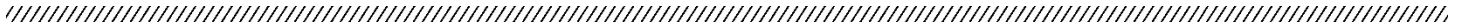


# Quarter Two 2021 Progress Toward Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Goals



ENERGY TRUST OF OREGON

AUGUST 13, 2021

Energy Trust developed 10 diversity, equity and inclusion goals to improve and enhance offers for underserved customers in 2021. Since 2019, Energy Trust has provided progress reports on diversity, equity and inclusion goals twice a year. This appendix reflects activities and progress made from January 2021 through June 2021 unless otherwise noted. Energy Trust identifies underserved customers (people of color, people with low incomes and people in rural areas) based on census tract characteristics.

Highlights of this work include:

- Energy Trust is on track to meet or has already achieved the vast majority of targets identified in the 2021 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Operations Plan, including increasing participation in efficiency programs among residents in areas where more people of color live, helping small and medium commercial businesses and rural businesses save energy and helping more low-income residents install solar panels.
  - Smart thermostat offers targeted to customers in racially diverse census tracts led to more than half of new residential program participants so far in 2021.
  - Income-qualified customers completed 135 Solar Within Reach projects in the first half of 2021 compared with 86 projects for all of 2020.
  - A new direct-install lighting offer for small, medium and rural business helps them upgrade to more efficient lighting at no cost to the customer.
- Results of a 2020 survey of more than 7,000 residential utility customers released in quarter one confirmed the value of this work. The survey, commissioned by Energy Trust, found people of color, those in rural parts of the state, renters and those with lower incomes are less likely to know about Energy Trust and participate in its programs. The survey oversampled among Black, Asian and Native American communities to ensure adequate representation from all major racial groups.
- In quarter two, Energy Trust launched a series of community summits to hear directly from community leaders, tribal members, contractors, business owners and residents about their experiences and challenges they are facing.
  - The first summit was held in June to hear from residential customers about disparities in the experiences of communities of color and other groups. Attendees shared challenges such as the severe lack of affordable housing and rising housing costs, Energy Trust programs that are not customized to community needs, the lack of training for future contractors of color and Energy Trust incentive offers that are not affordable for customers with low incomes.
  - Following completion of the series, staff will focus on turning the feedback collected into a plan for future community engagement and diversity, equity and inclusion activities in 2022 and beyond.

## Goal 1: Increase customer participation in energy efficiency.

### Goal 1A: Increase residential participation of people of color.

2021 Target	Progress as of Q2 2021	Status
Achieve 34% participation or 3,500 single-family, small multifamily or manufactured homes projects within census tracts with a large proportion of people of color <sup>1</sup>	33% participation or 2,231 new participants from target census tracts	On track to achieve target

- Smart thermostat offers targeted to diverse census tracts led to more than half of the new participants in census tracts with a high proportion of people of color so far in 2021. Targeting involved marketing directly to residents within target census tracts; utilities also helped by identifying customers who had received bill assistance in the past or by targeting offers in non-metro areas.
  - Weatherization and HVAC projects account for most of the rest, helped by the higher Savings Within Reach gas furnace incentive for income-qualified customers and ceiling insulation bonuses.
- Through the Community Partner Funding pathway, launched in 2020, nine community-based organizations around the state are performing in-home energy assessments and coordinating home energy improvements when possible.
  - Community Partner Funding offers a suite of higher incentives delivered to customers via nonprofits and community agencies that serve communities of color, rural customers, customers with low incomes, veterans and/or people experiencing disabilities.

#### Going forward:

- The Mi Comunidad (My Community) engagement campaign will launch in quarter three, including a webpage that will provide a step-by-step guide to working with Energy Trust in Spanish. It aims to drive participation in gas furnace, heat pump and heat pump water heaters incentive offers in three communities with large populations of Spanish-speakers: Hillsboro, Salem and Woodburn.
- Energy Trust will meet with each active organization enrolled in Community Partner Funding to identify and overcome barriers to participation and collaboratively create a 2022 forecast and budget for each organization.
- Staff across all programs will continue to coordinate regarding community engagement to refine relationship management protocols and explore tools to ensure outreach alignment.
- A direct mail campaign will kick off in early quarter three to promote no-cost offer that provides air and duct sealing and other services for residents of manufactured homes.

### Goal 1B: Support participation of small and medium commercial business customers and commercial business customers in rural areas.<sup>2</sup>

2021 Target	Progress as of Q2 2021	Status
Serve 1,082 small and medium businesses and 54 customers in very rural areas	Served 433 small and medium businesses and 19 customers in very rural areas	On track to achieve target

- The Existing Buildings program is working closely with a network of paid community-based liaisons to support program design, development and outreach. This network, launched in early 2021, is designed to influence and

<sup>1</sup> Census tracts identified as racially diverse 5 in Energy Trust's DEI Data Baseline Analysis.

