

# RACIAL EQUITY & CLIMATE ROUNDTABLE FACILITATION GUIDE

Every Bostonian has a role to play in making our city a healthy, thriving, and innovative city in a changing climate. *Greenovate Boston* connects community members to climate planning efforts as well as to programs and resources that support taking action at home, work, school, and around your neighborhood. *Greenovate Boston* aims to expand the accessibility of the Leaders program by creating dialogues specific to Boston's most vulnerable populations. Climate change will impact all facets of society and require all community members to use their expertise to prepare Boston. Community members must lead the actions taken against climate change, as they are the experts of their own communities. Environmental racism occurs when resources are not distributed fairly to all people. Communities of color have historically faced environmental rigors affecting the health and wellness of community members. To address this, communities of color must use the collective voices of all members to address the disparities of environmental racism.

At the Racial Equity & Climate Roundtable, community concerns are raised, captured, and shared with the *Greenovate Boston* team to inform climate action planning, and participants identify the steps they can take to help advance climate solutions. After these gatherings, leaders in partnership with the *Greenovate* team make themselves available to answer questions and/or find programs and resources that can help attendees implement their personal and/or neighborhood action plans.

The following guide offers tips for how to facilitate dialogue on climate action. It is designed to supplement the notes offered in the *Greenovate Racial Equity & Climate Roundtable*.

**GETTING STARTED** – Here are some general tips on how to approach a *Greenovate Racial Equity & Climate Roundtable* dialogue:

- **Create a dialogue.** Engaging in dialogues helps people process risk and provides a format for exploring solutions. Speak to what you know from experience. Be authentic and confident in your discussion. As a member of the community, what talking points do you think people care most about? Minimize presentation time and maximize participant interactions. Create the space for honest, organic communal conversation. Take special attention to important points/takeaways.
- **Tailor the approach.** The sample agenda, presentation and facilitation approach should be customized based on the community leader and the type of neighborhood or group being engaged. Be mindful and intentional with the words and colloquialisms you use. Make sure to be personable and knowledgeable about the community you are speaking to. Would the conversation around climate change be the same for residents in Roxbury compared to the seaport? Put yourself in your audience's shoes.

- **Prioritize solutions.** It is important to provide some facts about climate change impacts; however, focus on what is being done to tackle the problem and how people can contribute. Encourage creativity when coming up with the solutions. Don't be afraid to have tough conversations.
- **Climate change expertise is not required.** The goal of the gathering is to foster a conversation and facilitate action, not give a science lesson. If you want to include more detailed information about climate change projections and planning efforts than what is provided, the *Greenovate* team can direct you to the resources. A member of the *Greenovate* team will be at the gathering to help answer questions and can connect you with community leaders who have gone through the program and can offer guidance.

**DIALOGUE STRUCTURE** - This agenda provides a framework for a two hour dialogue. Group exercises can be expanded and the agenda modified.

## Agenda

### **Section One: Introduction – Why We Are Here (20 min) Slides 1 - 5**

- Community leader introduction
- Leaders program summary and agenda review
- Participant introductions
- Session Plan overview

### **Section Two: Why Action is Needed (20 min) Slides 7 - 17**

- Cutting carbon matters (Carbon Free Boston findings)
- Climate change impacts (sea-level rise and more extreme coastal storms, heat waves, and rain events)
- Boston Projections (example of sea-level rise projections)
- People aren't affected equally (social/economic factors)
- Public health impacts

### **Section Three: The Numbers (15 min) Slides 19 - 21**

- Boston's Booming.... But For Whom?
- Boston By The Numbers 2018

### **Section Four: Climate Action: What the City is doing (20 min) Slides 23 - 30**

- Prepared City – citywide and neighborhood strategies to address climate change impacts
- Smart Energy City – programs to shift to clean electricity, increase energy efficiency, and becoming carbon free by reducing emissions from buildings, electric power, transportation and waste
- Mobile City – programs to increase biking, walking, and EV use.
- Zero Waste City – efforts to reduce carbon emissions from waste
- Connected City – active engagement through *Greenovate Boston* and the *Greenovate Leaders Program*

## Q & A/Break (15 min)

### Section Five: Racial Equity & Climate Roundtable (70 min) Slides 32 - 36

- Participants will discuss the question that is presented for the roundtable.
- The coordinating team (facilitator, note taker, time keeper) will work together to facilitate conversation, jot down ideas, and keep track of time.
- Participants will fill out the climate action feedback form during the roundtable.
- All notes and material will be sent to [Greenovate@boston.gov](mailto:Greenovate@boston.gov), delivered to City Hall, room 709.

