



Fact sheet

Community Air Action Planning: What Communities Can Expect

Overview: The anticipated journey of partnering with DEQ

[Community Air Action Planning](#) is a pilot program designed to support communities with complex air pollution challenges to understand their air quality at a local-level and co-create potential solutions. During CAAP's three-year pilot phase, DEQ will be partnering with four communities across the state to test [our approach](#). Depending on the outcomes during this first phase and securing appropriate funding, DEQ intends to partner with additional communities.

During the Spring of 2024, DEQ will be recruiting and selecting four communities to partner with during the first phase of CAAP. This is an exciting opportunity for the four communities to both begin understanding and addressing their local air quality challenges in new ways and also support other communities by working with DEQ to pioneer a new model for protecting the environment and public health from air pollution.

Selection process

The four communities will be selected based on a heat map that is used to identify communities that are an appropriate match with CAAP's approach. This heat map was developed with a 'co-design group' of fifteen individuals from around the state that represented community-based organizations, advocacy groups, research institutions, local government authorities and state government agencies.

DEQ intends for the CAAP program to work with communities that have complex air quality challenges and tasked the co-design group to analyze a set of [environmental justice](#) criteria that could be used to identify suitable communities. The environmental justice criteria were evaluated through four sets of indicators – pollution data, demographic data, health data and socioeconomic data (*see annex for the full set of data*). DEQ created the heat map by overlaying each of the data layers on top of the other.

CAAP's co-design group recommended a two-part process for selecting the communities. Two of the four communities will be selected by DEQ based on their scoring according to the heat map. This will increase the likelihood that DEQ will create new relationships and partnerships with communities around the state where it currently lacks strong connections. The other two communities will be selected through an application process where community members and community-based organizations alike will fill out a simple questionnaire and those applications will be scored in accordance with the heat map.

Translation or other formats

[Español](#) | [한국어](#) | [繁體中文](#) | [Русский](#) | [Tiếng Việt](#) | [العربية](#)

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Phase 1: Develop an understanding of community-scale air quality

This phase of CAAP will consist of three main components – air quality monitoring, community knowledge mapping and introduction to air quality.

Air quality monitoring focuses on using equipment to gather information about the different types of pollutants and their relative amounts. DEQ will partner with community members to co-develop the monitoring plan and host the equipment. For this air quality monitoring, DEQ will use:

- PurpleAir monitors to measure PM2.5. This equipment can measure fine particulate matter from wildfire smoke that can increase health risks.
- Aethalometers to measure aerosols. This equipment can measure haze-like particles produced through activities like burning gas and diesel in vehicles or industrial processes. Aethalometers can be used to measure pollutants like diesel particulate matter.
- Anemometers or mini-weather stations will help identify how local meteorological conditions impact the dispersion of air pollution.

Community knowledge mapping focuses on gathering and evaluating community data that focuses on the impacts of air pollution. Air quality monitoring data alone does not tell a complete picture about the impacts of air pollution so CAAP will utilize this second method to systematically evaluate how air pollution effects the community. To do this, DEQ will engage community members in 'design charrette' exercises – a method where groups of people draw on maps to identify different phenomenon and collectively describe the phenomenon along with its impacts.

The 'introduction to air quality' trainings is an education and capacity building component that takes place during this phase of CAAP. The purpose of this component is to provide as many community members as possible with the opportunity to learning about the connections between air quality and public health risks, the system that's in place to maintain legally determined air quality standards, how air quality monitoring works and strategies that could be pursued to reduce air pollution.

This first phase of CAAP results in a 'Community Air Report' where DEQ analyzes the data collected through the air quality monitoring and community knowledge mapping and share the findings with the public. DEQ will work closely with the community to distribute the report and examine its findings together.

