Orange County Climate Council
Summer Intern Project: Final Report

Local Government Sustainability Offices
Climate Communications, Community Engagement and Climate Justice:
Accomplishments, Challenges, and Opportunities

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I. Project Background/Purpose

During 2021, the Orange County Climate Council internship team,[1] led by Dr. Donna Rubinoff (at-large member from Chapel Hill), focused on supporting the Council and members' climate communications, community engagement and climate justice efforts. Initial activities during the first half of the year included a literature review of evidence-based lessons learned and best practices on these topics, culminating in an annotated bibliography and several presentations to OCCC. The team also designed and initiated a community engagement process, developed a community organization database, and piloted the Yale climate survey instrument (the SASSY) to the Chapel Hill Carrboro NAACP.

During the summer session, the team intended to expand the communications/community engagement/climate justice process by upscaling the SASSY to multiple community organizations, in conjunction with the Orange County office of Human Rights and Relations. Unfortunately, this agenda was not available to the team, so we pivoted to an alternative exercise...working more closely with the OCCC local government (LG) sustainability offices. Our goal was to document LG climate communication/community engagement/climate justice activities, probe for constraints to expanding these agendas, and identify opportunities for the OCCC Community Engagement committee and interns to support LG efforts in these domains.

This document lays out the project research methodology, research findings, and analysis.

II. Project Methodology

A. Analyzing the Card

Since we wanted to initiate the project by identifying previous actions taken by the member jurisdictions, we began with an analysis of the Climate Action Reporting Database (CARD).

In 2020, the OCCC Climate Action Reporting Committee compiled data regarding each jurisdiction's climate actions and created the Climate Action Reporting Database (CARD) to showcase all the work that Climate Council members had done and coordinate it in one place. This has been an excellent resource for members and residents, since it not only allows the community to see the actions that are being taken, but also allows the different jurisdictions to collaborate and compare the work they've done.

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[1] Spring 2021 interns included Chloe Allen, UNC Environment, Ecology, and Energy Program and Rose Leek, UNC Environmental Studies and Global Studies. Summer 2021 interns included Chloe Allen and Hannah Rubenstein, UNC Departments of Political Science and Economics. Stella Kempf, UNC Department of Geography joined the team in August 2021.

Focusing initially on the four member jurisdictions (Orange County, Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Hillsborough), we highlighted cells that had actions relating to climate communications/engagement (orange), climate justice (blue), and mapping (yellow). We considered actions to be relevant to climate communications/engagement if they involved messaging, participatory events, or other forms of connection between the community and jurisdiction. We considered actions to be relevant to climate justice if they related to inclusivity and equitable access to climate action or addressed systemic disparities in the effects of climate change. Mapping is an important tool that supports all three of the topics in this project, so we gave it a special category. We highlighted any cells with actions involving mapping, even if the maps were not created by the jurisdiction itself.

In the future, it would be beneficial to expand this patterning exercise to the OCCC members outside of the four jurisdictions (such as UNC and the school districts). We also consolidated the relevant CARD items into a smaller database, which can be found on a separate sheet within the Google Docs version linked below.

Screenshots of the CARD analysis, with actions relevant to climate justice, climate communications and engagement, and climate mapping highlighted.
***Links to our CARD analysis:** Google Docs | Dropbox*

After this visual analysis which helped us quickly grasp the scope and distribution of relevant activities, we wrote summaries of each jurisdiction's actions in climate communications/ engagement, climate justice, and mapping areas. These can be seen in Appendix A. This gave us a foundation for understanding the jurisdictions' actions so far in these realms before our interviews. And it was meant to provide a "cheat sheet" in case any of the interviewees asked what other jurisdictions were doing.

B. Sustainability Officers Interview Process

Building on this initial analysis, we wrote our interview questionnaire, with sections for climate communications, participatory climate-related community engagement, climate justice, mapping, and room for OCCC help. We included questions about updates to the CARD, aspects that OCCC

could help with, challenges the jurisdictions have faced in these realms, strategies that have worked, among other topics. The questionnaire can be seen in [Appendix B.](#)

Next, we interviewed the Council member sustainability officers from each local government (LG). These interviews took place between August 3-9, 2021. The purpose of this activity was to document additional planned LG climate activities, identify opportunities for OCCC to provide them assistance, share ideas and executions with other jurisdictions, and thus give them an opportunity to build a stronger common agenda.