### Section Six: Resources & Meeting Conclusion (10 min) Slide 37-39

- The community leader outlines next steps including what they and/or the City can do to help implement individual action plans and group projects.
- Encourage attendees to submit action ideas to Greenovate Boston if interested in pursuing them.

**FACILITATION TIPS** – This section includes tips for presenting climate change impacts and action information and for facilitating the interactive portions of the dialogue.

## Introduction – Why We Are Here

- **The Greenovate Challenge - Racial Equity & Climate Roundtable Introduction (slide 3).** Kick off the session with a story about why you care about climate change and/or how it has impacted your life, and why you were motivated to become a community leader to help raise awareness and motivate action. Feel free to personalize the slide with your photo and/or image from your neighborhood.
- **The Greenovate Challenge - Greenovate and Leaders Program Introduction (slide 4).** Emphasize that *Greenovate* is how to connect to what the City is doing and the community leaders reach out to their networks and help increase awareness and action. Highlight the focus of the leaders program on Boston's most vulnerable populations including people of color, elderly, youth, persons facing homelessness, women, and people with disabilities.
- **Session Plan (slide 5)** – Break down how the time at the gathering will be spent. Next, have participants introduce themselves (name, motivation to attend) either to the group as a whole or in pairs if the group is large. Model a concise introduction and stick to 10 minutes for participant introductions.

## Why Action is Needed

- **Cutting Carbon Matters (slide 7)** - Use this time to educate the participants on what climate change is and what contributes to it. It is easy to assume that all participants have the same working knowledge about climate change, but that most likely is not true. Use this time to explain what climate change in relation to the context of the presentation. Don't necessarily get bogged down in the science. Speak about it as

you are setting the situation for participants to think about it in a cause and effect scenario. Also, use this time to highlight the findings of Carbon Free Boston and to educate participants where the majority of our emissions come from. Most will probably be surprised to see the breakdown.

- **What we are facing (Slide 8)** - Talking points in the presentation aim to convey the relevance of climate change impacts, rather than detail all the ways in which Boston will be affected. If you want to expand the presentation to include more information about impacts, there are additional slides and fact sheets available at <https://www.boston.gov/departments/environment/greenovate-boston-leaders-program>. Avoid over emphasizing the threat because it can generate fatalism. Many Bostonians are already concerned and want to know what can be done. You can refer participants to *Climate Ready Boston* for more information about climate impacts and responses. If they have specific questions, ask for names, emails, and requests to be written down and that you and/or the *Greenovate* team will follow up.
- **More Hot Days (slide 9)** - Sea-level rise provides a clear example of why cutting carbon and other GHG gases is critical to avoiding some of the anticipated impacts of climate change. Projections are based on emission scenarios and as you can see with sea-level rise, the more we emit the higher the water will be.
- **Heat Island Exposure (slide 10)** - The graphic on this slide shows where efforts to address climate change need to particularly factor in the needs of the young and elderly, those facing health challenges, low income community members and people of color. You can offer context by pointing out the trends in your neighborhood.
- **Increased Precipitation (slide 11)** - Emphasize the drastic increase in precipitation from today to 2100. Think about the impact that six inch precipitation will have on Bostonians. How would this movement of water affect residents? Where might the water accumulate? What effect would that have on the neighborhood? Use this conversation to brainstorm these questions as a group.
- **Stormwater Flooding (slide 12)** - Highlight the areas where there's a greater concentration of impact from stormwater flooding. Identify the neighborhoods that will be the greatest impacted out loud. This will help attendees visualize the scope of the impact.
- **Sea Level Rise (slide 13)** - Sea-level rise provides a clear example of why cutting carbon and other GHG gases is critical to avoiding some of the anticipated impacts of climate change. Projections are based on emission scenarios and as you can see with sea-level rise, the more we emit the higher the water will be.
- **Flooding Along the Coast and Rivers (slide 14)** - Flip through the projected flooding along the coast and rivers. Highlight the change and which neighborhoods will be most impacted.

