

# Carbon Management Stakeholder Guide

For communities seeking to implement a carbon management project, a necessary first step is stakeholder engagement—an inclusive and participatory process bringing together essential parties. This means that project leaders should seek consultation, support, and assistance from diverse members of their community as they develop new projects, programs, and practices.

This section of the Carbon Management Civic Toolkit provides guidance to interested parties on how to develop an engagement strategy, outlining key stakeholders to involve. While not meant to be an exhaustive list, this guide includes an overview of relevant stakeholder groups, describing their potential roles and why each group should be a part of the decision-making process.

## Who Has a Role in Carbon Management Projects?

### Chambers of Commerce

Embracing carbon management technologies can attract investment and businesses to states, cities, and towns. These technologies represent opportunities for innovation and job creation and can help foster economic growth. As key stakeholders in the local business ecosystem, chambers of commerce play a crucial role in facilitating the engagement process by facilitating industry partnerships, amplifying the benefits of carbon management projects, and advocating for supportive policies in local and state governments.

Carbon management technologies provide an opportunity for many industries to meet clean air standards and reach their climate objectives. Chambers of commerce can assist local businesses in navigating these targets and exploring carbon management technologies as an option for businesses to ensure market competitiveness.

### Communities

Community groups must be active and engaged decision makers from the early stages of deploying a carbon management project. Innovative partnerships and ownership structures empower communities to have a stake in decision-making processes, fostering transparency and accountability. Shared decision-making builds trust, ensures safety, and includes crucial local knowledge. Likewise, sharing information about safety and emphasizing measures to mitigate risks is essential to addressing concerns and building trust within the community. These practices can be written out in Community Benefits Plans and Community Benefits Agreements to ensure that the benefits of carbon management projects, such as job creation and environmental improvements, are distributed equitably among residents.

Carbon management projects can offer economic development opportunities, such as creating new industries and businesses that utilize captured carbon and providing well-paying jobs in constructing and operating carbon management facilities. Project developers and local officials should communicate various pathways for collaboration and listen to community concerns about their economic vision. Strong, transparent community ties will increase the likelihood of a project's deployment and, thereby, the benefits for localities.

# Stakeholder Guide Cont.

## Environmental and Conservation Organizations

State or local environmental and conservation groups are key stakeholders in environmental advocacy and policy. Partnering with these organizations to align priorities on carbon emissions reductions and addressing climate change is an important first step in the engagement process. Carbon management is a readily available suite of technologies that can make near-term, durable changes and complement other methods while transitioning to lower-carbon energy systems. Whether their mission is to improve wildlife habitat, conserve natural resources, or facilitate the clean energy transition, environmental and conservation groups should consider the important role carbon management plays in preventing carbon emissions from entering the atmosphere and slowing the worst effects of climate change. Environmental and conservation groups can raise awareness of climate benefits, advocate for supportive policies, mobilize resources and grassroots support, conduct research, and help foster collaboration among stakeholders.

## First Responders

Firefighters, police officers, and emergency medical personnel play a crucial role in ensuring the safety and well-being of surrounding communities. Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) pipeline leaks are rare, but as with any infrastructure or energy project, emergency response plans are necessary to ensure the safety of workers and community members in the surrounding area in case of an accident. Project developers and municipal leaders must coordinate to ensure that first responders have all the necessary support in the event of a leak. This includes providing oxygen tanks, specialized emergency equipment, and regular training to ensure first responders can respond swiftly to a crisis. Project developers and municipal leaders should collaborate with first responders early and consistently to ensure communities are safeguarded in the event of a CO<sub>2</sub> pipeline leak.

## Landowners

Whether through renewable sources like solar and wind, traditional methods such as oil and gas extraction, or carbon management, land is critical to our nation's energy production. By leasing or allowing access to land for energy projects, landowners stand to benefit financially but also play a crucial role in shaping the future of energy production and addressing pressing environmental challenges. Land is needed to facilitate the clean energy transition, and landowners play a large role in contributing to the greater good. They need to be involved from the beginning and are key stakeholders that require detailed information about safety.

Landowners play a critical role in siting CO<sub>2</sub> pipeline projects. Through voluntary easements, landowners can grant access to their property for the construction and operation of pipelines or carbon storage facilities. Collaboration between landowners and project developers is paramount, ensuring mutual benefits and addressing safety concerns. Landowners should weigh the compensation offered by developers, the extent of access granted, and the necessity for land remediation. Given the variance in state policy, consulting with local officials ahead of time would best guide this process. Furthermore, safety is of utmost importance. Landowners and project developers should discuss CO<sub>2</sub> pipeline safety, including regular maintenance, monitoring, and implementing the highest standards to prevent leaks or other potential hazards. By working together, landowners and project developers can successfully navigate carbon management projects while safeguarding both the environment and local communities.

# Stakeholder Guide Cont.

## Local Governments (Township Boards; County Officials; Mayors)

By adopting a local approach to carbon management projects, local governments can leverage unique regional resources and target local needs by selecting carbon management projects that have priority co-benefits, such as improved air quality or job creation, in addition to a reduction in carbon emissions.

Local governments may play important roles in the siting and permitting of carbon management infrastructure, and it's important they be up to date on state and federal regulations. When questions arise about the technology or a proposed project, it is natural for community members to turn to their local leaders for more information. Local governments are a key communicator, and it's critical that they feel confident in explaining carbon management technologies and projects to their constituents. Collaborating with local governments ensures that the project fits the community's needs and that the benefits of carbon management are communicated effectively.

## Public Health Professionals

Carbon management projects have the potential to offer significant [air quality benefits](#). In addition to preventing CO<sub>2</sub> from entering the atmosphere, carbon capture processes can also reduce harmful air pollutants such as sulfur oxides, nitrogen oxides, and particulate matter. It's crucial to engage public health professionals to assess and communicate these health benefits effectively. Public health professionals play a pivotal role by conducting research, evaluating health impacts, and disseminating information to communities. Collaborating with public health professionals confirms the role of carbon management technology in mitigating the effects of climate change while potentially decreasing air pollution levels that can contribute to respiratory diseases, cardiovascular issues, and other health problems. Public health professionals' involvement is vital in ensuring that carbon management projects not only address environmental concerns but also lead to tangible health benefits for communities.

## Organized Labor & Workers

Workers and labor unions are essential stakeholders when contemplating a carbon management project. Incorporating the perspectives and needs of workers and organized labor into a stakeholder engagement strategy helps foster a just energy transition that prioritizes both climate goals and the well-being of communities reliant on traditional energy industries. As we strive to decarbonize our economy and transition toward cleaner energy, we need affected workers at the center of the transition strategy. Energy sector workers provide affordable, reliable energy to power the US economy, but the transition to clean energy could disrupt employment and local and regional economies relying on traditional energy sources. Carbon management careers increasingly leverage the specialized skills honed within the oil and gas industry and the broader energy sector. This skill transfer can pave the way to career opportunities in the affected economies. Organized labor is a key stakeholder in this transition—trade unions and their members can provide the essential skilled labor needed to build and install carbon management technology.