banegas
- Maria Batayola
- The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Co-Chair)
- Todd Mitchell
- Running-Grass
- The Honorable JJ Wilbur

Agency Ex Officio Liaisons present:

- Jennifer Grove, Department of Commerce
- Lauren Jenks, Department of Health
- Nicole Johnson, Department of Agriculture
- Jerry Rivero, Department of Natural Resources
- Emilie Litsinger, Puget Sound Partnership
- Ahmer Nizam, Department of Transportation
- Millie Piazza, Department of Ecology

Council staff:

- Jonathan Chen
- Angie Ellis
- Christy Curwick Hoff
- Dana Myers
- Sierra Red Bow
- Sierra Rotakhina

Guests and other participants:

- Dana Myers, HEAL Interagency Workgroup

I. Welcome and Roll Call for Quorum

Tatiana Brown, Council Co-Chair, called the meeting to order. She recognized the Environmental Justice (EJ) Council's 4-year anniversary of its first meeting, saying it was a great time to reflect on the work and plan for the future. She said Council Member Maria Blancas' term has ended and thanked her for her contributions. She said the Council now has 5 vacant seats and encouraged Tribal and community members to apply.

Christy Curwick Hoff, Council Staff, facilitated roll call. At the time of the initial roll call, there were 3 voting members present, not meeting quorum (see table).

11 Members / 5 Vacancies / 0 Leaves of Absence / Current Quorum = 6		
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent
Maria Batayola	Community Representative	Absent
Tatiana Brown (Co-Chair)	Community Representative	Present
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Co-Chair)	Tribal Representative	Absent
Cristina González Torres	Community Representative	Absent
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	Present
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	Absent
Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	Absent

Faaluaina Pritchard	Community Representative	Present
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	Absent
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	Absent
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant

II. Approval of Agenda by Council

The Council did not have a quorum, so they did not approve the agenda.

III. Approval of January 29, 2026 Meeting Notes by Council

The Council did not have a quorum, so they did not take action on the meeting notes.

IV. Public Comment

David Mendoza, Council Member, opened the public comment period.

Shakila Kajaby, New American's Alliance for Policy and Research, shared information about the refugee and migrant community. They said these communities face disproportionate environmental hazards and health impacts, compounded by poor social determinants of health. Many are housed in older substandard buildings. These conditions are worsened by the trauma of war, persecution, and displacement that they face. These communities also face language barriers and restricted access to essential services. The Alliance is working to address the inequities that require targeted environmental justice strategies including tracking, language access, and inclusive policy making. They said they hope to work with the EJ Council to ensure the health of immigrant and refugee communities is addressed.

Member Mendoza said that the Council has adopted past budget recommendations to invest in communities, such as reducing environmental exposure to lead in schools. He said he appreciated the comments. Co-Chair Brown asked what areas they work in, and Shakila said they serve King County. Co-Chair Brown asked Shakila to share contact information so she could follow up.

V. 2026 Legislative Session Recap

Christy Curwick Hoff referred members to the memo on page 18 of the meeting materials. She shared information about SHB 2496, which the Council supported, and which specifies requirements for the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council when it conducts Government-to-Government consultation. She shared Council activities related to the budget and highlighted that there were no cuts to HEAL implementation funding in the adopted supplemental budget. She said the passage of E2SHB 2251 made changes to the Climate Commitment Act (CCA) Accounts and said the Council and the Budget Workgroup may want to have strategic conversations about what the changes mean for future Council budget recommendations.

Member Mendoza stressed that these changes will result in less operating funds going to HEAL implementation and generally less CCA revenue in the operating budget. He said programs funded in the past by CCA revenue will now have to compete for General Fund dollars. He said this is a big concern as we move into 2027 legislative session and it fundamentally shifts the ways the EJ Council has been developing its budget recommendations.

Christy also shared information about a HEAL work session and possible implications for the HEAL Act in future sessions. Jerry Rivero, Ex Officio Liaison for the Department of Natural Resources, said they had been working on process improvements for Environmental Justice Assessments (EJAs) and the work session was a signal to reflect on how to improve the EJAs moving forward. He also stressed that the HEAL Act is still very young. Member Mendoza said

there is some amount of confusion on whether the HEAL Act applies to boards and commissions connected with HEAL agencies. Millie Piazza, Ex Officio from the Department of Ecology, said the definition of overburdened communities and EJ communities was also raised in the work session and she would welcome that conversation. She said they want to identify the most vulnerable and the most at risk. Co-Chair Brown said the Council has some work to do to make sure folks understand environmental justice, the origins of the work, and the need to have communities represented.

Co-Chair Brown asked for clarity about the changes to the revenue available in the Air Quality and Health Disparities Improvement Account (AQHDIA). Member Mendoza said that previously there was \$20 million distributed to AQHDIA each biennium and that the Air Quality Grants Program was funded by AQHDIA funds. He stressed his concern with AQHDIA being the only defunded account.

Sierra Rotakhina, Council Staff, referred Council Members to the written public comments in their meeting packets. She said there were comments about the proposed biogas digester in Sunnyside. She said that the supplemental materials included a letter from Front and Centered urging the Council to take time to work on CCA issues when the Council discusses its workplan.

Theo Moment

A moment to share how you have affected change, witnessed good, or overall done something light and beautiful in the name of environmental justice.

Cristina González Torres, Council Member, said considering all the detentions that have been taking place across the state, she began a clothing and food bank where affected families can receive clothes and other donated items. They have received toys, diapers, formula, clothes, coats, and nonperishable food items. They will be kicking the program off next month.

Co-Chair Brown said that on April 18 the Social Justice Film Festival is hosting a screening of the documentary, *The Price of Plenty—Voices of the Yakima Valley*, produced by ELLA, which covers environmental justice issues from agriculture and dairies in the Lower Yakima Valley.

VI. Council Workgroup Updates

Co-Chair Brown shared background on the Council's current workplan and its 4 workgroups. She said she hoped the workgroup updates would lead to a good discussion about needed workplan adjustments and the Council's future meeting schedule.

Jonathan Chen, Council Staff, shared information about the Community and Tribal Engagement Workgroup, which prioritized the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Health. He explained that this workgroup has taken on the MOU as a project because many of the areas that would benefit from the EJ Council having its own decision-making autonomy are related to community and Tribal engagement.

