



**Strategic  
Plan  
2024 - 2026**





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# History

In the late 1990's Beyond Toxics' founders, including Mary O'Brien, Anita Johnson, Michael Carrigan, and Steve Johnson, successfully passed the model 'Community Toxics Right to Know' law in the city of Eugene, which requires polluters to report their emissions to the Fire Marshall for posting on a public website. This local law was the first of its kind in the nation. The local fight to pass a Community Toxics Right to Know law, inspired Oregon environmental leaders to form an organization dedicated to toxics use reduction, environmental integrity, and environmental justice. As a result, Beyond Toxics, originally named Oregon Toxics Alliance, was founded as a statewide nonprofit in January, 2001.



# Who We Are

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Beyond Toxics is a statewide environmental justice organization advancing policies that ensure meaningful participation and grassroots leadership from Oregon's frontline and impacted communities on issues of environmental, climate, and land use. Our team is a racially diverse, multicultural, and intergenerational team dedicated to centering community leaders as we build our state's vibrant Environmental Justice movement. Our work starts with grassroots organizing, leading to legal, regulatory, and policy victories. Our methods create capacity to end harmful environmental practices and legacy pollution through demanding justice and equity for communities facing the greatest risks of impact.

Our vision is winning bold and intersectional policies to advance racial, climate, and environmental justice to improve public health and community well-being. We are building an environmental justice movement that guarantees a just transition to equitable climate policies, clean energy, and land stewardship.

# Mission, Vision, & Values

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## Mission

Beyond Toxics provides leadership to create a community-driven environmental justice movement for a thriving and just Oregon.

## Vision

We envision a society where everyone has equitable access to healthy food and clean air and water, and underserved communities are included in decision making processes that affect them. Together, we move beyond the damaging environmental practices of the past and collectively work to support and maintain ecological resilience and balance.

## Values

We believe that everyone regardless of race, income, class, gender, and citizenship-status deserves access to resources free of exposure to harmful pollution. To enact lasting environmental justice, Beyond Toxics, along with our thousands of members statewide, believes that communities who live and work on the margins are experts in matters pertaining to their lived experience and should be informed and empowered in decision-making processes. Our team honors native heritages and tribal autonomy while guiding Oregonians to embrace ethical land stewardship for future generations.

# Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

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Beyond Toxics works to advance policies that ensure meaningful participation while cultivating grassroots leadership from Oregon's frontline and impacted communities. Beyond Toxics celebrates justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion because we believe that these factors are essential to supporting healthy people and creating healthy communities. As an organization, we are committed to aligning with these values in an intentional manner internally and externally.

Beyond Toxics strives to promote participatory leadership and distributive, collaborative decision-making processes that benefit frontline, underserved, and vulnerable communities. We achieve this through the process of dismantling structural and cultural barriers that exclude Black, Native American, Indigenous, People of Color, working class and poor people, and those who have experienced disenfranchisement due to systemic bias and racism.

We are committed to the ongoing learning and growth that is necessary to stay accountable to our diverse staff and stakeholders. Going forward, we will continue to create opportunities to employ and advance the leadership of those who identify as BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and those with disabilities. We understand that it is essential to center racial justice as the framework that guides us as an environmental justice organization.

We invite discourse on the issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion, and commit to analyzing, understanding, and educating ourselves around issues of privilege, including but not limited to racial, cultural, class, ability, gender, and geographic disparities.

# Board of Directors Strategic Goals

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## Resource Management

Guide resource allocation in collaboration with the Executive Director to ensure that program goals are met and organizational values for fair and just staff wages and community support are followed. Support fundraising efforts of the Executive and Assistant Directors to build relationships with major individual donors and granting organizations to ensure an ongoing reliable source of annual funding. Advise Executive Director on major HR decisions with respect to employee retention, salaries, time off, etc.

- Make a personally meaningful annual contribution to Beyond Toxics.
- Support the organization's fundraising events with volunteerism, in-kind donations, and "friend-raising."

## Review and Refine Operating Principles

Ensure that the key principles under which the board operates reflects organizational values.

### This includes:

- Incorporating environmental, economic and racial justice values into all policies and documents that the Board produces including the mission, vision, and values that the Board sets for Beyond Toxics
- Supporting the Executive Director in increasing the effectiveness of Beyond Toxics' programs and initiatives. This could include forming alliances with local, state, and national environmental or racial justice groups, local and state political or business leaders, as well as neighborhood groups and individuals affected by local environmental decisions, to join with Beyond Toxics to advance policy reforms.
- Having an ongoing commitment from all Board members to continual learning about issues related to equity, inclusion, and environmental justice.