We conducted four interviews in our preliminary round, with the sustainability officers from each jurisdiction, including Mr. Brennan Bouma Orange County Sustainability Coordinator, Ms. Stephanie Trueblood, Hillsborough Public Space Manager, Mr. John Richardson, Chapel Hill Resilience Officer, and Ms. Laura Janway, Carrboro Environmental Sustainability Coordinator.

C. Documentation

During the interviews, we each took extensive notes and assembled them afterwards into several lists of climate communications, climate engagement, climate justice, mapping, and other strategies that the jurisdictions discussed in the interviews. The findings are shown in Appendices C, D, E, (all with the caveat that interviews were preliminary and with only one member from each LG).

- [Appendix C](#): LG updates to the CARD in the realms of climate communications, engagement, justice, and mapping
- [Appendix D](#): challenges/constraints that the jurisdictions have faced in these realms.
- [Appendix E](#): LGs' requests for assistance from OCCC.

III.   Summary Research Findings

A. LG Updates to the CARD (for extensive list of details see [Appendix C](#))

Orange County: Mr. Bouma informed us that OC has been allocating funds for climate action projects in the years since the commissioners levied a climate action tax. The monies have been allocated based on several priorities with social justice and racial equity being the most heavily weighted. As part of this effort, Orange County has been running the Community Climate Action Grant Program, which awards funding to schools, jurisdictions, and other groups to help them implement climate action projects within their communities.

Hillsborough: Ms. Trueblood informed us that they have just begun the climate action planning process as well as a comprehensive sustainability plan. She highlighted that because of Hillsborough's size and overall land use it is important to focus on sustainability, not just climate. Additionally, Hillsborough has become a GARE member in the last year and has recently started working on a county wide race and equity plan. Ms. Trueblood has also facilitated a community

visioning survey in which she surveys the entire community to discern the citizen's concerns, ideas, troubles, and favorite parts about Hillsborough.

Chapel Hill: Mr. Richardson informed us that they have recently hired Ms. Shenekia Weeks to a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer position within the town. She will work to help advance racial equity in all aspects of the Town's work. Additionally, Chapel Hill has created and shared with the Town Council an [implementation plan](#) for the Climate Action Plan in the fiscals years 2022 and 23. They are focusing heavily on actions that advance racial equity in the shaping of actions, such as beginning to scope out an energy upgrade program that prioritizes historically marginalized communities. Other projects include studies to determine who is experiencing energy burden and who is most impacted by climate stressors, which will inform additional work and programming.

Carrboro: Ms. Janway informed us that they have been involved in GARE training for the past year and a half and have recently begun training staff. She also mentioned that they will have a new Climate Action Team and a climate advisory board, with hopes that it will be diverse to represent the town as a whole. Additionally, Carrboro has been working with Orange County to create a unified One Orange plan. Once they hear feedback from the Town Council on that they will use the Racial Equity Tool to examine the town's practices and policies.

B. Analysis of LG's Climate Communication, Engagement and Justice Activities

Regarding **Communications and Community Engagement**, there are varying approaches taken by each jurisdiction. Most of the jurisdictions are doing digital newsletters and posting them on media outlets. Carrboro shared many examples of actions and ideas for Communications. They not only held community events prior to COVID, but they also have been creating multiple outlets of communication outside of the typical newsletter and social media posts. They have created a system where they have "neighborhood liaisons," who are representatives of their area and are responsible for sharing town news/information with the people they represent. This also allows for people of the community to have a line of communication with government members when they previously may not have thought that a possibility or they previously were not able to attend town meetings. They have also been using neighborhood kiosks with bulletin boards to communicate information and posting flyers on NextDoor, which seems to have been reaching a large amount of people. To ensure that the actions they take reflect the wants and needs of the community, they perform surveys with the assistance of a company to ensure that it is statistically accurate.