Sierra Rotakhina shared information about the Budget Workgroup's past work on the Council's budget values and principles and letter of concern regarding the Governor's original proposal to use Climate Commitment Act revenue to support the Working Families Tax Credit. Christy Hoff said as the workgroup thinks ahead to budget recommendations for the 27-29 biennial budget, it might want to have a strategic conversation about the challenges with the steep declines in CCA revenue projections for the operating budget. She said current spending in the operating budget funded by CCA revenue is about \$288 million and the projected revenue for the 27-29 biennium is about \$136 million. Jennifer Grove, Ex Officio from the Department of Commerce asked about projections for the Capital budget. Christy the Capital budget would have an estimated \$120.8 million for fiscal year 2028, dropping to \$29.6 million in fiscal year 2029. The Transportation budget would have an estimated \$359 million in fiscal year 2028 and \$300 million for fiscal year 2029.

Jonathan gave an update on the Environmental Justice Assessment (EJA) Workgroup, which is developing guidance to help agencies implement EJA's consistently. The group is currently focused on EJA community engagement.

Sierra Rotakhina said she and Angie Ellis, Council staff, have been supporting the Urgent and Emerging Issues Workgroup, which is developing a process for fielding concerns that are raised by communities, Tribes, and agencies. The Workgroup is reviewing and building on the previous work of the Community Engagement Committee. They are discussing piloting a process on a specific issue that has been brought to the Council. They are interested in pulling in more members, especially ex officio members. Co-Chair Brown said they want to respond to public comments and longstanding EJ issues in the state. She asked Members to read the letter about the biodigester and dairy farms in the Lower Yakima Valley. Member González Torres urged Council members to share any thoughts after they have a chance to read the letter.

VII. Discussion and Possible Adoption of 2026-2027 Meeting Schedule

Sierra Rotakhina said the goal of this discussion is to talk about the Council's 2026-2027 workplan and meeting schedule. She encouraged members to reflect on the conversations around the HEAL Act and the changes to the Climate Commitment Act (CCA) revenue and think about whether the Council should be holding some capacity to respond to those opportunities. She asked Members to start by sharing what brought them to the Council, what their goals are, and how their passions can drive the Council's future work.

Ex Officio Member Piazza said she has made it her life's mission and challenge to understand and work toward EJ and has learned that it requires people working together and the Council is what brings folks together. She said the goal for the Council is to clarify and crystalize the problems in the state that we need to solve. She wants to contribute to making just systems to find problems and demonstrate how we're solving them.

Lua Pritchard, Council Member, said her main goal is to share information with the Asian Pacific Islander (API) community, because the community is typically forgotten and uninvolved. She said there are language barriers and cultural fears, and few individuals who are already in leadership roles can access spaces such as Council to receive the information. She said she is one of those few API people who do that. She wants to make sure the API community is informed of environmental issues because many live in areas with environmental justice concerns.

Ahmer Nizam, Ex Officio for the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), said that what drives his agency's work in EJ comes from understanding the history of transportation planning and the disproportionate impacts that highways have had on communities of color. More recently, impacts are not so overt but there is still underinvestment in communities where people rely on transit and where those needs are now inadequate and unreliable. WSDOT is

resolved to incorporate EJ into its mission. He wants to see everyone working together to fully institutionalize EJ into state government so it continues long past all of their involvement.

Cristina González Torres said the need to bridge the language barrier is what brought her to the Council. She spoke about an event with 300 people in her community aimed at bridging and helping to guide her community into leadership. That continues to be her goal. She wants to share more info about the EJ Council so communities know about it.

Member Mendoza said every past job he has had has been related to EJ. He said HEAL come about in order to establish structure and accountability in the state. He said he wants to see this vision succeed and he sees his role is to support work on budget recommendations and CCA implementation.

Ex Officio Member Grove said there is opportunity to increase benefit and reduce harm with clean energy in every action they take and she wants to influence and shape those decisions. The energy division and state energy office at the Department of Commerce think about EJ benefits and harms in all their work. She said this is especially important with agency leadership changes. She worries about having to be in a defense posture with HEAL and the funding to support the law and would love the Council to have a strategy around it that agencies can support. She emphasized the importance of showing impact and accountability back to community, for example with EJAs.

Ex Officio Member Rivero said he grew up in an overburdened community and has been working with community and policy makers to promote EJ his whole life. Every day he thinks of his community and all the communities that they serve. He said he is encouraged by the discussion about emerging issues and wants to see how the Council can better support communities through being an important connector.

Emilie Litsinger, Ex Officio Member for the Puget Sound Partnership, said her agency is working to have more community priorities show up and be integrated into their action plans that shape policies and channel funding. She said she is learning from her fellow Ex Officios and the Council's guidance and is focused on implementation. She hopes to gain connections to other communities that her agency can engage with so EJ is centered in their work.

Sierra shared written comments provided before the meeting by Nicole Johnson, Ex Officio Member from the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA). Ex Officio Member Johnson said her primary goal is to facilitate communication, collaboration, and knowledge exchange between the council and her agency and she wants to increase awareness of WSDA programs. She is committed to supporting equity driven solutions. Her focus is on building partnerships and shared objectives. She is committed to leveraging her understanding of government to reduce barriers for communities and is driven to support work at WSDA to reduce harms to the environment and health. She is interested in measurable outcomes.

Esther Min, Council Member, shared her story of her journey to the US while in high school. She said the Council is a unique space with agencies, communities, advocates, practitioners, and researchers. She said the Council is not limited by history to how it could function. She said it is always going to be about collaboration and about caring for the world.

Lauren Jenks, Ex Officio from the Department of Health (DOH), said she is motivated by a sense of fairness and a value for health. When access to health is unfairly distributed, that motivates her to try to fix it. She believes that agencies are generally acting in good faith with the information they have but the information is not always grounded. She is excited to get more of the critical knowledge about community needs that is not always easily accessed by state agencies. She said this means that community problems don't always get the resources they need. Her role is to

learn about the needs for Tribes and communities and translate that back to DOH so the agency can make decisions and apply resources where they can do the most good.

Sierra Rotakhina said she grew up in a rural area experiencing and witnessing health disparities unique to rural communities that impacted her community and that is what drives her passion. The role of the Council is to transform government by being authentically responsive to Tribes and communities.