# Board of Directors Strategic Goals

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## Communications, Visibility, and Public Relations

In coordination with the Executive Director and Communications Manager, help build upon Beyond Toxics' communications strategy and strengthen Beyond Toxic's reputation by sharing organizational successes and publicly advocating for Beyond Toxics' work. Cultivate continual awareness of new environmental justice and social justice issues arising in the community and strategize on the best approach to the issues. Support the work of Beyond Toxics' staff by attending public events.

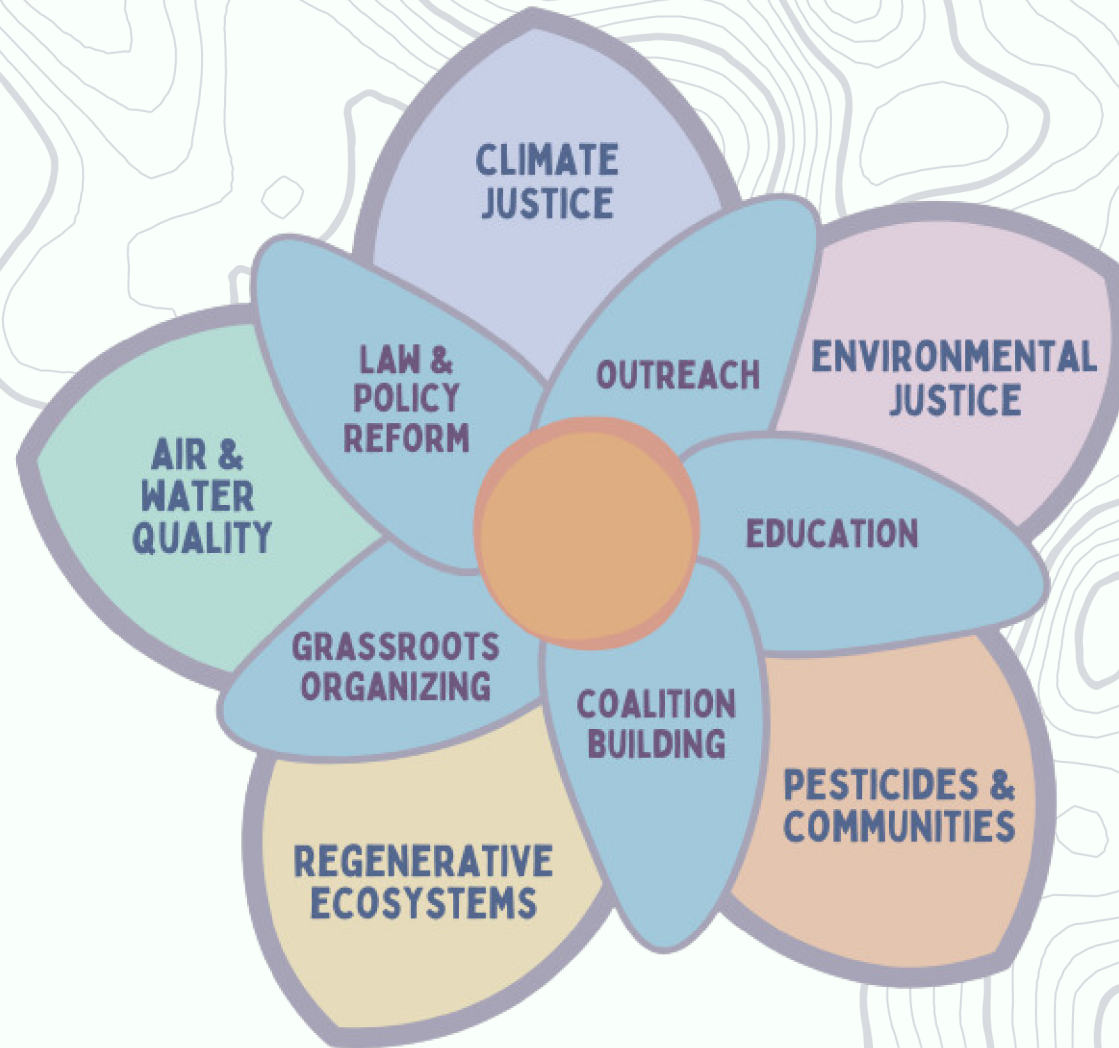
## Leadership Recruitment, Transition, and Succession