<sup>2</sup> Census tracts identified as rural 5 in the DEI Data Baseline Analysis.

accelerate diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and help the program reach new customers, including customers of color, rural customers and those for whom English is not their first language.

- Progress is considered on track given the increase in project volumes typical in the second half of the year.
- In quarter two, Energy Trust launched a direct install lighting offer, providing no-cost installation to qualifying small businesses and rural businesses. The offer, which is also available to qualifying industrial and agricultural customers, will help meet goals for serving commercial and industrial customers.

**Going forward:**

- Existing Buildings is developing a small business offer to reduce participation barriers for small businesses while providing opportunities for minority- and women-owned trade ally businesses and those owned by service-disabled veterans. The offer is expected to launch in late 2021 using guidance from the community-based liaisons, a racial equity lens, and community and contractor feedback.
- Energy Trust will continue field staff training and new customer outreach for the business lighting direct install offer, expanding to targeted areas throughout Oregon in the second half of 2021.

**Goal 1C: Increase participation of small and medium industrial and agricultural businesses in rural areas.**

2021 Target	Progress as of Q2 2021	Status
Serve 67 new small and medium business customers in census tracts outside metro areas <sup>3</sup>	Served 22 new small and medium business customers in census tracts outside metro areas	On track to achieve target

- Energy Trust has seen steadily increasing participation in standard industrial projects from targeted outreach to rural customers in the Klamath Basin region, with 14 potential customers in the region. Nearly all are for irrigation incentives.
- Progress is considered on track given the increase in project volumes typical in the second half of the year.
- In quarter two, Energy Trust launched a direct install lighting offer for industrial and agricultural businesses, providing no-cost installation to qualifying small and rural businesses. The offer, which is also available to qualifying commercial customers, will help meet goals for serving commercial and industrial customers.

**Going forward:**

- Program Delivery Contracts for the industrial and agricultural program will be rebid in 2022, and the goals and structure of the solicitation will be developed by the end of 2021. It will feature increased supplier diversity requirements and other strategies for reaching customers who have not participated in programs in the past.

**Goal 2: Increase the adoption of solar projects benefitting low-income customers, rural communities and communities of color.**

2021 Targets <sup>4</sup>	Progress as of Q2 2021	Status
38% of residential projects (approximately 646) are Solar Within Reach projects or projects in census tracts that are rural and have low- to moderate-income customers and people of color <sup>5</sup>	40% of projects (379) are Solar Within Reach projects or projects in census tracts that are rural and have low- to moderate-income customers and people of color	On track to achieve target

<sup>3</sup> Census tracts identified as rural 2, 3, 4 or 5 in the DEI Data Baseline Analysis.

<sup>4</sup> Solar targets assume Energy Trust will complete about 1,700 residential projects in 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Census tracts identified as composite 4 and 5 in the DEI Data Baseline Analysis.

45% of residential projects (approximately 765) are in census tracts with a large proportion of people of color <sup>6</sup>	33% of residential projects (313) are in census tracts with a large proportion of people of color	Off track to achieve target
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- Solar Within Reach continues to be a popular offer among customers, who completed 135 projects in the first half of 2021 compared with 86 in 2020. This is in addition to 244 standard residential projects installed in census tracts that are rural and have low- to moderate-income customers and people of color.
  - The Solar Within Reach offer, launched in late 2019 for income-qualified households, provides three to five times the standard residential solar incentive and can cover about half of the cost of a typical solar system.
  - Due to the success of the solar trade ally network in supporting the Solar Within Reach offer through standard marketing activities, the program prioritized supporting those trade allies and shifted incentive funds to maintain incentive rates and manage its budget rather than additional promotional activities.
- Energy Trust has been less successful at enrolling customers in census tracts with larger proportions of people of color in Solar Within Reach projects. Survey results show a majority of participants identify as white.
- Solar participation is largely driven by the availability of local participating trade ally contractors. The addition of a single contractor in Southern Oregon in late 2020 helped increase participation in that part of the state, which was a significant driver in decreasing the percentage of residential participation in census tracts with a large proportion of people of color.

**Going forward:**

- Energy Trust will award incentives for small-scale community solar installation in quarter three with \$1.5 million in incentives to be spread over as many eligible projects as possible. Funding is for projects that intend enroll in the Oregon Community Solar Program.
  - Projects must meet an equity requirement, either allocating at least 50% of project capacity to customers with low incomes or partnering with a community-based organization to develop and implement an outreach plan to serve customers who have not traditionally benefited from solar incentives.