Jonathan Chen shared that in a previous role, he helped elder Asian immigrants grow food in the International District. He shared his frustration about how those with power didn't understand that food insecurity was a cycle they wouldn't be able to leave. This led him to seek a job working in policy. He shared that he had cancer when he was 21 and said it is devastating that communities of color and low-income communities have these disproportionate health impacts. He said he doesn't want anyone to experience that.

Christy Hoff said the Council is charged with serving as a public forum and she believes that role is the one in which the Council is uniquely positioned to fill.

Sierra Red Bow shared a word that she said extends to people, places, animals, rocks, etc. She said she approaches her work from a place of kinship. She said there is nothing more amazing than to spend time in community. She shared an example of a hearing she attended and said it was incredible to witness the community members who came to speak. She said organizing can be a palpable power for community to push back against industry that has created harm. She said working with the Council was a unique opportunity because it is led by communities and Tribes. She said the focus on the HEAL Act convinced her to be a part of state government.

Angie Ellis shared her background working in public health and a medical office that accepted state Medicaid for adults. Seeing people in a vulnerable state and the injustice of people having to make decisions between getting health care or paying rent fueled her desire to help people.

Dana Myers said most of her life, she has worked with one person at a time and gave examples. She spoke about getting one person at a time through the systems and discussed the barriers. She said when she learned about the HEAL Act that became her mission.

Co-Chair Brown said the Council is trying to create opportunities where communities can express their voice, where we can choose what the future looks like, and how we can use our resources to make sure all community members are taken care of. She said we need to fight for a vision for the future where we can still exist in a relationship with the planet. She said she wants the Council to have a clear path where community informs changes in the government. She said collaborative governance is something we need to figure out.

Sierra Rotakhina referred members to the draft meeting schedule options in the meeting materials. Members discussed some barriers to participation and engagement. Co-Chair Brown asked all Members to share their preferred ranking of the proposed schedule options.

Council Member	1 st Choice	2 nd Choice	3 rd Choice
Esther Min	B	A	-
David Mendoza	A	B	-
Tatiana Brown	B	C	A
Jennifer Grove	A	B	C
Lauren Jenks	B	A	C
Emilie Litsinger	B	A	C
Lua Pritchard	B	A	C
Millie Piazza	A	B	C

Member Mendoza said his concern with Option B is that the Council is currently not working on all of its mandates and is worried that Option B could expand the work beyond the Council's capacity. Ex Officio Member Grove said she may have to have substitutes for Option C.

VIII. Public Comment

No public comments were provided during this period.

XI. Appreciation and Adjournment

Co-Chair Brown adjourned the meeting.

Draft Minutes of the Environmental Justice Council

June 23, 2026

Virtual ZOOM Platform

Due to limited staff capacity, Environmental Justice Council (Council) staff are working to streamline the Council meeting notes. The notes now include only very high-level points and the final decisions made along with voting records. The full meeting recordings can be found on the Council's website: [Environmental Justice Council Meetings | WaPortal.org](https://www.wa.gov/EnvironmentalJustice/CouncilMeetings). However, it is important that meeting notes are useful to the Council Members and the public. Please share feedback with Council staff on how we can make these notes most useful to you by emailing envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or by calling 360-584-4398.

Council Members present:

- Tatiana Brown (Co-Chair)
- The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Co-Chair), joined at 1:55pm.
- Cristina González Torres
- David Mendoza
- Esther Min
- Todd Mitchell, joined at 2:00pm
- Faaluaina Pritchard
- Running-Grass

Council Members absent:

- Nichole Banegas
- The Honorable JJ Wilbur

Agency Ex Officio Liaisons present:

- Jennifer Grove, Department of Commerce present
- Lauren Jenks, Department of Health present
- Nicole Johnson, Department of Agriculture present
- Olgy Diaz, Department of Natural Resources present
- Emilie Litsinger, Puget Sound Partnership present
- Ahmer Nizam, Department of Transportation present
- Courtney Cecale, Department of Ecology present

Council staff:

- Jonathan Chen
- Angie Ellis
- Christy Curwick Hoff
- Sierra Red Bow
- Sierra Rotakhina

I. Welcome and Roll Call for Quorum

Tatiana Brown, Council Co-Chair, called the meeting to order. Co-Chair Brown explained that this special meeting was called to share information about efforts by lawmakers to amend the HEAL Act and to receive any comments from Tribal nations, communities, and the public about whether and how the Environmental Justice (EJ) Council should engage. She shared that Maria Batayola, former Council Co-Chair, has stepped down from the Council. Co-Chair Brown thanked Maria for her service.

Christy Curwick Hoff, Council Staff, facilitated roll call. At the time of the initial roll call, there were 6 voting members present, meeting quorum (see table).

10 Members / 6 Vacancies / 0 Leaves of Absence / Current Quorum = 6		
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	Absent
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	Present
Faaluaina Pritchard	Community Representative	Present
Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	Absent
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	Present
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	Present
Cristina González Torres	Community Representative	Present
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Co-Chair)	Tribal Representative	Absent
Tatiana Brown (Co-Chair)	Community Representative	Present
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant

Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant

II. Approval of Agenda by Council

Cristina González Torres, Council Member, facilitated adoption of the agenda.

Motion: The Council adopts the agenda.

Motion/Second: Lua Pritchard/David Mendoza. No objections noted. **The Motion passed.**

III. Approval of January 29 and April 10, 2026 Meeting Notes by Council

The Council did not take action on this item.

IV. Briefing: Efforts to Amend the HEAL Act

Member González Torres, introduced the agenda item. Christy Hoff and Sierra Rotakhina, Council Manager, shared general information on how laws, like the HEAL Act, could be amended during legislative session and what they knew about efforts to date by legislators to amend the HEAL Act. David Mendoza, Council Member, said Representative Reeves indicated she was asked by budget leadership to make amendments to HEAL. The House had proposed drastic cuts to HEAL implementation last session. It took a lot of advocacy to ensure HEAL implementation funding was not cut in the final adopted budget. Many of the HEAL implementation staff in agencies are funded with CCA revenue and that revenue is expected to be cut in half. He added that legislators, particularly those more newly elected, may not understand the HEAL Act and there is a need to share what it takes for effective HEAL implementation. Co-Chair Brown said today the Council would be starting the conversation with community and Tribes to discuss whether the

Council should engage in conversations about possible amendments to HEAL. She stressed that it will not be the last opportunity.

V. Tribal Nation Guidance

The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson, Council Co-Chair, opened up the agenda item.