Retain and develop leadership capacity of current Board members as well as continuously recruit and seek out Board members who represent the communities Beyond Toxics serves. Members of the Board ideally offer expertise in science, communications, community relationships, fundraising and finances, business partnerships or other areas that provide a foundation to build on the organization's success. Develop a long-term plan for onboarding, transition, and succession of the Executive and Assistant Directors



# Our Approach

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*\*This Flower Model was inspired by the Climate Adaptation Model adopted by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.*

## Environmental Justice Theory of Change

Our Strategic Plan is visually presented in our illustrated **Environmental Justice Theory of Change**. In the above model, each of our five programmatic areas are shown in the outer petals. Woven throughout the five program areas is our commitment to prioritizing the empowerment of marginalized communities disproportionately affected by environmental hazards.

The inner petals detail how our work merges intentional methods – **grassroots organizing, outreach, education, coalition building, and law and policy reform** – as a means to achieve our priority area goals. Through collaborative efforts and research-driven solutions, we strive to address environmental challenges and promote social change.

### Grassroots Organizing

Grassroots organizing is fundamental to our approach. We believe that collective action sourced from a people-first perspective creates a driving force that holds polluter industries accountable to real individuals, families, and communities. We take our commitment to frontline communities seriously, and are determined to not only advocate for change in areas affected by disproportionate environmental health concerns—but to create opportunities for healing and resiliency to populations that have experienced trauma from the effects of public health neglect in their neighborhoods.

### Outreach

A large piece of organizing at this grassroots level comes down to effective outreach. Our Communications Team is essential in getting the word out about issues of public interest and rallying the larger public to get involved. Our organizers get on the ground with the community and ensure voices are being heard and put on record. We work to have a strong relationship with the media. Most importantly, relationship building is at the heart of our outreach efforts and feeds into the many collaborative aspects of our work.

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## Education

Providing informative educational materials is a core building block of our efforts. We take the lead to design cutting-edge research in order to uncover polluter and toxics related risks to the environment and public health. We present these datasets at an accessible reading level in our reports to ensure digestible information. At the focus of our efforts is centering youth education and leadership training in our programs for early-college, high school, and middle-school aged youth.

## Coalition Building

We don't do this work alone. Coalition building challenges us to be the best partners we can be as we tackle local and statewide challenges with other experts in the field. Our staff participate in a variety of commissions and workgroups on issues such as land use, environmental justice, pesticide reform, and air quality. We're honored to take leadership roles in coalitions such as Oregon Just Transition Alliance, Fossil Free Eugene, Plastic Reduction Coalition, Oregon Climate Equity Network, and the The Oregon Water Futures Project.

## Law and Policy Reform

Identifying and closing industrial loopholes, bringing forward Environmental Justice perspectives at high-level decision making spaces, and being a catalyst to prioritize commitment to environmental health at a governmental level is a driving force in our work. Whether it's pushing for emission level caps or in defense of the Climate Protection Program, we know that our presence is needed at city hall and the capital. Hiring a full-time Environmental Justice Staff Attorney and our continued partnership with the CRAG Law Center has been a vital leveraging force as we approach this work.

# Organizational Growth

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## Strategic Plan 2024-2026 Statement

In our Strategic Plan 2024-2026, we hope to capture the essence of our goals in a way that achieves grounding guidance for us as an organization. However, due to the dynamic nature of our work, not all of our ongoing initiatives, programs, and partnerships are able to be highlighted and predicted. With that understanding, Beyond Toxics will always pivot to center environmental justice values within the vital work we do to serve Oregonians.

## Resilient Organizational Model

As we engage in ongoing work on a programmatic level, we also understand the importance of strengthening our organization from within. Encompassing internal environmental justice principles is vital to the success of our efforts. We are committed to improving our administrative processes and policies to best facilitate an environment that prioritizes safety, health, and anti-racism. We believe that justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion must be integrated into the fabric of our organization as a whole.

## Fundraising

Additional focus on our membership program, annual campaigns, outreach, relationship building, and stewardship of individual donors will help to diversify our budget and support the growth of our organization. An improved compensation policy will increase staff retention, which in turn, deepens our community relationships and strengthens our programmatic work.