In terms of **Climate Justice**, all the jurisdictions are taking actions to various degrees. A general theme throughout the interviews was that there is a broader focus on other areas of racial and social equity which are the focus of the government, though they also try to address inequities in their own planning, both climate-related and non-climate related. Hillsborough, for example, has a focus on addressing over-policing of communities of color, but they are still attempting to make the town more equitable by building sidewalks and greenways which connect town center amenities with different income level neighborhoods, among other actions. Chapel Hill recently hired a DEI

(Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) officer evaluating all actions taken by the town, and the town is still in the process of implementing Climate Justice actions in their Climate Action Plan.

Each jurisdiction has a different approach to **Mapping**, especially considering they have different resources and goals. iTree analyses were used by both Hillsborough and Carrboro and have been useful tools for them in measuring tree canopy cover. Orange County has been using ESRI ArcGIS online, but they are working on an interjurisdictional project to identify priority areas for EV Charging Stations. Chapel Hill has been using state-level community mapping as well as EJSCREEN, with Dasy metric being a tool to overlap the datasets.

C.   Common Challenges/Constraints

Jurisdiction-specific challenges are shown in Appendix D. In this section we compiled key common concerns expressed by multiple interviewees.

The largest common problem that jurisdictions had in achieving their goals was simply not having the capacity or resources to undertake their work: to reach as many people as possible, apply for grants, do research and surveys, make connections with community organizations and HOAs, and preparing communication materials to distribute.

Another issue that arose was the need for a stronger connection between the jurisdictions in order to address problems of scale, potentially bringing down prices/fees, jointly applying for grants which benefit everybody, and generally making connections with one another to find potentials for collaboration and know what is working and what isn't.

In the area of Climate Justice, a key question arose about how we define climate equity, as this is necessary before we begin to measure it.

With Mapping, most respondents expressed concern that there was not a clear single way to do it, and they wanted to know the metrics which should be measured, how this can be used for climate mitigation, and how other jurisdictions are doing it at a local level.

D.   LG Sustainability Offices Requests for Assistance

As shown in detail in Appendix E, the LGs had many suggestions for support they could use. To be clear, the intention of this exercise is not to add more work to members' plates, as we know they are already overwhelmed. This is simply to identify opportunities to aid them and to help make their work more efficient and effective. The following table shows a synthesis of the key ideas that several of the LGs discussed.

General	*Annual Check-ins with all members *Better communication between jurisdictions led by Community Relations Team
Climate Justice	*Assistance in building relationships with community organizations and members
Communications	*Assistance in consolidating information into a spreadsheet to identify organizations and people who would be a good resource. Businesses, Climate Justice communities, neighborhoods, and HOAs. *Help in pushing forward newsletter communications. *Assistance in scaling up activities that are too much for one jurisdiction, such as external grant projects or common interest topics. *Assistance engaging with HOAs and businesses/the private sector.
Community Engagement	*SASSY surveys can continue as a method of community engagement *Help determining what experiential community engagement would look like.
Mapping	*Wants to know what other jurisdictions are using for mapping, especially climate mitigation. *Would like to know what metrics to measure with when mapping.

IV.   Conclusion

Many of the challenges faced by the LG's could be eased by strengthening the OC Climate Council's Community Relations team. The team could do annual check-ins with each jurisdiction and plan annual support based on what is working and what is needed. They could also create well-vetted climate communications messages which each of the jurisdictions can send out, along with assisting in creating flyers and newsletters. There was also an expressed interest that the Community Relations team should continue to administer the SASSY surveys to community organizations as well as neighborhoods, the private sector, and other groups.

The Community Relations team could do research to define climate equity so that all jurisdictions are on the same page before formally measuring it.

The team could help overcome mapping challenges by serving as a liaison between jurisdictions and coordinating them in this topic. The Climate Relations team has begun to look at the possibility of using canned tools that simplify mapping social vulnerabilities and climate risks, which could be cost shared across jurisdictions. When asked about the possibility of exploring these tools, most were interested about learning more, though there needs to be more clarity on how this works at a local level.

As all members know, OCCC is unique in that it is a joint-government organization specifically formed to accelerate action against climate change. With this comes a lot of organizational and structural challenges; and building any kind of new institution is always going to be difficult, especially in securing staffing and funding. These challenges are to be expected, but we should not leave these challenges unaddressed. In many ways, the OCCC can support the climate

communications and justice agendas for all its members, as well as set an example for other potential future Climate Councils, having a wider reach than just Orange County.