Amy Trainer, Swinomish Indian Tribal Communities Director of Environmental Policy, asked the EJ Council to consider the opportunity to engage in Government-to-Government consultation. She referred to the past proposal to include the Forest Practices Board in the HEAL Act, saying she had concerns with that approach. She said she believed that the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission also expressed concerns in a letter last fall. If that becomes a consideration moving forward, it would be a concern for her and she would want to check with Council Senator JJ Wilbur. Adding that as staff, she would be concerned.

Jim Peters, Squaxin Island Tribal Secretary, said he has 45 years of experience in natural resources co-management with the state of Washington. He said he was one of the original Department of Fish and Wildlife negotiators and Forest and Fish negotiators that is still working on these issues. He said he heard about the meeting from the Northwest Indian Fish Commission. He said he doesn't quite understand what the goal of the process is to amend the HEAL act. He said he knows there was some concerns about the rules from the Forest and Fish agreement that all the caucuses agreed on and one decided not to fulfill their commitment and agreement to the process. He said the EJ Council needs to be educated on those processes and why they were set up the way they were and the importance of the consensus process and honoring the agreements that all the caucuses had with the adaptive management program. He said this has not been adequate time, adding that he hasn't had time to work with his Tribal Council and the Northwest Indian Fish Commission staff and the other Tribes that are fluent on this process and also understand the original intent of the HEAL Act. He said they are concerned if there is a back

door approach that may be occurring to balance economic impacts vs environmental impacts to his community and other communities that depend on clean water to survive. He said the EJ Council needs to understand what Tribal Consultation truly means – it is a collaboration as much as a consultation. There are treaty Tribes with legal standing when it comes to environmental protection of resources and other Tribes that need these resources to be protected based on their own aboriginal rights. He said that's all he wanted to share at this point, until he gets a better understanding of the justification for opening up the HEAL Act. He said he needs more time to work with his Tribe and their natural resources staff, as well as they Northwest Indian Fish Commission. He said that he hopes that announcements for future meetings provide more time to attend in an adequate way. He also requested that any notices be sent to the Northwest Indian Fish Commission as they often rely on Commission staff to see who will be attending and to receive technical assistance so he can be better prepared for these meetings.

Co-Chair Brown said the EJ Council is convening this meeting to hear from Tribal partners and community members, adding that the EJ Council is not initiating the effort to amend the HEAL Act. She said the EJ Council has been invited to engage in the effort by Representative Reeves. The EJ Council is holding this meeting to keep communities and Tribes informed and to collect input on if and how the EJ Council should participate in the process that Representative Reeves has set up.

VI. Community Guidance

Member Mendoza said the Council is not seeking feedback on any amendments, emphasizing that they are not aware of any proposals for amendments at this time. He clarified that they're looking for feedback on whether the EJ Council should even be considering engaging in the efforts to amend HEAL.

Maiko Patschke, Environmental Justice Policy Lead at Front and Centered, offered Front and Centered to be a thought partner. They have anticipated that there would be efforts to amend HEAL and have convened community partners so they can approach the work with a community-centered lens. They would like to work to improve HEAL in a collaborative way. She said they're interested in working out some of the kinks they've seen over the last few years.

Jonathan Jones Thomas, Environmental and Climate Justice Chairman of the NAACP for the State of Washington, Oregon, and Alaska. He said African Americans are an overburdened community that remains underrepresented on this Council and other Councils. He asked how he and the NAACP can support the outreach to communities that are not represented on the Council. He said the NAACP is a massive civil rights organization that champions environmental and climate justice issues. He said they could help to support the Council and the HEAL Act.

VII. Public Comment

Member Mendoza opened up the public comment period

Sierra Red Bow, Council Staff, read the public comment that was submitted in writing (see below for a summary of the comments)

Martha Foster Lucas, Executive Director of the Washington State Coalition of African Community Leaders, said African diaspora seniors, youth, and family members that live in King, Snohomish, and Pierce Counties with Environmental Health Disparities map scores of 7 or higher are directly benefiting for the first time from HEAL funding. The CCA was set up to provide the resources to support communities overburdened by pollution and climate change. They asked decision makers continue to keep their promise to the communities they serve.

VIII. Council Member Discussion and Possible Action: Efforts to Amend the HEAL Act

Co-Chair Brown asked each voting member to share their thoughts on this issue. She said they have not yet decided whether the Council should be engaging in efforts to open up the HEAL Act. The Council has been offered an opportunity to engage in the working group that Representative Reeves is convening. She asked each member to share their thoughts on whether the Council should engage in Representative Reeve's process and if so, what that engagement could look like.

- Todd Mitchell, Council Member, said that if we are looking at the potential expansion of HEAL and the agencies that are included, we need to consider if those agencies would have the necessary funding in this next session. We don't want to ask for something from an agency that is downsizing capacity.
- Running-Grass, Council Member, said he has a lot of questions, including what the meetings are, who is facilitating, what Representative Reeve's role is, and who is at the table. He said more transparency is needed. He asked what the goal of those meetings is. He said we have a responsibility to be in solidarity with Tribes and communities, and we need more dialogue with environmental justice communities. He said he has no doubt or hesitation in participating in a process that they Council didn't initiate, adding that we need to be careful not to marginalize the Council. He said it is too weak to only **encourage** early and often engagement from Tribes and communities. He said this is a test of co-governance, and the engagement needs to be meaningful. He encouraged the Council to be more demanding.
- Esther Min, Council Member, said this would be a great opportunity if we were not dictated by a preset timeline. She commented on the need to learn more about how Tribes and communities feel the impacts of HEAL have been and to really assess and evaluate in a forward looking way, rather than being pushed into a reactive place. She encouraged looking at the impacts of HEAL and having a shared voice to uplift and safeguard what is working well in a coordinated way.