## Communications and Awareness Raising

Our focus is to implement cohesive communications to support our organizational goals, increase membership outreach, and promote fundraising campaigns. We plan to improve the content and accessibility of our website. We will continue to engage with the community to develop compelling narratives that showcase the impact of our work. Additionally, we'll create virtual events to foster a sense of community around our advocacy.

## The Need

The consequences of climate change have disproportionately burdened frontline communities with the brunt of health, economic, and ecological impacts. Amidst rapid warming, increased wildfires, drought, and imperiled water quality, it's imperative that all communities have access to renewable energy, clean air and water, and a healthy living environment.

*Our team advocates for equitable solutions to climate change impacts in the following ways:*

- Amplifying impacted voices in climate discussions
- Promoting policies to achieve statewide climate initiatives
- Educating and engaging with the public to reduce reliance on fossil fuels

## Our Plan

### Bethel Clean Energy Project

Following our successful pilot program we plan to expand the Bethel Clean Energy Project. We'll do so through direct collaboration with neighborhood residents, to research and identify the best options for implementing free or low-cost clean energy home improvements. Recognizing how cost is a barrier for most households, we'll implement a revolving loan program that residents can access for upfront renovations such as weatherization, heat pump placement, and solar energy installation. This is an important step forward to provide access to fossil fuel reduction methods and mitigate the burden that climate change places on impacted communities.

### Climate Protection Program Defense

Beyond Toxics was engaged in litigation to defend Oregon's Climate Protection Program (CPP). Within the coalition of seven organizations filing for intervenor status, we were the sole legal intervenor representing environmental justice interests and will continue to fight for the State's authority to adopt strong climate policy and secure tangible benefits for frontline communities. In light of the Court of Appeals' decision invalidating the CPP, the critical funding for impacted communities generated by polluter fees is being temporarily paused. Beyond Toxics will work with our coalition partners to support agency action that aims to address the court's decision and correct procedural requirements. When the CPP is readopted, we will continue our involvement in rulemaking with an environmental justice lens.

## The Need

Those most affected by pollution and climate change are historically excluded from decision making spaces. Our focus on grassroots organizing supports the leadership of low-income, rural communities, and communities of color to step forward to protect themselves from the harmful effects of hazardous pollutants in their neighborhoods.

*We work to empower and involve marginalized communities in the following ways:*

- Uplifting the leadership and agency of communities affected by pollution and climate change
- Holding polluters accountable to regulations in place, and striving to strengthen environmental laws
- Conducting community-focused research projects and awareness campaigns

## Our Plan

### Youth Education Programs

With the ongoing success of our youth education programs we'll continue to develop and invest in these offerings. Our youth outdoor camp for middle-school aged youth will be hosted annually each summer in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Emerald Valley. Our Rise as Leaders cohorts, for high-school and college-aged young adults, will continue to be hosted bi-annually, with an emphasis on education on the concepts of environmental and climate justice to empower and nurture youth-led leadership. Opportunities for cohort members to develop internships at Beyond Toxics will continue to be fostered.

### Equity and Land Use

Beyond Toxics will continue to develop a path forward to incorporate environmental justice into land use laws at a local and statewide level. This includes expanding upon HB 2488, a legislative concept we introduced in 2021, addressing equity and environmental justice in our land use system. A core goal is to reform Goal 1 (public participation) of the Oregon Land Use Goals in upcoming legislative sessions. We will actively support initiatives to better integrate equity in Oregon's land use system and prioritize relationship building with other land use organizations in the state. Locally, we hope to leverage recent victories like the Eugene City Councilors' votes to establish public health standards in industrial development codes and to initiate a process for holding fossil fuel and hazardous chemicals users responsible for risk bonding. Adopted upon our recommendation, these innovative policy outcomes are setting the example for other municipalities to apply far-reaching actions.



# Pesticides & Communities

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## The Need

Exposure to pesticides correlates with a myriad of health issues, kills keystone species, and upsets the balance of nature's systems. Populations in Oregon such as farm workers, forestry workers, and children face the brunt of these exposures due to the lack of protective regulations and poor enforcement of current policies. Our goal is to establish comprehensive pesticide reforms that protect human health, biodiversity, and water quality.