- **Impacts Are Here. Time To Prepare. (slide 15)** – Emphasize that climate change is already affecting Bostonians. Use personal anecdotes and experiences to highlight the felt sensation of climate change.
- **People Aren't Affected Equally (slide 16)** –The graphic on this slide shows where efforts to address climate change need to particularly factor in the needs of the young and elderly, those facing health challenges, low income community members and people of color. You can offer context by pointing out the trends in your neighborhood. *Spend more time examining the People of Color concentration slide.*
- **Climate Change & Public Health (Slide 17)** - Climate change is a public health concern. People depend on clean air and water, reliable food sources, and a stable climate to be healthy. Though addressing climate change, we have the opportunity to simultaneously improve people's health. By improving air quality, we decrease the risk of respiratory complications, by expanding our tree canopy, we decrease heat related illness, and through flood prevention measures, we decrease the risk of harm to our critical health infrastructure.

## The Numbers

- **Boston is Booming...1 (slide 19)** - Within the city, White household income is roughly two times as high as that for other racial/ethnic groups. Interestingly, White incomes are roughly the same in Boston and Metro Boston, whereas Asian incomes more than double for the broader metro area.
- **Boston is Booming...2 (slide 20)** - This work was led by William Darity and Darrick Hamilton in close partnership with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, and it resulted in 2015's Color of Wealth in Boston report. There's a large, persistent racial wealth gap, and that gap is even greater than gaps in income. As a long-term, cross-generational measure, wealth is a tough economic indicator to move, yet it may ultimately be the most important measure of how equitable we are as a society.
- **Boston by the Numbers (slide 21)** - The numbers highlight some demographic and social disparities that exist within Boston. Make certain to highlight the most startling numbers as that will help the audience conceptualize that economic and social disparities drastically affect ones preparedness and access to impact climate change.

## Climate Action

- **Greenovate Vision for Boston (slide 23-25)** - Provide a short overview of the programs that make up Greenovate Boston that you will be covering in terms of what the City is doing and what you can do as individuals or as a group.
- **Prepared City – What the City is Doing (slide 26)** - *Climate Ready Boston* is the program to advance efforts to prepare for climate impacts. You can explain all of the strategies listed in the slide notes or highlight the one or two that are most relevant to your group. If you want to go into more detail about a particular neighborhood

plan, there is information for East Boston, Charleston and South Boston on the *Climate Ready Boston* webpage and the *Greenovate* team can help with tailoring your presentation. In case questions come up about the development, design and zoning actions, the City has adopted a *Climate Resiliency and Preparedness* checklist that is used when reviewing large development projects to ensure increased temperatures, sea level rise, and flooding are being addressed; has developed guidelines for on-shore flood protections that will supplement the City's existing design standards and is creating a "flood resilience zone" is being created to guide the use of and development in the area in the city most vulnerable to flooding so that future climate change impacts are anticipated and planned for (i.e. building to prepare for 40 inches of sea-level rise). When it comes to heat and health, the City of Boston is updating its plans for responding to extreme heat events, creating a public health heat strategy, and expanding efforts to educate community members about how to respond to heat waves. Urban wilds can be found in Brighton, Charleston, Dorchester, East Boston, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, Mission Hill, Roslindale, Roxbury and West Roxbury. For more details, visit <https://www.boston.gov/environment-and-energy/urban-wilds-initiative>. The City holds regular clean up events at urban wild parks which are listed on the *Greenovate* event page.

- **Smart Energy City – What the City is Doing (slide 27)** - Boston is working with other cities to scale renewable energy through collective buying power and is increasing energy efficiency through the *Renew Boston* program. The Municipal Energy Aggregation working group has been meeting to make sure that the program is introduced in an equitable way. *Carbon Free Boston* has developed strategies to reduce emissions which will inform the update to the *Climate Action Plan*. To become carbon neutral Boston must help shift the electrical grid to clean power, run buildings and transportation on electricity, upgrade our existing buildings to be highly efficiency, and build our new buildings at a net zero energy standard. We are currently updating our *Climate Action Plan* to decide what steps the city can take in the next 3-5 years to address these critical actions. Steps the City can consider include promoting district heating and cooling systems, micro-grids, rooftop solar, and community produced and owned power; making improvements in building design and retrofits, energy systems and efficiency; and increasing electric vehicle use.
- **Mobile City – What the City is Doing (slide 28)** - The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) is responsible for public transit, not the City of Boston, and is therefore not included in strategies under this action item. MBTA is addressing the vulnerability of the Blue Line in its planning efforts. Boston Transportation Department is one of our closest partners in our Mobile City work! Talk about Go Boston 2030. Examples with GB2030 like Vision Zero.
- **Zero Waste City – What the City is Doing (slide 29)** - Reducing emissions from waste is a key pillar of *Carbon Free Boston Report* that was released in January of this year. It is being advanced through the City's *Zero Waste* initiative which is looking at ways to expand recycling, food waste collection, material reduction, reuse, and repair. *Carbon Free Boston* and *Zero Waste* will both feed into the update to the *Climate*

*Action Plan.* Zero waste means that as much solid waste is reduced and reclaimed to the point that essentially none is left to be burned or landfilled.