V. **Appendices Table of Contents**

A. Summaries of Climate Communications, Engagement, Justice, and Mapping as shown in CARD, by Jurisdiction
B. Interview Questionnaire
C. Updates to CARD, by Jurisdiction
D. Climate Communications, Engagement, Justice and Mapping Challenges
E. Sustainability Officers' Assistance Requests/How OCCC Can Support

Appendix A: Summaries of Climate Communications, Engagement, Justice, and Mapping as shown in CARD, by Jurisdiction

1. Orange County

Orange County has filled out about 79% of the CARD. The actions they have taken had spread evenly across the categories of Communications and Climate Justice. Their Communications actions include anti-idling campaigns in both English and Spanish, as well as having a Recycling Education and Outreach Coordinator who uses an array of outlets and events to promote recycling.

In terms of Climate Justice, Orange County provides 19 free and publicly accessible EV charging stations to make electric vehicles more affordable and accessible. In addition, they have a program called Orange County Commuter Options which attempts to reduce the amount of County staff and Hillsborough employees driving to work alone. The employees are encouraged to ride public transportation, bike, walk, rideshare, etc. Most significantly, though, the County assists in weatherizing projects in low-income homes, with funding provided by the state's Weatherization Assistance Program and climate tax. Additionally, they have allocated funds for a low-income housing repair program and supplemental weatherization projects for some homes not covered by state funding.

Orange County has a lot of additional projects, and though they do not yet have a dedicated climate action plan, it is obvious from the CARD that they put efforts into putting a climate lens on a lot of the actions they take, even if it is not explicitly a climate-focused issue. The towns generally seem to have more ability to do explicitly climate-related projects, but perhaps because Orange County's responsibilities are broader, they have other priorities to attend to. In this case, putting a climate lens on all actions seems like the most effective way to take actions until it is possible for a dedicated climate action plan. Putting a climate justice lens on all actions taken can be a useful tactic for other jurisdictions as well though, even if they have already taken explicit climate actions.

2. Chapel Hill

Chapel Hill has the fewest gaps of all the organizations on this CARD and has the highest rate of applicable actions taken to fulfill each slot on this sheet.

In terms of Communications and Engagement, Chapel Hill has published a Climate Action and Response Plan which is very extensive and has easy to read graphs as well as things the town and people can do to mitigate and adapt to climate change. They have publicly endorsed and helped to promote a solar panel program and made this more accessible to the community as well. They also publish messaging about composting and recycling. Twice a year, the town has annual litter cleanups with community volunteers. They also host other environmental related events to engage people.

For Climate Justice, Chapel Hill is using state funding to complete weatherization projects in low-income households. They have also in the past done energy efficiency upgrade programs with federal grants. The Rogers-Eubanks neighborhood has historically been left without sewage infrastructure, and the town, along with Carrboro, OC, and OWASA, have now contributed to a sewer service being provided to the neighborhood. There is now an advisory board known as the Justice in Action Committee which claims to preserve racial, economic, and social justice within the community.

In terms of Mapping, they are creating maps which indicate what will be a climate stressor in the future in specific areas of Chapel Hill and they plan to use this when creating land use plans in the future. This is called the Future Land Use Map series. In this series they have also included green infrastructure corridors and areas with natural habitats. The FLUM project in Chapel Hill has also been utilized to create a Mobility Plan where they try to make the town more walkable. They are also using GPS technology to create route optimization for the town's fleet of hybrid electric vehicles.

3. Hillsborough

Of the three major areas in Orange county, Hillsborough shows the fewest items in the CARD reporting of climate action taken in the community. It has only indicated 18 actions which leaves 21 gaps that they must focus on. (However, the interview demonstrated an extremely thoughtful active and aspirational agenda that is only limited by its small size, limited staffing and resource shortages.)

