



# climate risk and vulnerability assessment



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY

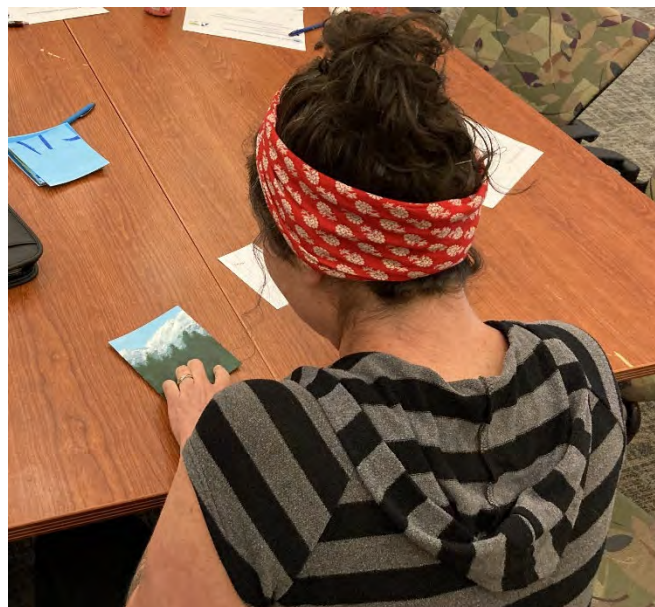


## Overview

In April 2023, the City of Olympia began working on a Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA) to better understand how the Olympia community may be impacted by current and future climate hazards. The process worked to identify local hazards caused, or made worse by, climate change and the potential impacts of those hazards on local communities, community assets and services.

### Outreach Into the Olympia Community

Community members participated in in-person and digital engagement opportunities to share perspectives and concerns on the local impacts of climate change.



City staff took the climate conversation out to the Olympia community with the help of a large, collaborative community mural “From Risk to Resilience” designed by local artist Carrie Ziegler. Residents shared their personal perspectives and concerns about the impacts of climate change on individual 4”x4” segments of the mural. Two hundred squares captured the hopes and concerns from residents across ten community events, such as the Farmers Market and Arts Walk, or students attending class. These mural contributions were later reconstructed and displayed in City Hall with imagery depicting a resilient, future Olympia as part of the effort’s report back to the community in October of 2023.

In-person presentations to interested community groups and City advisory committees let others learn about the CRVA process, participate in discussions and contribute their perspectives.



For those unable to attend an opportunity in-person, a virtual “ideas board” through the City’s Engage Olympia feedback platform provided a way to share perspectives in a digital format. More than 770 people visited the webpage and contributed 139 climate risk concerns and comments to the board. This feedback, combined with workshop and online digital engagements, helped to inform which concerns Olympians want prioritized.

Engagement opportunities were advertised through Olympia’s Climate Actions Newsletter, social media, public meeting announcements and targeted emails to community groups, stakeholders and partners.

**Table 1. Outreach Into the Olympia Community**

A summary of the outreach and engagement activities conducted from April to August, 2023.

Organization/Event	Event Format	Date
Engage Olympia Web Platform	Virtual Ideas Board	4/25/2023 – 7/12/2023
Arts Walk	Community Event	4/28/2023
Evergreen Center for Climate Action and Sustainability	Presentation and Discussion	5/31/2023
World Oceans Day	Community Event	6/10/2023
Avanti High School – Climate Crisis & Action Class	Presentation and Discussion	6/14/2023
Olympia Strong Community Meeting	Community Event	6/14/2023
Olympia Planning Commission	Advisory Committee/ Commission Briefing	6/26/2023
Eco-Love Festival	Community Event	7/22/2023
Kiwanis Club	Presentation and Discussion	7/24/2023
Olympia Land Use and Environment Committee	Advisory Committee/ Commission Briefing	7/27/2023
Senior Services of South Sound	Presentation and Discussion	8/2/2023
Evergreen Center for Climate Action and Sustainability (Second Meeting)	Presentation and Discussion	8/23/2023
Thurston Climate Action Team	Presentation and Discussion	8/24/2023

### Community Project Team

In addition to the community engagement opportunities described above, the City also convened a Community Project Team, made up of 15 City Staff and 15 Community Members, to provide more in-depth guidance and feedback throughout the CRVA.

Community members and City staff worked side-by-side through a process facilitated by ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability) consultants to ensure an accurate reflection of Olympia. The group met five times between May and October 2023.



**Table 2. Community Project Team**

A summary of Community Project Team sessions is provided below.

Engagement	Purpose	Date
<b>Introductory Meeting</b>	Learn about the project, meet each other and the Project Team.	5/18/2023
<b>Workshop 1</b>	Learn about local climate conditions and brainstorm climate change impacts.	5/25/2023
<b>Survey Introduction Meeting</b>	Learn how to complete the vulnerability assessment survey.	6/18/2023
<b>Vulnerability Assessment Survey</b>	Complete survey to assess vulnerability to identified climate impacts.	7/21/2023 – 8/1/2023
<b>Workshop 2</b>	Receive an update on survey results and work in small groups to assess risk for selected climate impacts.	9/6/2023
<b>Workshop 3</b>	Discuss our visions for the future of Olympia; solutions/strategies for action; and who needs to be in the room for future conversations about vulnerability and risk.	10/17/2023

## What We Heard

Across all methods of outreach, City staff found that **rising temperatures, increased fire and smoke exposure, and sea level rise** were the most frequently referenced climate hazards. Community members also expressed overwhelming concern regarding the effects climate change will have on **ecological systems** as well as **public health and wellness**. Other frequently mentioned concern were: **children/future generations, equity and disproportionate impacts of climate change, and the need for fossil fuel/emissions reductions.**

**Concerns about “...increased fire risk, threats to public health, invasive species, damage to existing wildlife and vegetation.”**

-Engage Olympia

The following are some example concerns shared by participants during this process:

- “(many people who) ...aren’t required and don’t carry flood insurance. Flooding due to heavy precipitation could cause folks to lose their homes.” -Engage Olympia Digital Engagement on Heavy Precipitation
- “Increased fire risks, threats to public health, invasive species, damage to existing wildlife and vegetation” -Engage Olympia digital engagement on rising temperatures
- Wildfires will place a burden on highways and city streets for emergencies. -Engage Olympia digital engagement on wildfires
- Decreased availability of water for urban forests and landscapes that help mitigate increasing temperatures and capture carbon. -Engage Olympia digital engagement on reduced snowpack
- “I think of two different types of impacts from sea level rise. The first is destruction of property and infrastructure. The second is the financial impact on public budgets to try to protect from sea level rise and then to deal with it when it comes...” -Engage Olympia digital engagement on sea level rise
- “Are we going to lose our cultural food?” -Risk to Resilience Community Mural
- “I’m concerned about rising tides and land erosion” -Risk to Resilience Community Mural
- “Increased violence and conflict when resources are limited and people are stressed.” -Risk to Resilience Community Mural
- “Community health, well-being, hope and joy.” -Risk to Resilience Community Mural

A complete list of contributed ideas and comments will be included as a part of the final Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment report, which will be completed by September 2024.

## Thank You

We would like to especially recognize the feedback contributed by the Community Project Team members who were willing to contribute significant time, extend understanding for differing perspectives and focus their attention on a myriad of daunting topics. A comprehensive review of Olympia’s climate-driven risks would not have been possible without these locally informed perspectives.