

**RACIAL EQUITY POCKET**  
**QUESTIONS**  
**Climate Action Team Expansion**

**What are the racial impacts?**

Expanding the size of the Climate Action Team (CAT) by four members will increase the total board membership to thirteen seats. While all CAT meetings are open for members of the public to attend and comment, expanding the CAT will provide the opportunity to increase the diversity of official CAT members.

The Town's [Advisory Board Appointment and Recruitment Policy](#) states that the Town Council has a goal of promoting racial and ethnic diversity on advisory boards. To the extent possible, the Town Clerk brings forth applications that will expand the racial and ethnic composition of the existing advisory board. If no applications exist that will expand the racial or ethnic diversity of the advisory board, the Town Clerk notifies the Town Council of the lack of racially or ethnically diverse applicants and at such time requests that the Town Council work to recruit additional applicants.

**Who is or will experience burden?**

Some members of the community may not be able to participate on advisory boards and commissions due to limitations related to the affordability and access of transportation and childcare. Some community members may not have adequate access to the internet or electronic equipment, leading to less access to announcements, recruitment efforts, and participation in virtual meetings. Some community members may have employment with schedules which differ from normal business hours, which would prohibit them from attending advisory board meetings. Community members for whom English is not their primary language may not feel comfortable joining an advisory board in the absence of translation services. Additionally, community members who do not speak fluent English may face a barrier to even understanding that the Town is recruiting for board members and/or filling out the application. Further, there may be a historical mistrust of government or fear of not being heard by others, which limits interest in applications to advisory boards and commissions by people of color and lower-income households. Expansion of the board will not address these barriers to participation.

**Who is or will experience benefit?**

Increasing the size of the CAT allows for more opportunities for BIPOC residents to be appointed as members of the board. This will increase the opportunity of community members who are at greater risk of climate change impacts (low-income residents and members of communities of color) to have their voices heard as voting members of the CAT.

**What are the root causes of inequity?**

Several root causes of income disparities which may lead to a resident's lack of ability to pay for transportation/childcare in order to attend an advisory board meeting include:

- Ability to pass down generational wealth
- Discrimination/nepotism in hiring practices
- Lack of access to education
- Discriminatory policies of government institutions

In addition, the Town's previous advisory board recruitment efforts may have contributed to the lack of diversity on advisory boards. Previous efforts focused on advertisement through social media and physical posters as well as word of mouth to groups aligned with certain neighborhoods or demographics. The adoption and amendments to the Advisory Board Recruitment and Appointment policy over the past few years have worked to address historical inequities and make sure diverse applicant pools are being brought to the Town Council.

**What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy?**

After expanding the CAT, there is no guarantee that there will be an increase in diverse applicants to the board. Furthermore, expansion of the board will increase the quorum number and may make it more difficult to reach a quorum and hold a meeting, particularly if seats are not able to be filled due to a lack of diverse applicants.