

Puget Sound Energy Equity Advisory Group Meeting

Meeting Summary

Tuesday, January 20, 2026 | 5 – 7 p.m.

Meeting purpose & topics

Equity Advisory Group (EAG) meeting objectives:

- Equity Strategy in the 2026 General Rate Case (GRC)
- Year in Review and Year Ahead

Agenda

1. Opening – 5:00 p.m.
2. 2026 General Rate Case Strategy – 5:20 p.m.
3. Break – 6:05 p.m.
4. Year in Review, Year Ahead – 6:10 p.m.
5. Public comment – 6:50 p.m.
6. Next Steps – 6:55 p.m.
7. Adjourn – 7:00 p.m.

Meeting summary

Below is a summary of the presentations and discussions from the January 20, 2026 EAG meeting. A recording of the presentation portions of the meeting is also available on the [EAG YouTube channel](#).

Opening

Uncommon Bridges facilitator Ariam Ford, AICP opened the meeting. The agenda began with a safety moment led by Em Piro, Energy Equity Program Manager -Community Partnerships at PSE, focused on disaster preparedness after recent floods. EAG member Marco Morales Mendez discussed equity concerns in disaster relief, highlighting gaps in FEMA and recovery eligibility for undocumented individuals. Ariam reviewed the meeting objectives: the 2026 General Rate Case and an EAG year-in-review and look ahead.

2026 General Rate Case Equity Strategy

Troy Hutson, Director of Energy Equity at PSE, presented on the equity strategy in the upcoming 2026 General Rate Case (GRC) - a legal proceeding in which the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) decides on PSE's proposals in the case to ensure utility services are safe, equitable, available, reliable, and fairly priced. PSE's equity strategy is shaped by ongoing conversations and retreats with the Equity Advisory Group (EAG), with an emphasis on weaving their priorities into broader system changes. The Commission determines if PSE's proposal is in the public interest (which includes factors such as equity) and is fair, just, and reasonable. The official process starts with PSE's GRC filing in February 2026 and continues through discovery and hearings until a final decision is issued approximately eleven months later, around January 2027.

The 2026 GRC equity strategy focuses on PSE's approach in addressing affordability, high energy burden, reliability and resiliency for named communities. This includes focusing not only on customer-led programs, but also utility investments that benefit named communities. PSE is also looking to utilize rate structure design to mitigate energy burden. PSE's approaches are intended to lower bills for energy burdened low income customers spending over 6% of their annual household income on energy (aka high energy burden). While affordability programs will continue, the shared vision with the EAG is to reshape the utility's approach so that, eventually, high energy burden could be eliminated altogether for low-income and vulnerable customers by these proactive, system-level changes.

After Troy's presentation, Ariam discussed how the GRC process offers a formal way to operationalize the group's conversations and calls for systemic change. She acknowledged that the current strategy marks progress in addressing high energy burden for low-income and vulnerable customers but noted that continued involvement at EAG meetings is essential to continue system-level impact and changes.

Key Takeaways

The EAG voiced general agreement with the Equity Strategy for the GRC, sharing that it was consistent with priorities they have articulated throughout the year. The discussion affirmed that the strategy reflects a meaningful step forward that incorporates their vision for systemic change, is consistent with the 4As Framework employed by the group, and supported the overall vision to eliminate high energy burden for low-income and vulnerable customers.

Questions centered around the implementation approach and efforts to accommodate "missing middle" communities. Specific feedback and questions can be found in [Attachment B: Q&A](#)

Break

The group held a break from 6:05 – 6:15 p.m.

Year in Review, Year Ahead

Ariam presented a review of the EAG's work in 2025: over 55 hours spent together in person, and 100% participation in the fall 2025 retreat. She shared an upcoming Annual Impact Report, which PSE is considering including in the General Rate Case filing to show how the EAG's efforts made an impact in its equity strategy and approach. Looking ahead, Ariam introduced the 4As Priority Framework Action Plan Worksheet as a tool to focus EAG meetings in service to the group's efforts towards positive systems change. In 2026, the facilitation objective for the group is to move past an isolated review of programs focus on how the utility works at its core, with community stories and formal documentation helping drive that change.

After the presentation, members attended breakout sessions to share reactions to the Priority Framework Worksheet. Participants reflected that real progress in energy equity seems to be underway. They discussed the challenge of building a common language from their different experiences, but also how important that is if they want to develop a strong shared voice that can support energy equity goals, continuing to keep in mind how systems-scale changes affect people's lives, not just numbers on a page.

Public Comment:

Ariam facilitated a brief public comment period, allowing attendees to voice their thoughts and concerns. One question was raised about openings on the EAG, and a response was provided to the public attendee with information about applying.

Next Steps:

- EAG were provided a link to a poll for a focus group on an upcoming RFP.
- EAG members were apprised of the January 31 deadline for new interested members.
- Uncommon Bridges will confirm the date for the spring retreat, update the 4As framework tool using feedback from the group, and create a summary slide of the framework.
- The PSE team will share the annual impact report with the EAG once it's finalized.