- Co-Chair Erickson said he recommends that the Council engages, especially from a Tribal perspective. The first time around, Tribes were not included. He has heard from Representative Reeves that she wants to engage Tribes early and often. He said there are some things about HEAL that can be improved and encouraged looking at it section by section. He stressed that this is an opportunity to ensure funding can be used in the best way and keep the purpose of HEAL moving forward, despite the budget constraints. He said he would rather be partially in the driver's seat than just on the menu.
- Member González Torres said she agrees with Co-Chair Erickson and with Member Running-Grass. She said the work is important and we need to be at the table. They took an oath to represent their communities. She said she is looking for more information about where Representative Reeves sees this going. She also said we need to bring more people to the table, adding that to do her job, she needs to hear more from her community.
- Member Mendoza stressed that participating in a process is not an endorsement of whatever comes out of the process. He said that is a separate step. He said he felt that participating and sharing the successes and challenges is a valuable exercise. He said he also wanted to provide a little context about legislators and how they do not have a lot of staff and how this is actually relatively early for legislative engagement. Representative Reeves has been trying to show up and engage and is open to bringing more people to the table.
- Lua Pritchard, Council Member, said she wants to support taking advantage of the opportunity for the Council to bring its voice. She said we should take advantage of making our demands. She added that she would rather have more time to go to the community to get some more thoughts so we can inform the legislation properly. She said she applauds Representative Reeves and she is eager for more information.
- Co-Chair Brown said she has some legitimate concerns, including how HEAL funding has shifted to the CCA. She said she questioned the current knowledge of the Legislature on

environmental justice and HEAL and motivations for CCA spending in a budget crisis. She questioned the conditions and risks of opening up HEAL that could go in our favor and could not go in our favor. She said she is hearing that the Council is moving in the direction of wanting to engage in the workgroup and to ask for an evaluation. She asked what it could look like to increase education among legislators. She said once session starts our access will decrease and with less access we will have less influence.

Member Mendoza shared draft language for a possible motion. Co-Chair Brown asked if we want to hold off on engaging until Tribes and communities have been more meaningfully engaged. Co-Chair Erickson said we should continue to engage because this is our opportunity. He discouraged waiting and waiting and then rushing into a decision. Member González Torres said she agrees with Co-Chair Erickson, adding that she is concerned about making final decisions without more people at the table. Member Running-Grass said he wants to make sure that we are in significant solidarity with Tribes and communities and that Representative Reeves understands this. He said it is more than just asking for inclusion. He said our endorsement of conclusions of this group will not be in our control and that we need to work from the inside to make it as impactful as possible. Member Pritchard concurred.

Motion: EJC directs staff and the Council to participate in discussions on HEAL Act amendments to provide background on successes and challenges of HEAL implementation as well as ideas to address concerns as they see it. We also direct staff to work with Rep. Reeves to meaningfully engage Tribes and frontline communities. EJC staff do not speak for the Council on any positions not adopted by the full Council and staff input on HEAL Act amendments should not be attributed as endorsement by the EJC and only reflect that staff person's expertise and experience. The EJC will decide later whether to endorse any legislation that results from this process.

Motion/Second: Member Mendoza/Member Mitchell

Motion Passed

A: Yes, I approve.

B: Yes, with reservations.

C: Not voting until we have further discussions.

D: I don't approve, but I won't block.

E: I block, have serious concerns.

F: I stand aside, recuse myself.

10 Members / 6 Vacancies / 0 Leaves of Absence / Current Quorum = 6		
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	Absent
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	B
Faaluaina Pritchard	Community Representative	A
Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	A
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	A
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	A
Cristina González Torres	Community Representative	A
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Co-Chair)	Tribal Representative	A
Tatiana Brown (Co-Chair)	Community Representative	B
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Community Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant
Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant

IX. Appreciation and Adjournment

Co-Chair Brown asked folks to continue to share thoughts on others who should engage. She encouraged everyone to contact Representative Reeves and advocate for their own ability to be at the table. She said this would be a priority for the Council next session.

Environmental Justice Council

Date: September 17, 2026

To: Environmental Justice Council

From: Christy Curwick Hoff, Policy Advisor

Subject: 2027-2029 Biennial Budget Recommendations

Background and Summary

The Environmental Justice (EJ) Council has authority under RCW 70A.65.040 to adopt budget recommendations for how Climate Commitment Act (CCA) revenue should be spent. During the upcoming 2027 legislative session, the Legislature will adopt the 2027-2029 biennial budget, and budget writers will be faced with an ongoing state budget shortfall. One specific challenge is that the estimated CCA revenue available for the 2027-2029 biennial operating budget (about \$155 million) will not be enough to support the carryforward base CCA budget (about \$271 million).

In this tough budget climate, the EJ Council's Budget Recommendation Workgroup has recommended that the EJ Council focus on: (1) elevating funding for HEAL Act implementation as the top priority and (2) providing guidance to the Governor and Legislature about centering programs specifically investing in Tribes and communities or aimed at promoting equity and justice.

During today's meeting, the EJ Council will have an opportunity to review, discuss, and consider adoption of 2027-2029 biennial budget recommendations that were drafted by the

EJ Council's Budget Recommendation Workgroup. These draft recommendations were also discussed at the Council's September 1 Tribal Forum and September 8 Community Forum.

Council Staff Recommended Actions

After review and discussion, the Council may wish to consider, amend as necessary, and adopt the following motion:

Proposed Motion: The Council adopts the 2027-2029 biennial budget recommendations as submitted on September 17, 2026, with any changes agreed to by the full Council.

The Council directs staff to submit the budget recommendations to the appropriate committees of the Legislature, the Governor, and the Office of Financial Management to inform the development of the 2027-2029 biennial budget.

The Council will follow its adopted [Legislative Session Procedure](#) when advocating for the budget recommendations.

Staff Contact

Christy Curwick Hoff, Policy Advisor, christy.hoff@ejc.wa.gov

Environmental Justice Council 2027-2029 DRAFT Biennial Budget Recommendations

**DRAFT for Environmental Justice Council discussion– this document has not been
approved by the EJ Council**

I. Background

The Environmental Justice Council (Council) recognizes the following:

- The amount of Climate Commitment Act (CCA) revenue available for the 2027-2029 biennial operating budget (about \$155 million) will not be enough to support the carryforward base CCA budget (about \$271 million).
- As required by law ([RCW 70A.65.230](#)), a minimum of 10% of total CCA revenue must be used for projects supported by Tribes and a minimum of 35%, with a goal of 40% of total CCA revenue must provide direct and meaningful benefits to “vulnerable populations within the boundaries of overburdened communities” as defined in the law.
- The Council has authority under the CCA, [RCW 70A.65.040](#), to make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature for how CCA revenue should be spent to provide environmental benefits and reduce environmental health disparities.
- The Council has authority under the Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act, [RCW 70A.02.110](#), to “recommend funding strategies and allocations to build capacity in vulnerable populations and overburdened communities to address environmental justice.”