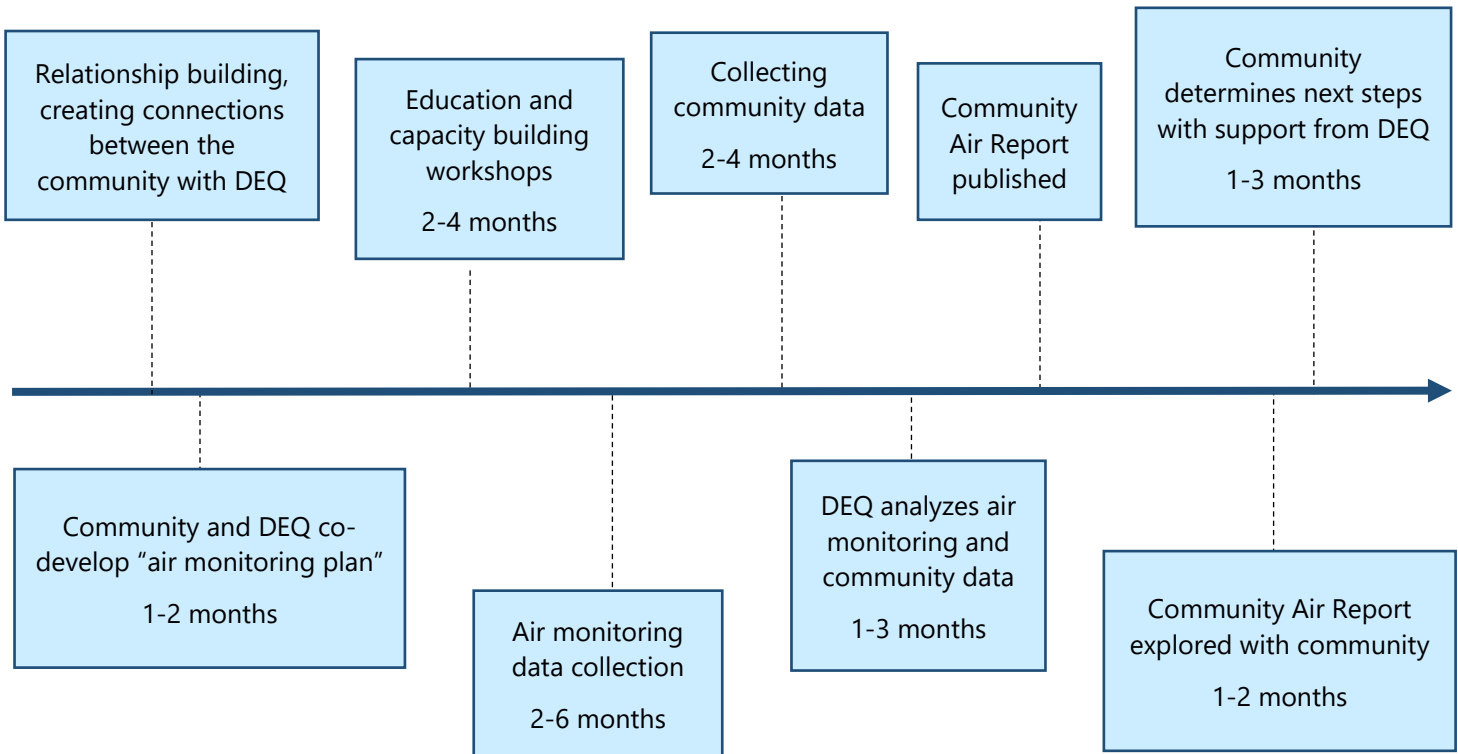
Phase 2: Taking action

After the publication of the community air report and following discussion, DEQ will partner with the community to advise on what actions might be desirable to reach the community's goals. This phase of CAAP will be led by the community – they will determine what course of action to pursue and have an influential role in bringing their desired actions to life.

There are many different options a community may wish to pursue during this phase of CAAP, ranging from conducting further air quality monitoring and modeling to installing air filtration systems in key areas across their community to working with other organizations to secure voluntary commitments from others to take supportive actions. The process of determining and taking the community's desired actions is explained in detail in the 'how is action planning defined in our approach?' section of [the Community Air Action Plan story map](#). This phase of CAAP will be completely dependent on the community's ambition and motivation, with DEQ committing to serving in a supportive partnership role.

Timeline

CAAP is a program that will rely on deep collaboration between DEQ and the communities. DEQ will announce the selection of the four communities in early summer 2024. We anticipate the approximate timeline in each community will follow a process like what is described below:



Next steps and questions

Visit the [CAAP web page](#) for more information and to see how you can get involved. If you have questions about CAAP or want to discuss the program with our team, please send an email to CAAP@deq.oregon.gov.

Non-discrimination statement

DEQ does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age or sex in administration of its programs or activities. Visit DEQ's [Civil Rights and Environmental Justice page](#).