

JUST FUTURE

Washington's approach to Collaborative Governance



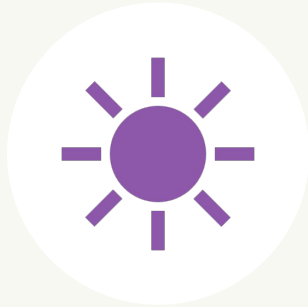
Image credit: MLK Labor leads a Community Assembly in Seattle on the effects of extreme weather events.

Closing the disconnect between government and the communities they serve

Collaborative governance builds trust and engagement in democracy—while also creating fairer and more effective outcomes when investing public money and making laws.

Using Community Wisdom to Solve Our Greatest Challenges

Washington's Black, Indigenous, people of color, and low-income communities are more likely to experience:



**Impacts of climate
change**



**Barriers to
affordable housing**



**Unemployment
& Low Wages**

Facing environmental and economic challenges has given community members valuable wisdom and expertise.

Leveraging the power of community self-determination

When communities participate in creating policy through collaborative governance, they are building skills in civic participation – and making Washington more resilient to economic and environmental challenges.



Image credit: MLK Labor leads a Community Assembly in Seattle on the effects of extreme weather events.

The Just Futures Initiative

Since 2021, a coalition of community-based organizations has worked to create the **Just Futures initiative: an effort to realize collaborative governance in Washington State.**



What are Community Assemblies?



- A series of learning and discussion sessions led by trusted community-based organizations
- Attended by community members who carry high levels of environmental and economic burdens
- Community raises important local issues and develops solutions through policy proposals
- Funded by the Climate Commitment Act

Community Assemblies:

A tool for deep collaboration

In fall 2024, Just Futures is piloting six Community Assemblies as a tool for collaborative governance that centers community leadership.

Community Assemblies align with Strategy 2 of the 10 Year Plan to Dismantle Poverty.



Image credit: BMAC leads a Community Assembly in Walla Walla

Beyond Traditional Community Engagement

Community Assemblies

**Activate
people with
lived
experience**

**Provide
Structure &
Support for
Participation**

**Build Trust with
Government
Partners**

**Demystify
Policy Making**



Three Months

Outcomes

**Grassroots insights to
create more targeted
and effective
programs**

Role of Government

Community Assemblies allow community and government to learn together

- Government gains insight into challenges and solutions building from the lived experience of frontline communities
- Community members learn how to better navigate policymaking to improve their well-being
- At many Community Assemblies, community identifies priority issues and then government agency staff join to discuss programs and resources



Image credit: BMAC. Community Assembly Participants discuss mental health resources in Walla Walla



Blue Mountain Action Council

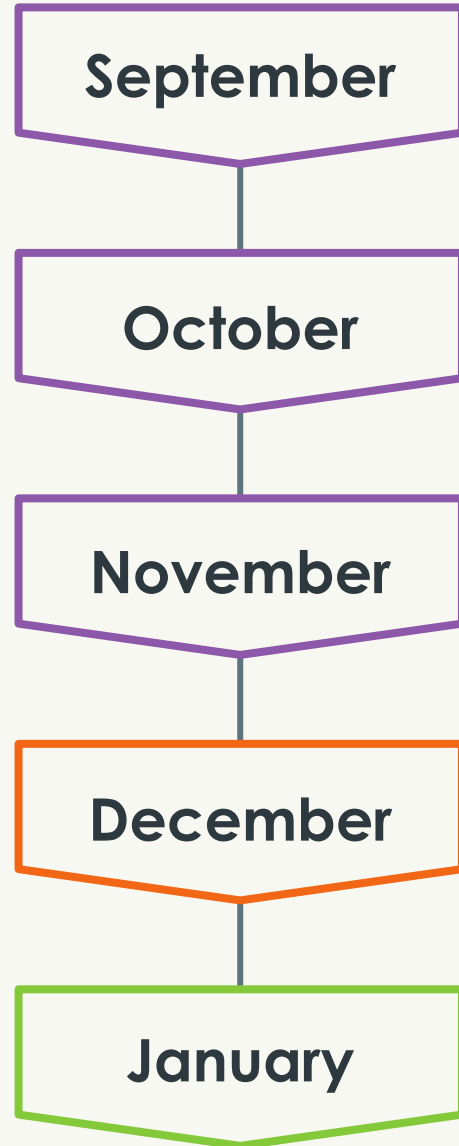
Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC) is hosting a series of Community Assemblies with low-income communities in Walla Walla. Community members identified increasing the number of mental health providers and clinics as their priority issue.



Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle

Urban League convened people of color and people from migrant communities who face disproportionate impacts of climate change.

Timeline of Community Assemblies Pilot



September-December

Piloting community assemblies:

- Seattle,
- Spokane,
- SeaTac,
- Tacoma,
- Walla Walla,
- Everson,
- Sunnyside,
- Whatcom/Skagit Counties

December

Report out community recommendations

January

Community coordination with lawmakers during Washington Legislative Session to refine and advance policy proposals



Thank you!

Questions?