- **Connected City (slide 30)** – Quickly mention *Greenovate Boston* and the *Greenovate Boston Community Leaders* as these *Connected City* programs were described in the introduction. Highlight the opportunities available from *Greenovate Boston*: *cleaning up an Urban Wild & a Street*; *leading a climate action*; *hosting an equity dialogue for your community*; *volunteering for the environment department*. All actions are accessible to community members to participate in.

## **Racial Equity & Climate Roundtable**

- **Instructions & Community Guidelines (slide 30 - 31)** – The coordinating team will go over the prompt and the community guidelines for the attendees. **Facilitators** will coordinate the conversation and make sure that everyone shares their thoughts. **Note Takers** will record the sentiments and thoughts that are shared during the roundtable. The notes should be typed and forwarded to [Greenovate@Boston.gov](mailto:Greenovate@Boston.gov). **Time Keepers** will make sure to keep the group notified of how much longer the group has to discuss the question. Once time is close to the end, the time keeper and facilitator will ask if the group would like to allocate more time to the conversation.
- You are welcome to orient the conversation in any manner that you'd like/make sense. **Ask the questions you would like to and is relevant to current events for the community.** You can either have one large group with all of the attendees or you can split the attendees into X number of groups. This will heavily depend on the attendance size and what is most constructive. The goal is to generate constructive ideas from the conversations that are had. These conversations are pivotal as they can easily contribute to new programming and initiatives that will have an immense benefit for all of Boston! Encourage open and honest dialogue. Assure that this communal space is a safe one and that they are open to express their thoughts. ***Before beginning, remind the participants that these roundtables are important for creating a stronger forum for the City to hear what residents want in progressing our climate and equity work.***
- **Roundtable Questions (slide 32 - 34)** – Before presenting, brainstorm 2-3 questions to ask participants. The questions should be reflective of current matters and concerns of the population you are presenting to. Once you arrive at the question, hand the climate action feedback forms to each of the participants. They will fill it out as they are brainstorming and will give that to the coordinating team after the roundtable.
- Read the question out loud to the participants. Give the participants 5-10 minutes to jot down some ideas/think about how they will respond. Facilitator will ask participants to share ideas. The conversation should feel fluid and not need too much intervention from the coordinating team. Coordinating team should come in when to notify of time, lead conversation into next question, if a topic is becoming too aggressive, etc. The coordinating team should use this to steer the conversation

away from things that take away from answering the question. Make sure to take notes, collect action feedback forms, and take pictures. Please share these documents with Greenovate Boston at [Greenovate@Boston.gov](mailto:Greenovate@Boston.gov).

## Conclusion

- **Want to take climate action? (slide 37)** - Walk through the steps for attendees to take climate action with Greenovate Boston. Following the action plan discussion, engrain in attendees to follow through with the actions they discussed. Encourage attendees to take stronger leadership in preparing their fellow community members for the impacts of climate change. Make sure everyone feels supported and encouraged to take actions. Allow for creativity to lead the way in the possible actions that could be taken. If they need assistance/support for actions, encourage them to send their action plan to Greenovate Boston.
- **Racial Equity Resources (slide 38)** - Highlight the departments that provide resources to people of color. Each provides an opportunity for community members to further leadership opportunities. Each opportunity presents a great opportunity for more engagement around climate action. The emphasis should be on how interconnected all matters are and engaging with the City is a great first step to taking climate action.
- **Let's Greenovate Boston (slide 39)** - In the last 5 minutes of the meeting, thank participants and let them know you and the *Greenovate* team are available to help answer any questions/locate resources, etc. and that you will be emailing the group in a month to see how things are going with implementing action plans. If there is energy in the group to move forward on a collective project then clarify what the next step will be (i.e. sending an email to set a follow up meeting to explore further).