Adjournment:

The meeting concluded at 7:00 p.m.

Attachment A: Meeting Attendees

Equity Advisory Group Members

1. Jenny Harding, GSBA and New Chapter Weddings and Events
2. Elizabeth Vaughn, Sustainable Connections
3. TJ Protho, Community Advocate
4. Dennis Suarez, Community Advocate
5. Megan Walsh, Community Advocate
6. Karia Wong, Chinese Information and Service Center (CISC)
7. Monica Guevara, Emerald Cities Collaborative
8. Marco Morales, Community Advocate
9. Glenda Duldulao, Asian Pacific Cultural Center
10. Amy Nichols, Community Advocate
11. Rachel Gates, Community Advocate

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12. Troy Hutson, Director Energy Equity
13. Yvonne Wang, Manager Energy Equity
14. Em Piro, Energy Equity Program Manager - Community Partnerships

Consultant Staff

15. Ariam Ford, Uncommon Bridges
16. Carson Bridges, Uncommon Bridges

Attachment B: Q&A and Feedback Report

Topic	Question/Comment	PSE response
EAG Recruitment	What is the cut-off date for interested candidates to apply to be part of the EAG?	Applications close at the end of January, but they are being processed now, so the sooner the better.
General Rate Case (GRC)	When was the last GRC and what was the outcome?	The 2024 GRC outcome was presented to the EAG in February 2025 . The 2024 GRC was filed by PSE in February 2024, and the UTC approved PSE's 2024 GRC in January 2025 for a two-year period of 2025 and 2026. This upcoming 2026 GRC (planned to be filed in February 2026) is planned to propose a three-year period (2027-2030).
General Rate Case (GRC)	Would this [rate] structure be for all customers or just applied to deep need/high energy burden?	The rate structure would be applied to all residential customers. However, in this GRC, PSE is proposing a rate change related to basic/customer charge only while planning to propose working with pertinent interested parties and advisory groups to further evaluate tiered rate structure changes.
General Rate Case (GRC)	In the residential rate structure proposal, the 600 kWh tier threshold is over what period of time?	It is per billing cycle (for most, it's monthly).
General Rate Case (GRC)	Is it a tiered system where the price increases as the top tier gets bigger?	Yes, that is correct. PSE already has a tiered electric charge system currently in place, where customers which electric usage below 600 kWh pay one rate, and above the 600 kWh pay a higher rate.
General Rate Case (GRC)	How will energy burdened customers with large households and high usage be impacted?	Recognizing that some vulnerable customers may still face challenges with higher usage, PSE proposes continuing to offer energy assistance, weatherization and energy efficiency support specifically for high-use,

Topic	Question/Comment	PSE response
		<p>income-qualified households, coupling rate relief with ongoing bill assistance, arrearage forgiveness, and long-term energy burden reduction. Note, as PSE stated above, the proposal changed to proposing a rate change related to basic/customer charge only while planning to propose working with pertinent interested parties and advisory groups to further evaluate tiered rate structure changes.</p>
General Rate Case (GRC)	Has there been modeling on how many households this impacts and how it shifts energy burden?	<p>PSE is still assessing the impact, but PSE believes that approximately 46% of high energy burden customers would see lower bills under the proposed structure, with the greatest improvements concentrated in highly impacted communities and high vulnerable populations.</p>
General Rate Case (GRC)	Who is accountable for improving housing/rental stock and incentivizing landlords?	<p>PSE outreach teams focus on renters for bill assistance and work with Multifamily retrofit programs on incentives.</p>
General Rate Case (GRC)	/ will the lower-use threshold be defined as consumption rises due to 2030 EV mandates?	<p>PSE is actively engaged with customers interested in adopting fleet electric vehicles (“EV”) as part of their transportation electrification (“TE”) initiatives. Although increasing demand rates is under consideration, PSE acknowledges the importance of incentivizing EV adoption. Separate proposals for EV charging rates or programs, and offering favorable pricing during low-demand periods, are being developed. This strategic approach makes TE and the charging of EVs cost-effective during times of lower demand, supporting the integration of EVs into the grid without imposing stress during peak demand periods.</p>

Topic	Question/Comment	PSE response
		PSE will bring a proposal outside of this rate case to implement as part of a stage one technical feasibility study, to help inform a larger deployment in stage two to a larger set of customers.
General Rate Case (GRC)	Could the rate structure marginalize residents in specific tax brackets where take-home pay is low despite higher gross income?	Rates are set based on demand (kWh usage) rather than income. While PSE does not conduct analysis based on a household's take-home pay, PSE conducts an energy burden analysis, based on a household's gross income, to estimate the number of low-income, energy burdened customers to help inform the design of PSE products, services, and outreach efforts.
Meeting Materials	Can we get a stand-alone slide of the whole worksheet table?	The worksheet will be mailed for physical binders and is available as Slide 32 in the shared presentation deck.