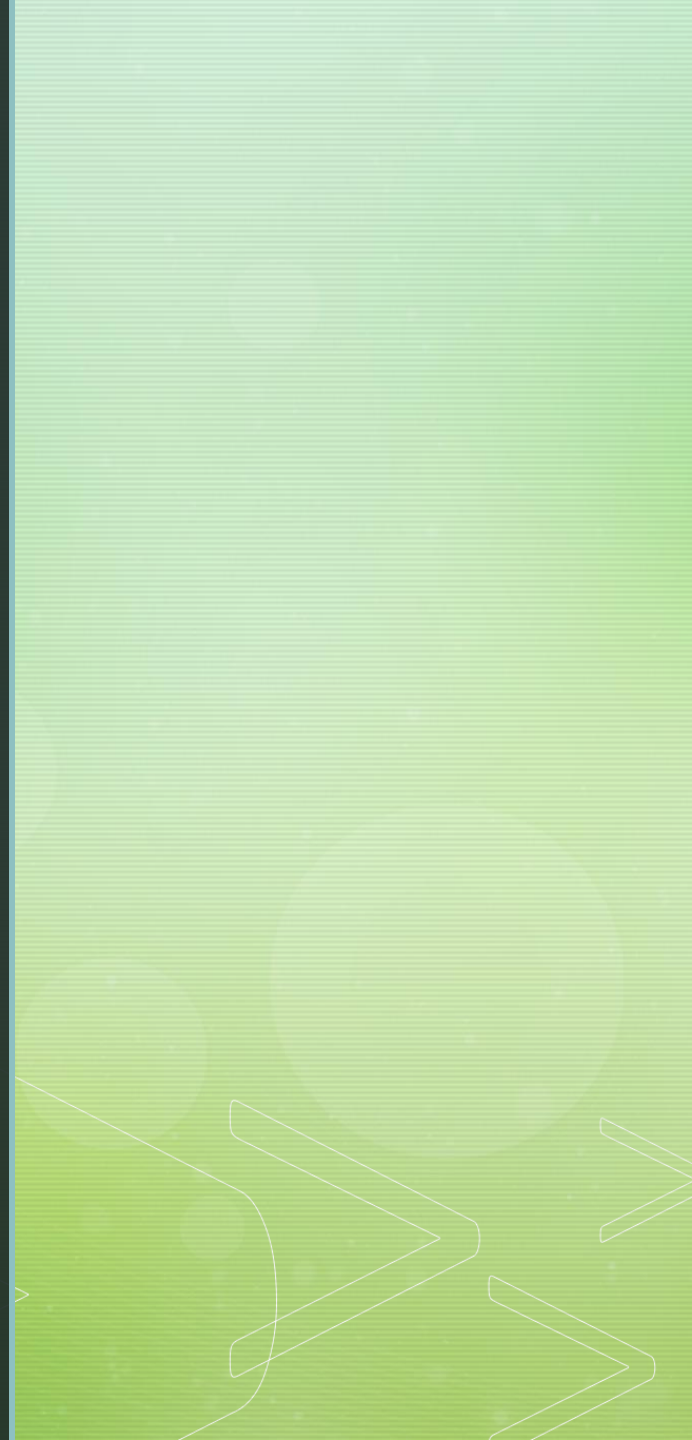


Community Feedback on Potential EJ Taskforce Recommendations



Community Engagement

- Front and Centered has funded a series of community conversation across the state since October 2019.
- Local organizations have hosted these events, F&C staff provided insight on the EJ Taskforce and our work but the events were run entirely by these organizations in Yakima, Vancouver, Spokane and Tacoma.
- As recommendations have been developed, F&C staff have re-engaged these organizations for specific feedback on these emerging recommendations.

COVID-19 and Environmental Health Disparities Map

- WA state data collection on the demographics of those diagnosed or dying from COVID-19 is incomplete while multiple other U.S. states and national studies show a disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities with high levels of pollution. As such, COVID relief/response funds and programs must be effectively targeted to areas most impacted. Otherwise, the very practice of not considering the distributive injustices or geographic inequities detailed in the Environmental Health Disparity Map are bound to exacerbate the disparities related to COVID. **In addition, to preserve the current level of services in these areas as much as possible, the map should also be used to ensure that budget cuts do not disproportionately impact these communities negatively.** Hence, before the issuance of our final report, the Environmental Justice Task Force recommends to the Governor, the Legislature and the recently convened Safe Start advisory groups that COVID-19 relief/response efforts must be informed by the Environmental Health Disparity map in order to prioritize for investments in areas with high levels of disparities and prevent a disproportionate impact related to potential forthcoming budget cuts.