

Internal Notetaking Template for Stakeholder Public Engagement Period



Stakeholder Group Name: Catherine Chudy

Date: Oct. 18, 2022

Format (Virtual/In-person): Virtual

[00:58:41] Catherine Chudy: Thank you. My name is Catherine Chudy, and I live in Vancouver, Washington. Thank you for providing this opportunity to share my concerns as you identify communities in Washington that are highly impacted by air pollution and the significant sources of this pollution. I fully support Vancouver being included in the list of overburdened communities who will most benefit from the next steps of expanded and improved air monitoring, strategies to reduce criteria air pollutants, and periodic analysis to make sure reduction goals for air pollution are being met.

I am a retired healthcare worker living close to the River Road gas generating plant here in Vancouver, operated by our local Clark County PUD. I also live right next to both the I-5 and Highway 14 freeway corridors, which means I'm exposed to high levels of transportation emissions along with what comes from the gas plant. I live in an old house, and like many limited-income elderly residents, I have a gas furnace that I would like to replace with an efficient heat pump, but I'm currently unable to afford.

There are only a few air quality monitors that I'm aware of in Vancouver. One for AQI and one for PM 2.5. We have six existing bulk fossil fuel facilities and a gas plant along with three major transportation corridors contributing to polluting emissions that are clearly affecting our air quality and negatively affecting our public health. I have friends and neighbors who have children with asthma and given their vulnerability, greater than adults to exposure, I think it's essential to resolve the data limitations in order to include this as an indicator for identifying overburdened communities.

I have advocated without success to our public utility district commissioners to phase out the gas plant as soon as possible, but they persist in longer-range planning, with the gas plant remaining in operation with a proposed reduction but not complete removal of the criteria pollutants that affect the air quality and public health of my neighbors and myself. Our census tracts in Vancouver score 9 to 10 on the health disparities map, which underscores the seriousness of the impacts we endure here. We also have a significant number of unhoused people visible in various locations in Vancouver, and I am deeply concerned about the ongoing health impacts these individuals and families are experiencing as they struggle to survive.

These are indicators worth including in your considerations. Finally, wildfire smoke has driven our air quality into the unhealthy to hazardous numbers repeatedly in the last several years, including the last week. This problem will only continue to worsen as we experience the kind of hot dry summers that appear to be the new normal for us here in Vancouver. Thank you for taking my concerns into consideration in your determination going forward.