**Goal 3: Increase participation in the Trade Ally Network by minority-owned and women-owned businesses.**

2021 Target	Progress as of Q2 2021	Status
Three new women-owned trade allies and six new minority-owned trade allies, a 50% increase	0 new women-owned trade allies and 0 new minority-owned trade allies	Off track to achieve target

- Energy Trust is working with the National Association of Minority Contractors–Oregon, LatinoBuilt and Professional Business Development Group (PBDG) on a contractor development pathway to engage contractors who haven’t worked with Energy Trust in the past and support existing trade allies who have low participation.
  - The pathway is designed to help businesses certified by the state’s Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity (COBID) and COBID-eligible businesses enroll in the Trade Ally Network and complete projects with Energy Trust.
  - The pathway will include one-on-one mentorship, technical training and program training. The group is looking to launch this pathway in quarter three with a goal of having about 10 contractors for the first cohort and at least 80% participation from minority-owned contractors.

<sup>6</sup> Census tracts identified as racially diverse 4 and 5 in the DEI Data Baseline Analysis.

- Separately, Energy Trust and PBDG are working on a pathway to help minority-owned trade allies achieve COBID certification, launching in quarter three. PBDG will provide one-on-one certification support at no cost for up to 30 trade allies.

**Going forward:**

- Energy Trust will meet with contractors and the trade organizations listed above in quarter three to discuss future goals of participating in the Trade Ally Network and how Energy Trust can better support COBID-certified contractors.

**Goal 4: Increase the number of projects completed by minority-owned and women-owned trade allies.**

2021 Target	Progress as of Q2 2021	Status
1,800 projects completed by minority-owned and women-owned contractors, a 15% increase	760 projects completed by minority-owned and women-owned contractors	Off track to achieve target

- While Energy Trust has focused on enrolling minority- and women-owned contractors in the Trade Ally Network through outreach to and participation in trade organizations, those enrollments have not always translated to projects completed.
- The vast majority of projects completed by minority- and women-owned contractors are residential projects; projects on the commercial side have lagged. The launch of the small business offer from Existing Buildings, which was expected to generate projects that would support this goal, was delayed.

**Going forward:**

- To help minority- and women-owned trade allies complete more projects, particularly on the commercial side, Energy Trust meet with minority- and women-owned trade allies, focusing on those who have completed few or no projects, to identify barriers and resources that could support their businesses.

**Goal 5: Increase the number of contracts with Black-owned, minority-owned and women-owned businesses and improve contract tracking systems to support increased supplier diversity.**

2021 Targets	Progress as of Q2 2021	Status
Enter into 25 new contracts with minority-owned or women-owned businesses and 10 new contracts with Black-owned businesses in Oregon, a 20% increase	Entered into 12 new contracts with minority-owned or women-owned businesses, and three of those contracts are with Black-owned businesses	Off track to achieve target
Track number of contracts with community-based organizations to establish a baseline for comparison for future contracting goals	Energy Trust is now tracking the number of community-based organizations it contracts with	On track to achieve target
Establish a system for tracking community-based organizations by March 1, 2021	An initial system has been established	Target achieved

- Energy Trust continues to build its work with minority- and women-owned businesses through its programs and operations, including program management and delivery contracts. This is being done through outreach to businesses and communications to staff who initiate contracts.

- While direct contracts with Energy Trust are not on pace to achieve this goal, outreach is expected to increase in the second half of the year.

**Going forward:**

- Work is underway to develop a supplier diversity tracking system that will include tracking minority- and women-owned businesses.

**Goal 6: Build relationships with community-based organizations.**

2021 Targets	Status
Continue to deepen and develop relationships with 50 community-based organizations to better reach and serve more diverse customers	On track to achieve target
Have at least twice-yearly conversations with community-based organization focused on workforce diversity to understand workforce opportunities for energy efficiency and renewable energy	On track to achieve target
Ensure more than half of the community-based organizations' missions are to serve people of color	On track to achieve target

- Energy Trust began working with new organizations in 2021, expanding the list that is tracked for this goal to 59. Several of these new relationships offer new insights into customers and how Energy Trust can more effectively engage them.
- These community-based organizations tend to have missions focused on multiple aspects of diversity, equity and inclusion. More than half (61%) of the organizations tracked for this goal have a focus on serving Black, Indigenous and People of Color customers or community members.
- Staff has deepened relationships with organizations focused on workforce diversity including Professional Business Development Group, National Association of Minority Contractors-Oregon and LatinoBuilt by establishing contracts, holding twice-yearly meetings and recruitment and training events.

**Going forward:**

- As relationships with many of these organizations deepen, staff will look to move more of these relationships to a stage where Energy Trust and the organization are co-developing activities, offers and engagement approaches.
- Energy Trust is preparing to offer grants that will be made available to nonprofit organizations. Several organizations tracked for this goal provided insight to help shape this offer.
- Many relationships exist with organizations, community service providers, public agencies and others beyond what is tracked for this goal. Staff is working to coordinate and track those broader relationships.