The Council’s Budget Workgroup discussed the approach they wanted to recommend the Council take with its budget recommendations for the 2027 legislative session.

Understanding that the Governor and Legislature were going to need to reduce the funding

for programs supported by CCA revenue in the base operating budget by about half (or find alternate fund sources for those programs), the Budget Workgroup determined it was vital to focus recommendations on protecting existing investments in Tribes and Communities and environmental justice and equity programming rather than making recommendations to fund new programs.

Additionally, the Budget Workgroup considered whether the Council should make recommendations for which specific programs to maintain (i.e., to develop a prioritized list of programs that the Council would recommend not receive any funding cuts.) The Budget Workgroup opted not to recommend that approach, as doing so could signal that the programs they did not prioritize were less important or should be considered for reductions. The Budget Workgroup did not have the capacity to collect the necessary information to understand which programs are priorities for Tribes and Communities or to review the impacts of all programs, so they felt creating a prioritized list would not be a responsible approach.

In the end, the Budget Workgroup is recommending the following to the full Council for its consideration: (1) elevating funding for HEAL Act implementation as the top priority and (2) providing guidance to the Governor and Legislature about centering programs specifically investing in Tribes and communities or aimed at promoting equity and justice in budget decisions.

II. DRAFT Budget Recommendations

1. The Environmental Justice Council's (Council) **top priority** for the 2027-2029 biennial operating budget is to ensure **sustainable funding for HEAL Act implementation**. This includes:

- Establishing the HEAL Community and Tribal Capacity Grants (administered through the Department of Health) as an ongoing program and restoring funding to the level in the 2023-2025 biennial operating budget.
- Maintaining all carryforward base funding in the operating budget for staffing and operations for the following: agency implementation of the HEAL Act, the Environmental Justice Council, the HEAL Interagency Workgroup, and the Environmental Health Disparities Map. Several agencies have already received significant cuts to their HEAL implementation funding during the 2025-2027 biennium, which has deeply impacted the work.ⁱ
- Identifying sustainable funding (a source of revenue for **ongoing** programmatic funding) for HEAL Act implementation.

2. The Council recommends **maintaining funding for programs specifically aimed at promoting equity and justice—this includes but is not limited to programs that promote environmental justice, support Tribal and community engagement, and directly invest in Tribes and communities.** In the [Office of Financial Management’s \(OFM\) budget instructions](#) to agencies, Governor Ferguson requested that as agencies consider where to propose reductions, that they specifically consider “programs created or expanded after January 1, 2019.” The Governor also stated his commitment to equity and requested that agencies “be mindful and carefully consider disproportionate impacts reductions may have on communities underserved by state services.”

These two separate instructions may be contradictory in many cases, as programs created to intentionally promote equity and justice are more likely to have been created after 2019. For instance, in the 2025-2027 biennial operating budget, there was a \$2 million reduction that eliminated grants for emergency drinking water programs in frontline communities. The program (funded in the 2024 supplemental budget) was a recent investment that resulted from community advocacy to address urgent

environmental justice water issues in their communities. The program was defunded using the criterion to focus reductions on recently funded programs, potentially without consideration of the disproportionate impacts that the reduction would have on communities underserved by state services.

Therefore, the Council recommends the following:

- **To Governor Ferguson:** As you review agency cost saving proposals, **we ask that you deny requests** to reduce funding for equity and justice centered programs. These include but are not limited to programs that promote environmental justice, support Tribal and community engagement, and directly invest in Tribes and communities, even if they were created after 2019. We ask you and state agencies to also engage with Tribes and communities to understand the impacts of reductions already made to equity and justice centered programs. Tribes and Communities know best how these reductions impact them.
- **To the Legislature:** **We request that you maintain funding for programs** specifically aimed at promoting equity and justice, including but not limited to programs that promote environmental justice, support Tribal and Community engagement, and directly invest in Tribes and communities. Programs focused on equity and justice have already received disproportionate budget reductions in the last biennium. We ask you to also engage with Tribes and Communities to understand the impacts of reductions already made to equity and justice centered programs. Tribes and communities know best how these reductions impact them.

i

HEAL Agency	2025-2027 Funding Change	Impact of Funding Change
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Department of Commerce (Commerce)	Commerce received \$1.5M biennial funding for HEAL implementation. Commerce did not have any ongoing funding for HEAL; therefore, this represented a reduction in funding for Commerce from \$3M to \$1.5M per biennium.	This resulted in a significant decrease in staffing and decreased engagement with Tribes and communities (including in Environmental Justice Assessment processes).
Department of Natural Resources (DNR)	DNR's HEAL funding was reduced by \$580,000 per biennium	This reduction required the agency to eliminate two positions who work on Environmental Justice Assessments.
Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA)	WSDA's funding was reduced by \$258,000	This reduction prevented the agency from hiring an Equity Advisor. While this position was focused on broader equity work at the agency, it also supported HEAL implementation. Even before this reduction, WSDA had minimal funding to implement the HEAL Act.

Environmental Justice Council

Date: September 17, 2026

To: Environmental Justice Council Members

From: Sierra Rotakhina, Council Manager

Subject: October 2026 – January 2027 Council Meeting Schedule

Background and Summary

[RCW 70A.02.110](#) specifies that meetings of the Environmental Justice Council (Council) are subject to the Open Public Meetings Act ([chapter 42.30 RCW](#)). [RCW 42.30.075](#) requires the Council to file a schedule of regular meetings with the Code Revisor to be published in the Washington State Register.

Going into 2026 the Council was discussing how to approach it's work and meeting schedule in a new way, so the Council did not adopt a full 2026 meeting schedule. At the December 2025 Council meeting the Council adopted January and February 2026 meeting dates and staff filed these dates with the Code Revisor. The Council later added an April meeting to the schedule and then held special meetings in June and today to address specific, time-sensitive topics.

At today's meeting the Council will discuss and possibly adopt the meeting schedule for the rest of 2026 and early 2027, with the goal of adopting the full 2027 meeting schedule before the end of this year. The proposed meeting schedule is on [page xx](#).

Council Staff Recommended Actions

The Council may wish to consider, amend if necessary, and adopt the following motion:

The Council adopts the proposed October 2026 – January 2027 meeting dates with any changes agreed upon by the full Council at the September 17, 2026 meeting.

