



# ACEEE City Scorecard Equity Metrics Implementation Strategy

JUNE 2022

## Commitment to Accountability

ACEEE is committed to ensuring that the priorities of community-based organizations are integrated into our *City Scorecard* through a transparent and collaborative process. To this end, we created this strategy document to share our planned next steps for incorporating new equity metrics into the *City Scorecard*. The metrics in the final report will change based on feedback we receive from community-based partners over the next year. We will be transparent about the decisions we make and how we respond to and incorporate partner feedback throughout this process.

## Overview and Purpose

This document outlines ACEEE's strategy for implementing new equity-focused metrics in its *City Scorecard*. The strategy summarizes the evolution of equity metrics in past *City Scorecards*, our planned process for soliciting feedback from stakeholders and community-based organizations (CBOs), and our commitment to accountability. As part of our organization-wide Leading with Equity Initiative, ACEEE has committed to ensuring that energy equity metrics account for at least 30 of the 100 points in the upcoming edition of the *City Scorecard*. To accomplish this, we will update and add equity metrics to reflect effective, leading, and innovative equity-driven practices. These metrics are built around three dimensions of equity adapted from the 2014 Urban Sustainability Directors Network report researched and written by Angela Park and referenced in more detail on the [Leading with Equity Initiative landing page](#).<sup>1</sup>

Through the Leading with Equity Initiative, ACEEE convened community-based organizations, advocates, utilities, and energy efficiency program implementers to identify equity-focused metrics for ACEEE's state, city, and utility scorecards. The initiative aims to ensure that each scorecard captures clean energy policy and program impacts on historically under-resourced or climate vulnerable groups, including communities of color, low-income communities, immigrant communities, rural communities, and other marginalized communities.

<sup>1</sup> Park, A. 2014. *Equity in Sustainability: An Equity Scan of Local Government Sustainability Programs*. San Francisco: USDN (Urban Sustainability Directors Network). [usdn.org/uploads/cms/documents/usdn\\_equity\\_scan\\_sept\\_2014\\_final.pdf](https://usdn.org/uploads/cms/documents/usdn_equity_scan_sept_2014_final.pdf).

## Evolution of Equity Metrics in the *City Scorecard*

The past four editions of the *City Scorecard* included metrics tracking the degree to which cities and their utilities were pursuing racial and social equity outcomes in clean energy planning and policymaking. The 2017 *City Scorecard* was the first to include equity metrics, with two metrics examining utility low-income and multifamily energy efficiency programs. Together, these metrics were worth 4 of the 100 *City Scorecard* points in 2017. Over the subsequent three scorecards, we added several equity metrics. ACEEE's Equity Working Group,<sup>2</sup> an advisory group of several community-based organizations, informed and guided this process. The 2021 *City Scorecard*, the most recent edition, included 14 equity metrics worth 17 points out of 100 and 2 bonus metrics worth an additional 2 points.

## Leading with Equity Process and Priorities Alignment

Throughout 2021, Leading with Equity Initiative participants met in a series of workshops to develop a set of recommended equity metrics that could be included in ACEEE's scorecards. We will work to add these proposed metrics to the upcoming *City Scorecard* so that at least 30 of the 100 points are attributed to equity metrics. While each of the suggested metrics can serve as a starting point to revise the *City Scorecard*, we may not be able to include questions related to all proposed metrics in our data requests sent to cities and utilities. To respect participants' limited time and data access, we will likely request information on a subset of the proposed new metrics.<sup>3</sup> Decisions to include questions will be based on the Leading with Equity cohort's guidance on prioritization, feedback from expert partners, ACEEE's assessment of the likelihood of obtaining the data needed to conduct scoring, the degree to which proposed equity metrics align with other existing metrics, and a consideration of equity-driven practices that have emerged since the creation of the original list. Meeting the 30-point target will also require revising existing non-equity metrics to include equity criteria, such as requiring that certain equity activities serve as a prerequisite for earning credit under a given metric.

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<sup>2</sup> The Leading with Equity Initiative convened participants for two years with a focus on improving the consideration of equity in the scorecards, while ACEEE's Equity Working Group is a long-term group of community-based organizations that meet regularly and provide feedback on a variety of ACEEE projects.

<sup>3</sup> We have continually worked to streamline the data request process for cities and utilities, including working to align our data requests with other sustainability reporting processes. We will continue this work for future editions.

## Process for Soliciting Feedback

We are proposing the below actions and timeline to review and incorporate new equity metrics and expand existing metrics (see table). Leading with Equity workshop participants have specifically requested that we work to increase the number of renewable energy equity metrics. While not specifically mentioned in the table below, we will work in the months ahead to build new relationships with organizations and individuals that have experience with the equitable deployment of renewable energy systems.

### CITY SCORECARD TIMELINE

MONTH PERIOD	TYPICAL CITY SCORECARD ACTIVITIES	EQUITY METRIC DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES
1–2	Data request revision and review period: Authors develop data request questions for cities and utilities. These data will be used for scoring.	Review questions related to equity metrics with ACEEE’s Equity Working Group members. Use feedback to revise data request questions.
3–6	Cities and their utilities receive and respond to the data request.	Work with identified local CBOs to encourage city/utility participation and provide supplementary data if possible.
7	Authors use information from the data request to create and update metric criteria and point allocations.	Review proposed equity metrics and point allocations with ACEEE’s Equity Working Group members. Use feedback to revise <i>Scorecard</i> .
8–10	Authors score cities and utilities. ACEEE conducts internal reviews of the early <i>City Scorecard</i> drafts.	No procedural change necessary
11	<i>City Scorecard</i> draft is reviewed by cities, utilities, industry experts, and environmental justice–focused CBOs.	External review draft is shared with an expanded list of local, regional, and national environmental justice organizations. (New for upcoming scorecard)
12	Authors revise scoring and report draft based on external review comments.	Authors consult reviewers with expertise in environmental justice and ACEEE’s Equity Working Group to address any equity metrics scoring issues. (New for upcoming scorecard)
13–16	Work on the <i>City Scorecard</i> is completed. The draft and related materials are prepared for release.	Authors will also create a summary of the feedback we received from the Leading with Equity workshops, changes made, and reasoning for metric decisions. (New for upcoming scorecard)

*The City Scorecard has historically taken 12 to 16 months to complete, but this may shift based on project needs.*

**For more information about the City Energy Efficiency Scorecard, please reach out to Stefen Samarripas at [ssamarripas@aceee.org](mailto:ssamarripas@aceee.org). For more information about ACEEE’s Leading with Equity Initiative, please reach out to Amanda Dewey at [adewey@aceee.org](mailto:adewey@aceee.org).**