*We prioritize pesticide policies that guarantee full transparency and advance organic practices by:*

- Protecting children's health by encouraging reduced and pesticide-free maintenance practices at our schools, parks, and public spaces
- Conducting community-centered research and outreach on the harms of pesticides
- Providing support to Tribal community members to reduce pesticides in Tribal lands and resources

## Our Plan

### Toxic Free Schools and Parks

Our 2023 Toxic Free Schools legislative concept (SB 426) aimed to improve transparency around pesticide use in Oregon schools. With its passage blocked in the Ways and Means Committee, it is even more pressing that we don't back down. Moving forward we will leverage our partnerships to reintroduce pesticide protections for school children. Our Non Toxic Oregon (NTO) project in partnership with national partners such as Beyond Pesticides, educates city, county and school landscape staff on how to steward our public spaces without the use of toxic pesticides or chemical fertilizers. The City of Eugene and Willamalane Park District are successfully engaging with our NTO pilot project to implement toxic free management practices. These successful programs help set a standard that other local governments can adopt.

### Ending Aerial Sprays in Our Forests

Following up on the publication of our comprehensive reports on herbicide applications in industrial timber plantations and state forests, we continue to press state legislations, agencies and businesses to end this ecologically damaging practice. We'll continue to work towards a moratorium on aerial pesticide sprays and initiate a comprehensive analysis of the impacts of aerial pesticides spray to watershed, community and environmental health.

# Regenerative Ecosystems

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## The Need

Chemical management of natural resources and land poisons food systems, ecosystems, watersheds and nearby communities. We're working towards a regenerative economy that values biodiversity, climate resilience and restores equilibrium to our ecosystems.

*We provide leadership in many ways, including:*

- Protection of native bee populations through bee surveys, our pollinator garden plot, toxics-free projects, and public education campaigns
- Advocacy for resilient and climate smart forestry practices
- Introducing and defending policies to protect Oregon's ecosystems and watersheds

## Our Plan

### Resilient Forestry Tours

As a leader in the charge to stop herbicide use of forest land, we'll continue to study and provide detailed analysis of herbicide sprays on forest land in watersheds in Oregon. Our unique research will serve as a tool to strengthen our community activism efforts and leverage policies at the statewide level. We understand the importance of pairing an environmental justice lens with hard data about pesticides to inform our policy goals. On the ground, we will continue to host seasonal guided tours in biodiverse forests in partnership with small forest owners as a valuable demonstration of sustainable forest management practices that protect drinking water, encourage biodiversity and sequester carbon on the land.

### Pollinator Health

Our food security is closely intertwined with the health and vitality of the planet's pollinators, which are, in turn, dependent on healthy ecosystems. We will continue to nurture our "Pollinator Plot" located at a West Eugene community garden in partnership with Huerto de la Familia. The surrounding gardens, many of which provide food for the families tending them, benefit from the attraction of bees that our plot provides. Our campaigns to educate the public on how to protect the health of pollinators through reducing use of pesticides, such as insecticide use in gardens, will be ongoing. As we continue our informative native bee education programs, we're working to reinstate Oregon Native Bee Conservation Day as a way to permanently raise awareness about pollinator health at a statewide level with the backing of our governor.

# Air & Water Quality

## The Need

From decades of research, the US EPA has concluded that communities of color, rural communities in poverty, and Native American Tribal communities face some of the worst air and water quality in the nation. These pollutants, often found in quantities that exceed public health standards, exacerbate chronic public health issues.

*We stand up against air and water pollution in the following ways:*

- Promoting policies to enforce polluter accountability, transparency and the community's right to know about toxics
- Advancing policies to protect the health of our watersheds and air quality
- Standing in solidarity with Tribal Nations

## Our Plan

### **Advocate for Impacted Communities**

Beyond Toxics partners with community-led efforts as we work to amplify impacted voices in decision-making spaces that affect pollution-burdened communities. As a result of our community organizing we understand that accountability to the communities we serve is required. Advocacy doesn't end at holding a polluter to a regulatory standard—it requires investment into a communities' ongoing resilience and healing in the aftermath of pollution. Beyond Toxics' multifaceted approach focuses on facilitating policy reform, organizing community events, providing youth education, and expanding community access to resources.

### **Propose Efficient Waste Management Methods**

We are tackling topics surrounding the growing issue of landfills, methane leakage, toxic ash and leachate and downstream water contamination. Existing landfills and the expansion of landfills has implications for climate stability and environmental health. To achieve goals of GHG reductions, climate stability and environmental health, our opposition to the expansion of landfills and support for waste reduction and methane capture will continue to be a priority.