Staff Contact

Sierra Rotakhina, Council Manager, sierra.rotakhina@ejc.wa.gov, 360-584-4398

Environmental Justice Council

Draft 2026 – January 2027 Meeting Schedule

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (chapter 42.30 RCW), the following is the schedule of regular meetings for the Washington State Environmental Justice Council (Council) for 2026. The Council’s meetings are open to the public. Community access to the meetings and language justice are priorities for the Council. Members of the public can contact staff (see below) to request language interpreters at meetings, translated meeting materials, or accommodations to improve the accessibility of Council meetings and materials.

Agendas for the meetings listed below are made available in advance via listserv and the Council’s website (see below). Every attempt is made to ensure that the agenda is up-to-date. However, the Council reserves the right to change or amend agendas at the meeting. Meeting links, call-in, information and locations (as applicable) are posted here:

<https://waportal.org/partners/home/environmental-justice-council/environmental-justice-council-meetings>

Meeting Date	Location
Thursday January 29, 2026 3:30pm – 6:30pm	Virtual Only
Canceled: Thursday February 12, 2026 3:30pm-6:30pm Hold to meet only if needed for legislative purposes	
Thursday April 10, 2026 1:00pm – 4:00pm	Virtual Only
Seeds of Justice Gathering May 13, 2026 10:00 - 3:00 pm	In-person (with virtual option) Asia Pacific Cultural Center Auntie Senator Rosa Franklin Performance Arts Hall

	4851 South Tacoma Way Tacoma, WA 98409
Special Meeting: June 23, 2026 1:30pm-3:00pm	Virtual Only
Special Meeting: September 17, 2026 12:30pm-2:30pm	Virtual Only
Hold to Meet Only If Needed for Continuation of September 17 th Special September 24, 2026 12:30pm-2:00pm	
October 29, 2026 2:00pm-5:00pm	Virtual Only
December 14, 2026 12:00pm-3:00pm	Virtual Only
January 25, 2026 12:00pm-3:00pm	Virtual Only

Time and locations subject to change as needed. See [Environmental Justice Council | WaPortal.org](#) for the most current information. Contact Council staff at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov.

Last updated: September 17, 2026

Environmental Justice Council

Date: September 17, 2026

To: Environmental Justice Council Members

From: Christy Curwick Hoff, Policy Advisor

Subject: 2027 Legislative Session Policy Statement

Background and Summary

The Environmental Justice Council has made it a practice to adopt a Legislative Policy Statement prior to the start of each legislative session. The Legislative Policy Statement documents official Council positions on issues, allowing it to take a position on bills in a timely fashion during session.

In preparation for today's meeting, the Council's 2026 Legislative Policy Statement was shared out with Council Members (see [page xx](#)), and Members were asked to review and provide input into an updated draft for 2027. The 2026 statement was also shared with Tribes, communities, and the public so the Council could receive feedback on past positions that needed edits, any past positions that the Council should consider removing, or new positions the Council should consider as they develop their 2027 statement.

The track changes shown in the draft on [page xx](#) show suggested changes to be made for the 2027 statement. At today's meeting, the Council will have an opportunity to review and discuss the draft 2027 Legislative Session Policy Statement. Suggested edits received at today's meeting will be incorporated into an updated draft for the Council to review and consider adopting at a future Council meeting.

Staff Contact

Christy Hoff, Policy Advisor, christy.hoff@ejc.wa.gov, 360-688-4699.

Environmental Justice Council

2026 Legislative Session Policy Statement

Adopted December 4, 2025

1. Purpose and Background

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy statement is to document the Environmental Justice Council's (Council) policy positions ahead of the 2026 Legislative session. This document will guide Council Members and staff in determining whether the Council may want to take a position on legislation this session.

Background:

The Healthy Environmental for All (HEAL) Act, [RCW 70A.02.110](#), and the Climate Commitment Act (CCA), [RCW 70A.65.040](#), give the Council statutory authority and direction to make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature in several areas:

- The Council may, in consultation with the HEAL Interagency Work Group, make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature on ways to improve agency compliance with the HEAL Act;
- The Council may make recommendations for amendments to the HEAL Act, proposed laws, or other existing laws to promote environmental justice;
- The Council may recommend funding strategies and allocations to build capacity in vulnerable populations and overburdened communities to address environmental injustices;

- The Council must provide recommendations to the Legislature, agencies, and the Governor on the development and implementation of the cap and invest program established in the CCA (RCW 70A.65.060 through 70A.65.210); and
- The Council must provide recommendations to the Legislature, agencies, and the Governor on the programs funded by the CCA accounts.

2. Policy Positions

2.1 The Council opposes policies that would alter the Council’s membership, duties, and/or authority in ways that are counter to the intent of the HEAL Act or would significantly disrupt or delay the Council’s work.

- Note: The Council’s positions on alignment with the HEAL Act regarding topics like community engagement and environmental justice assessments can be extrapolated from official Council letters or position statements.

2.2 The Council supports policies that would direct the Department of Labor and Industries, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, and the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council to comply with the HEAL Act, Chapter 70A.02 RCW.

2.3 The Council requests that it (the Council) only be added to legislation or budget proposals when the inclusion is directly related to the HEAL Act or CCA and when doing so aligns with the Council’s capacity, authority, and structure as an advisory body of volunteer community members. The Council believes that legislative and budgetary proposals should center free, prior, and informed consent from Federally Recognized Tribes; community engagement; co-

governance; and co-design. For example, the Council opposes being included in any legislation or budgetary proposals when the sole reason for doing so would be for the Council to serve as a proxy for meaningful Tribal Government Consultation and community engagement.

2.4 The Council has adopted a [statement](#) uplifting Tribal Sovereignty; Self Determination; and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent. The Council supports policies that are supported by Tribes that affirm sovereignty and self-determination and that would codify the practice of free, prior, and informed consent into state law.

2.5 The Council supports policies that would ensure Tribes have opportunities if desired for diverse Tribal representation, including but not limited to at least one representative from both Eastern and Western Washington, and representatives of overburdened communities in the membership of the Interagency Clean Energy Siting Coordinating Council created by [chapter 43.394 RCW](#).

2.6 The Council supports policies that would ensure Tribes have opportunities if desired for diverse Tribal representation, including but not limited to at least one representative from both Eastern and Western Washington to the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council created by [chapter 80.50 RCW](#).