Hillsborough has done some work regarding communication, including Green Infrastructure education and outreach, and offering some educational workshops. Their biggest success has been adopting a Clean Energy Resolution that aims to reduce carbon emissions 80% by 2030, and 100% by 2050

Based on the tasks they *have* completed, Hillsborough is doing considerable work in addressing climate justice. They have also made major sewage upgrades that reduce electricity usage and releases cleaner waste into the Eno river, as well as completed an energy inventory which they used to make a comprehensive sustainability plan.

According to the CARD, Hillsborough has not ostensibly focused on mapping (however in the interview we discovered that most of the planning work has been digitally mapped as a matter of course, even if there is not explicit programmatic and staffing support for it). The Community Connectivity Plan and existing staff technical expertise could form a useful basis for additional and formalized mapping activities.

4. Carrboro

Carrboro seems to be prioritizing communications/community engagement in its climate action, as 10 cells relate to this. Carrboro is especially interested in engagement around composting – they have composting info on the Carrboro website, were working on an educational composting video, have backyard composting as part of the Community Climate Action Plan's Green Neighborhoods Initiative, are "expanding organics drop-off locations," and are looking into staff helping at the Carrboro Farmers' Market Composting Collection. They also have several projects engaging the community with surveys/data collection, including a phone survey on food choices, composting, gardening, and commuting (Solid Waste Reduction cell), a 2019 food choices survey with a consultant for baseline emissions data (Food System Sustainability cell), and a staff-led community survey for a "GHG food system emissions inventory" (Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory cell).

Several of Carrboro's communications/community engagement boxes involve collaboration, including the partnership "with UNC graduate students to update … municipal greenhouse gas emissions inventories and update the community inventory" (Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory cell) and the Solsmart program with Carrboro and OC. They also mention several actions related to their Bee City USA participation, such as pollinator gardens in Dr. MLK, Jr. Park and National Pollinator Week Outreach Events. Other actions include organizing "invasive species removal volunteer events" and having Solar Photovoltaic cells on the Town Commons rooftop, which could be a form of indirect communication through design depending on the visibility.

Three cells relate to climate justice. Changes to the Climate Action Plan included "recognizing principles of race and equity and climate justice," and GARE "training for Town sustainability staff to guide climate action plan implementation." The Community Climate Action Plan included an Environmental Justice section. Town Council accepted the updates to the Town's Community Climate Action Plan and municipal Energy and Climate Protection Plan on 10/13/20. The Environmental Advisory Board contributed recommendations for this section. Also, in their December 2018 Resolution, the Carrboro Board of Aldermen endorsed Climate Justice.

One cell relates to mapping, pointing to potential opportunities for either more use of mapping or more communication of these efforts to OCCC/the public. The Eno-Haw Regional Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan document linked in the Accessing Climate Hazards and Vulnerabilities cell includes several maps.

Appendix B: Interview Questionnaire

1. **Climate Justice**
    a. In addition to the actions in the interview request email (written using actions in CARD), are there any updates to climate justice actions your jurisdiction is taking?
    b. What underrepresented populations in your jurisdiction are you currently working with, relative to climate justice and other programs?
    c. What populations in your jurisdiction need more prioritization in terms of bringing them into the climate conversation/agenda? (populations you are not yet working with, or need help strengthening connection with)
    d. How does your jurisdiction measure climate equity?
    e. What areas are most needed to fill the gaps in your jurisdiction's climate justice agenda:
        ▪ Technical (e.g. mapping), Best practices, Ideas/brainstorming for events, Help with communicating grant opportunities, climate events, etc.
2. **Climate Communications**
    a. In addition to the actions in the CARD / interview request email, are there any updates to climate communication actions your jurisdiction is taking?
    b. What communication strategies have worked best for your jurisdiction in the past? (data sharing, reports, community events, etc.)
    A. How does your jurisdiction measure what communication strategies work best / are most effective?
    c. Have you identified any specific challenges in your public communication efforts? For example, how does your jurisdiction combat climate misinformation?
3. **Climate-Related Community Engagement** (This section pertains to active, participatory climate engagement events/activities)
    a. In addition to the actions in the CARD / interview request email, are there any updates to climate community engagement actions your jurisdiction is taking?
    b. How do you envision future community engagement around climate issues?
4. **Mapping**
    a. Does your jurisdiction use any mapping technology (UrbanFootprint, other GIS, EPA EJScreen, in-house program, etc.) in your climate justice planning/activities?
    b. If yes, what are the typical goals of this mapping? (mapping hazards, mapping areas with high social vulnerability in tandem with high climate vulnerability, etc.)
5. **OCCC Help**
    a. Would you mind introducing us to climate justice communities that you've already established a relationship with?
    b. Is there any part of the above climate issues you want OCCC's help with?