## Goal 7: Increase representation of staff identifying as people of color.

2021 Targets	Progress as of Q2 2021	Status
Increase percentage of applicants identifying as people of color by 10%	34% of applicants (71 out of 209) identify as people color, compared with 12% at the start of the year	On track to achieve target
Ensure at least 50% of all new hires identify as people of color	71% of new staff members hired in 2021 identify as people of color; when interns are included in these metrics, 80% of staff and interns hired in 2021 identify as people of color	On track to achieve target

- Following a new recruiting strategy to promote diversity, equity and inclusion, Energy Trust is requiring all hiring panels consider qualified applicants of color throughout the hiring process. It is also inviting members of the Diversity Advisory Council to sit on hiring panels and using a hiring blueprint and scoring card to help make objective hiring decisions, among other changes.
- Energy Trust has partnered with diversity, equity and inclusion consultant Gilmara Vila Nova-Michell to better understand staff needs and opinions to recommend changes that will boost retention of staff of color. As a first step, staff was asked to complete an anonymous survey and invited to attend virtual listening sessions.
- Based on the feedback provided by Gilmara Vila Nova-Michell, Energy Trust is working to build equity and transparency into its career development processes; applying an equity lens to existing promotion guidelines, human resources policies and processes; and developing a new paid collaboration with Workplace Change, a local minority-owned human resources firm.

### Going forward:

- Staff leadership will apply an equity lens to any changes to Energy Trust's remote and/or hybrid work policies and practices.
- Energy Trust will evaluate its recruiting strategies on an annual basis.

## Goal 8: Determine new ways to track participation among communities of color, low-income households and rural customers.

2021 Targets	Status
Complete report on Data Enhancement Project	On track to achieve target
Conduct contractor/trade ally analysis	On track to achieve target
Explore market research to inform customer engagement (e.g., market and outreach) and differential baselines for developing new offers (e.g., measure development)	On track to achieve target

- Staff focused data enhancement efforts on identifying what data are meaningful to measure and track for program engagements beyond the census tract approach currently used. Research efforts include seeking qualitative insights from focus groups and community partners and evaluating customer-level quantitative metrics from the Customer Insights Study and Fast Feedback Survey reports.



- Energy Trust improved internal reporting dashboards to track enrollment and project activity for minority- and women-owned contractors.
- A cross-functional team including marketing, programs, communications and planning and evaluation staff continues to identify areas for further research aimed at reaching customers of color, low-income customers and rural customers.
- The Existing Buildings program’s community-based liaisons are providing feedback on how to best collect demographic information of business customers, which has historically been a gap in understanding across Energy Trust’s data and analysis efforts.

**Going forward:**

- Energy Trust will continue to engage stakeholders, the Diversity Advisory Council and community-based organizations to understand what data are valuable and should be collected.

**Goal 9: Increase the ability of staff and board to work across cultures and be more inclusive through structural organizational change and continuous staff learning.**

2021 Targets	Status
Create a work environment that supports staff who are people of color	On track to achieve target
Ensure 100% of Energy Trust employees attend a training that addresses gaps in organizational readiness	On track to achieve target

- All new hires and anyone participating on an interview panel are asked to take an implicit bias training, and 100% of interview panelists have completed this training prior to assisting in the selection of new Energy Trust staff.
- As part of 2021 training offerings, each full-time staff member has access to LinkedIn Learning as a professional development resource.
- A tribal culture training offered in quarter two was attended by 32% of staff, and there were many requests to have an additional training on this topic in 2021 or 2022. The training gave staff members critical historical, political and cultural context as they work with and develop relationships with tribes across the state.

**Going forward:**

- Energy Trust will continue to provide diversity, equity and inclusion training opportunities.
- All staff members are required to identify a diversity, equity and inclusion training element in their yearly workplan. Completion of this task will be monitored by management throughout the year.

**Goal 10: Increase awareness and understanding of the diversity, equity and inclusion goals and progress.**

2021 Targets	Status
Provide progress report in an appendix to Energy Trust’s 2021 Q2 and 2021 Annual Report to the OPUC	On track to achieve target

Ensure efforts to support diversity, equity and inclusion are reflected in organizational communications and public relations

On track  
to achieve  
target

- Energy Trust continues to publish regular progress reports on diversity, equity and inclusion activities that serve to inform the OPUC, Energy Trust board, staff and external stakeholders on current work and lessons learned.
- Blog posts this year have highlighted utility assistance resources for customers behind on their payments, legislation to lessen energy burdens for low-income customers, the legacy of Black leaders of energy efficiency and environmental justice in honor of Black History Month and finding of a national report on the benefits of energy efficiency for rural communities.
- Energy Trust's 2022 organization goals include addressing the needs of customers who experience significant energy burden and expanding support for community-led approaches to increase access to clean energy.

**Going forward:**

- As staff works to gather community input to draft future diversity, equity and inclusion activity plans, organizational communications on that process will help promote transparency and ensure future accountability.