

Breakout Session Guidance
CT DEEP Climate Action Planning Workshop
December 11, 2025

During the breakout session for the workshop, each group will focus on one of the three sectors below. You will be assigned to a breakout room based on We will be using a “root cause” tree visual to frame the challenge (tree branches), surface the barriers (tree trunk), and identify the root causes (tree roots). Following this exercise, each group will optimize their solutions. Please review the guidance below ahead of the workshop to prepare for your breakout session.

Broad Climate Measures:

- **Transportation:** Expand vehicle electrification and electric vehicle infrastructure
- **Buildings:** Increase energy efficiency and electrification in existing residential and commercial buildings.
- **Natural & Working Lands:** Increase and manage urban tree canopy; and increase protection, management and conservation of high-carbon coastal habitats, wetlands, grasslands, and forests.

Discussion Questions:

1. **Framing the Challenge (Symptoms/Tree branches)**
 - a. What does this climate goal look like in your community or work?
 - b. Who is most impacted – positively or negatively – if this goal is achieved?
 - c. What existing efforts or success stories can we build upon?
2. **Surface the Barriers (Tree trunk)**
 - a. What barriers make achieving this climate goal difficult?
 - b. Of these barriers, which one feels the most significant or urgent to address?
Facilitators should focus on this barrier to explore more deeply.
 - c. Which stakeholder groups experience these barriers most acutely?
3. **Root Cause Analysis**
 - a. Important to remember not to rush to solutions during this “why” exercise. *As you go through the “why” exercise, try to reiterate the barrier that you are focused on exploring more deeply.*

Why	Potential Question	Example Question	Example Answer
1	Why is this barrier happening?	Why is limited organic waste diverted?	Many households and businesses don’t separate organics.
2	Why is that happening?	Why don’t they separate organics?	There is a lack of convenient collection systems and unevenly distributed local programs.
3	Why does that underlying issue exist?	Why are collection systems inconsistent?	Municipal budgets and infrastructure vary.
4	Why hasn’t this been solved yet?	Why are composting facilities unevenly distributed?	High start up costs, significant community education needed, limited incentives.

5	Why are current strategies insufficient?	Why are incentives and investments limited?	Waste management policy focuses more on landfill diversion targets than on upstream infrastructure or producer responsibility.
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4. **Identify Root Causes (Tree roots)**

- a. What are root causes that we identified? Be careful to distinguish between symptoms and causes.
- b. Which root causes are within our control or influence? Which are not?

5. **Begin Optimizing for Solutions (Right side boxes)**

- a. What types of interventions could address these root causes?
- b. Which solutions would create the biggest impact and the most equitable outcomes?