Appendix C: Updates and Additions to the CARD

Disclaimer: This table of ideas is based on preliminary interviews. Because there are additional officials that can be interviewed, it is possible that not all of a jurisdiction's climate justice and communications actions are represented.

	Climate Justice & Engagement	Climate Communications & Engagement
Orange County	*Including "Social Justice and Racial Equity" and "Amount and Duration of Engagement" as criteria for climate action grants *Building off of past collaboration with underrepresented communities (e.g. vaccination efforts) for outreach events on Climate Action Plan *Participated in GARE training *Provides resources/contacts for non-climate areas that communities want help with *Mapping areas for EV charging stations in advance of funding, building off other cities' models. *Collaborates with regional resilience plan that uses CDC's Social Vulnerability Index. *Looking forward to receiving the 2020 census data for more analysis *Creating Racial Equity Index tool	*Communicates grant programs through newsletter *Doesn't repeat misinformation; objectively provides the correct information *Makes sure climate communication messages are well documented with authoritative sources *Understands the communications environment: compared to emergent information (e.g., onset of COVID-19), people may have less room for longer-term, environmental messaging

Hillsborough	*Is a GARE member *Working on improving representation on advisory boards *Building relationships around concerns such as safety before/in addition to climate *Looking forward to receiving the 2020 census data for climate justice analysis *Think about the public realm/spaces too *Sidewalk and greenway projects that connect different parts of town. Project originally about planning and community, but has climate benefits too *Aware that making changes to jurisdiction's physical infrastructure/space can also decrease affordability *Interested in partnering to bring fees down *Created a board position for a teenager and one for a 55+ person *Sees voting as climate justice – e.g. poll access for people across ages and abilities *Uses taskforces as a more equitable and project-based form of engagement	*Conducts community survey every other year *Uses surveys to find out what is importnat to people: e.g. by asking what 3 words do you associate with [jurisdiction] *Go to community organization meetings *Provides materials in multiple languages, e.g. surveys in English and Spanish *Uses public art to start conversations *Created a website page for sustainability plan with videos and links *Reaches a lot of people with established and consistent town newsletter *Uses direct mailing in water bill for communications that need to go to every resident *Uses Zoom/virtual meetings for broader participation; makes recording available for a long time *Tactical urbanism for sidewalk widening, pocket parks, etc. *Listens as much as possible vs. Talking *Important to define broad terms like climate justice
Chapel Hill	*Building off existing networks for perspectives on Climate Action Plan *Siting EV charging stations with ADA access *Building relationships and trust with community groups as a foundation for town support of climate justice work and two way relationship *Daisy Metric EPA tool allows environmental simulation at building level, and overlaying social information with hazard mapping *Using mapping to answer the question of who is/will be most impacted by climate change and its impacts	*Initiatives to make sure communications are in multiple languages *Initiatives to make sure communications are clear (e.g. Plain Language Initiative) *Learning from other communications efforts, such as COVID-19 *Building relationships and trust with community groups as a foundation for effective climate communications *Enhanced weekly newsletter recently to make it more visual and easy to glance at on phone *Customizes communications strategies based on specific situation
Carrboro	*Participated in GARE training	*New advisory board Climate Action Team