2.7 The Council supports HB 1262/SB 5228, Updating the Governor's Interagency Coordinating Council on Health Disparities. The Health Disparities Council was established in 2006 as an advisory body charged with making recommendations to eliminate health disparities. During the 2025 legislative session, the Health Disparities Council's request

legislation was introduced (HB 1262/SB 5228) to modernize its authorizing statute in alignment with community priorities. The EJ Council supports the Health Disparities Council's efforts to update its statute, and it will look to and follow the Health Disparities Council's positions on the legislation moving forward.

2.8 The Council supports policies informed by Tribes and communities that aim to address the recent loss of federal environmental, health, and cultural resource protections, and potential risks to Tribal and community data. This includes, but is not limited to, changes to Presidential Executive Orders on Environmental Justice; changes to National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) regulations and implementing procedures; and state to federal data exchanges, breaches, and/or misuse placing Tribes' and communities' wellbeing (including immigrant communities) and knowledge at risk.

Environmental Justice Council

2026-2027 Legislative Session Policy Statement

Note: This is a copy of the 2026 legislative session policy statement adopted by the EJC on December 4, 2025 marked up with proposed changes for the 2027 legislative session, along with formatting edits.

This version is DRAFT for discussion at the EJ Council's September 17, 2026 meeting.

Purpose and Background

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy statement is to document the Environmental Justice Council's (Council) policy positions ahead of the 2026-2027 Legislative session. This document will guide Council Members and staff in determining whether the Council may want to take a position on legislation this session.

Background:

The Healthy Environmental for All (HEAL) Act, [RCW 70A.02.110](#), and the Climate Commitment Act (CCA), [RCW 70A.65.040](#), give the Council statutory authority and direction to make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature in several areas:

- The Council may, in consultation with the HEAL Interagency Work Group, make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature on ways to improve agency compliance with the HEAL Act;
- The Council may make recommendations for amendments to the HEAL Act, proposed laws, or other existing laws to promote environmental justice;

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- The Council may recommend funding strategies and allocations to build capacity in vulnerable populations and overburdened communities to address environmental injustices;
- The Council must provide recommendations to the Legislature, agencies, and the Governor on the development and implementation of the cap and invest program established in the CCA (RCW 70A.65.060 through 70A.65.210); and
- The Council must provide recommendations to the Legislature, agencies, and the Governor on the programs funded by the CCA accounts.

Policy Positions

1. Policy Positions Related to the HEAL Act (Chapter 70A.02 RCW)

1.1 The Council opposes policies that would alter the Council's membership, duties, and/or authority in ways that are counter to the intent of the HEAL Act or would significantly disrupt or delay the Council's work.

- Note: The Council's positions on alignment with the HEAL Act regarding topics like community engagement and environmental justice assessments can be extrapolated from official Council letters or position statements.

1.2 The Council supports policies that would affirm and strengthen statutory language in RCW 70A.02.110 outlining its autonomy as an independent advisory body and its ability to have direct decision-making authority over its own operations including hiring an Executive Director who would oversee all staffing, administrative, and operational duties of the Council.

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1.3 The Council opposes policies that would move the staffing and support for the EJ Council to another state agency or entity without first conducting an analysis, in collaboration with the Council, on the impacts, risks, and benefits of the change.

1.4 The Council recognizes the significant value that staff with expertise in environmental justice, equity, and Tribal and community engagement bring when they are embedded into each HEAL agency, and therefore, it strongly opposes policies to reduce, limit, or consolidate HEAL implementation staff and/or other resources into a single agency or other entity.

1.5 The Council supports policies that would direct the Department of Labor and Industries, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, and the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council to comply with the HEAL Act, Chapter 70A.02 RCW.

1.6 The Council recognizes that environmental justice cannot be achieved without the ability for Tribes and communities impacted by environmental injustices to inform state government policy and program development. The HEAL Act directs agencies to conduct meaningful community and Tribal engagement to inform agency actions. Communities and Tribes need ongoing resources and capacity to engage; therefore, the Council supports policies that would codify the HEAL Community and Tribal Capacity Grants into the HEAL Act, Chapter 70A.02 RCW.

2. Other Policy Positions Related to the EJ Council

2.1 The Council requests that it (the Council) only be added to legislation or budget proposals when the inclusion is directly related to the HEAL Act or CCA and when doing so aligns with

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the Council's capacity, authority, and structure as an advisory body of volunteer community members. The Council believes that legislative and budgetary proposals should center free, prior, and informed consent from Federally Recognized Tribes; community engagement; co-governance; and co-design. For example, the Council opposes being included in any legislation or budgetary proposals when the sole reason for doing so would be for the Council to serve as a proxy for meaningful Tribal Government Consultation and community engagement.

3. Policy Positions Related to Tribal Sovereignty; Self Determination; and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent

3.1 The Council has adopted a [statement](#) uplifting Tribal Sovereignty; Self Determination; and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent. The Council supports policies that are supported by Tribes that affirm sovereignty and/or self-determination and that would codify the practice of free, prior, and informed consent into state law.

3.2 The Council supports policies that would ensure Tribes have opportunities if desired for diverse Tribal representation, including but not limited to at least one representative from both Eastern and Western Washington, and representatives of overburdened communities in the membership of the Interagency Clean Energy Siting Coordinating Council created by [chapter 43.394 RCW](#).

3.3 The Council supports policies that would ensure Tribes have opportunities if desired for diverse Tribal representation, including but not limited to at least one representative from both Eastern and Western Washington to the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council created by [chapter 80.50 RCW](#).

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4. Other Policy Positions

4.1 The Council supports HB 1262/SB 5228, Updating the Governor’s Interagency Coordinating Council on Health Disparities. The Health Disparities Council was established in 2006 as an advisory body charged with making recommendations to eliminate health disparities. During the 2025 legislative session, the Health Disparities Council’s request legislation was introduced (HB 1262/SB 5228) to modernize its authorizing statute in alignment with community priorities. The EJ Council supports the Health Disparities Council’s efforts to update its statute, and it will look to and follow the Health Disparities Council’s positions on the legislation moving forward.

4.2 The Council supports policies informed by Tribes and communities that aim to address the recent loss of federal environmental, health, and cultural resource protections, and potential risks to Tribal and community data. This includes, but is not limited to, changes to Presidential Executive Orders on Environmental Justice; changes to National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) regulations and implementing procedures; and state to federal data exchanges, breaches, and/or misuse placing Tribes’ and communities' wellbeing (including immigrant communities) and knowledge at risk.

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