	*Work to do to reach goal that boards should represent the town as a whole *Often has translator(s) present on Zoom meetings about the comprehensive plan *Provides flyers and other communications in multiple languages	will work a lot on outreach and events *Models climate engagement on past successful strategies *Evaluates who the town is reaching at meetings, by asking people to identify the closest intersection to them *Facebook live events with community organizations *Tabling at Farmers' Market *Weekly newsletter; can have environmental column *Events: pollinator week, replanting, stream restoration *Advertises events on flyers, social media (e.g. NextDoor) *Will keep some virtual meetings to make them easier to attend *Makes virtual events engaging with polls, etc. Vs. Just PowerPoint *Creating a neighborhood liaison system, for people to sign up to facilitate communication *Planning neighborhood climate kiosks/bulletin boards, similar to little free library model *Green Neighborhoods grant, outreach *Has ways for people to answer how they found out about an event/program, and to give feedback *Word of mouth has been a common answer *Community climate action survey *Uses google translate on the jurisdiction's website *Tracks the percent of people using translation browsers on the website *Provides flyers in multiple languages *Takes people's questions about climate and climate action seriously, responding by staff looking into research *Ensures people can trust information the town puts out, with thorough research, peer-reviewed sources

Appendix D: Challenges in Climate Communications, Engagement, Justice, Mapping

Caveat: The following items were brought up as issues during our interviews, but were not necessarily things interviewees asked for OCCC's assistance with. The intention of listing these challenges is to provide a basis for further discussion. They are ordered by how commonly mentioned they were across the interviews.

1. The most universal challenge is a lack of capacity to achieve goals. This was a problem present in everything from outreach, to housing issues, to climate communications.
    a. There are not enough people or resources to achieve many goals, but another problem is that there are not enough economies of scale.
    b. Capacity and ability to give technical training in grant writing is an issue, which is holding back marginalized communities from receiving grant funding.
    c. Scale and capacity are especially challenging for Hillsborough and Orange County.

2. Measuring and defining climate equity and measuring who is impacted by policy presents a challenge.
    a. A clear definition for climate equity must be established before being able to measure it and determine the most appropriate actions, as pointed out by Ms. Trueblood from Hillsborough.
    b. Carrboro finds it difficult to identify if CJ actions are really reaching or impacting the communities it is intended to and this needs to be evaluate. The Racial Equity Toolkit can hopefully be used to measure this but it is still unclear.

3. Climate community engagement challenges revolve around specific best practices and how to expand scope.
    a. Chapel Hill is having difficulty in determining what actions are appropriate for the local governments to take when building relationships with communities.
    b. Orange County has difficulty in having more community engagement.

4. Mapping software and tools are often not useful at the local level because they often do not go smaller than the census tract level, leading to assumptions that the entire census tract is one entity.
    a. Chapel Hill has found success using the state level community mapping system, as well as EJ Screen and Daisy metric. Multiple other jurisdictions used iTree as well.

Appendix E: Compiled Requests from LGs for Support

Caveat: The following items were discussed or noted by the interviewers during the interview, but are not necessarily formal requests.

General
1. Community Relations team can have annual check-ins with each member and ask what their focus is for that year and how they will go about it. Community Relations team can also collect information on the models each jurisdiction uses and share it with the rest of the group so there is a possibility for connection.
2. Would also like recommendations made based on what is working and what isn't.

Communications
1. Wants OCCC Community Relations team to help consolidate information into a spreadsheet identifying climate and justice relevant organizations and people, including businesses, neighborhoods and HOAs.
2. Wants help to push forward newsletter communications.
3. Wants OCCC to become a platform for scaling up or coordinating activities that are too time consuming for individual governments to work separately. (Ie. pursuing external grant projects or researching topics of common interest.)
4. Want to use partnerships to bring certain fees down, especially since smaller jurisdictions have less capacity/staff/resources.
5. Want to create well vetted climate communications messages for LGs to use.
6. Wants help preparing educational material to distribute to HOAs.
7. Needs help engaging with the business/private sector.

Community Engagement
1. Community Relations team can continue to give SASSY surveys to members of the community.
2. Want to compile examples of best practices in experiential/kinesthetic climate engagement.

Climate Justice
1. Wants examples of metrics for climate equity and common agreement on it should be defined.
2. Wants help in building relationships with community members, especially those who are marginalized and underrepresented.
3. Want help identifying the appropriate ways to engage in climate justice activities.

Mapping
1. Would like to have a compilation of how other jurisdictions are using mapping, especially for climate mitigation.
2. Would like to keep in conversation about tools (such as Urban Footprint or EJ Screen) which can be used for mapping at the local level.
3. Would like to know what metrics to use to measure when using GIS.