

Energize Denver Task Force – Meeting #1

January 7, 2021 – via Zoom

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute (CBI)

Meeting in Brief

The 25-member Task Force met for the first time to discuss its charge to help the City transition Denver's existing commercial and multi-family buildings to Net Zero Energy by 2040. With a welcome from Mayor Hancock, City Councilman Jolon Clark, and Denver's Office of Climate Action, Sustainability and Resiliency Executive Director Grace Rink, the Task Force refined its Charter, guiding principles, meeting schedule, work group structure, and questions to address in developing its recommendations. The Task Force will meet more or less monthly. The next meeting on February 18 will focus on equity, defining what it means for a buildings policy in Denver, and developing equity criteria that will be integrated into all Task Force decisions.

Click [here](#) for the Task Force Charter and membership, a video recording of the meeting, future meeting announcements, and other materials.

Clarifying Task Force Charge, Guiding Principles & Key Questions to Address

The Task Force is charged with developing a building performance policy for existing commercial and multifamily buildings that:

- **Improves Health and Equity:** Improve indoor air quality, comfort, and health outcomes. Lower energy costs for businesses and improve energy equity. Ensure under-resourced communities can thrive under the policy.
- **Creates Jobs:** Create clean energy jobs and drive economic recovery from COVID.
- **Drives Climate Solutions in Buildings:** Buildings are responsible for over half of the greenhouse gas emissions in Denver today. The Task Force will design a policy that will require all existing buildings to achieve Net Zero Energy by 2040. The Task Force will help the City design a regulatory path that enables all buildings to achieve this goal. Net Zero Energy means highly efficient, all electric, grid flexible, and powered by 100% renewable electricity.

Katrina Managan, Denver Buildings Team Lead, discussed the charge and relevant background in more detail. Facilitator Ryan Golten discussed draft principles to guide the process, as informed by discussions this past month with Task Force members. The full presentation is available [here](#). Task Force members met in small groups to discuss and refine a list of Guiding Principles and Key Questions for the Task Force to answer in developing its policy recommendations. The refined list of Principles and Key Questions accompany this summary and are available on the City's [website](#).

Task Force members emphasized the following points regarding the Task Force charge:

- Need to balance the ambitious goal with the **flexibility and nuance to achieve it equitably and realistically, including in light of changing technologies**. 'Where feasible' was an important part of the Climate Action Task Force's goal of getting Denver and its buildings to Net Zero Energy by 2040. The Task Force wanted to push the City to recognize climate science and move decisively toward net zero energy, in part to help drive innovation, but not at the expense of affordability and equity or other unintended consequences. We want to develop a policy that's realistic, achievable and allows for flexibility based on building type. Equally important is the idea of replacing systems gradually over the next 20 years, with firm deadlines so building owners, managers and others can begin planning now.

- **Start with low-hanging fruit.** The first phase of upgrades is likely to cost less, i.e., the first 80% of changes needed to achieve Net Zero Energy will be substantially cheaper than the last 20%.
- **Account for early and late adoption.** Balance incentives for early adopters without locking folks into technologies that may become obsolete. Avoid late adopters getting stuck with enormous costs.
- Define what we mean by **cost-effective**. Ensure this includes vulnerable residents and communities. Consider the role that affordability plays, as well as utility rates.
- In thinking about **local economic development**, include support for local businesses as well as potential of attracting new business.
- Important to include **youth perspectives/needs** to ensure the policy leads to good jobs and opportunities in Denver.
- Need **building education/awareness for building owners, managers and residents**. We need a campaign to educate folks on the policy and issues and role buildings play in solving the climate crisis, reduce fear of change, and change culture around what’s acceptable and doable. It should be ‘easy to be green.’ This includes having an accessible ‘portal’ with training and support for building owners and managers, and resources for residents.
- Need to define what we mean by **renewable energy**.
- Address compounding factors for building owners in **budgeting for new costs** – e.g. taxes, fixed costs.
- Helpful to ensure Denver’s policy is **integrated with statewide approaches**. Several Task Force members are closely engaged at the state level. Denver’s Buildings Team also consults closely with the CO Energy Office. The policy we develop may also be useful to inform a broader statewide approach.
- **Workforce training and labor standards** must be considered in an equitable building policy.
- Need to consider when will the **grid** be able to handle the full energy demand with renewables.
- Need to consider **nuanced interplay** between electrification, energy efficiency, renewable energy, and achieving net zero energy.

Clarifying Process – Decision Making, Work Groups, Schedule, Resources

Katrina and Ryan walked through the proposed Task Force structure and process (see pages 26-35 of the [presentation](#)), followed by group discussion regarding the following topics.

Decision Making. Councilman Clark in particular emphasized the importance of doing the work needed to reach consensus, i.e., working hard to understand and satisfy the relevant needs and interests. While the Charter provides a ‘fall back’ means of decision making if needed, Task Force recommendations will be strongest if they represent a full consensus.

Work Groups. Task Force members signed up to participate in the following work groups. Please contact Katrina Managan with any questions, concerns, or requests to add or change your participation.

Agenda Design Team (process only; help CBI and City staff design agendas/frame topics, starting Feb/March)	Equity Work Group (discuss/frame ideas for Task Force consideration, including Feb. Equity workshop)	Work Force Work Group (discuss/frame ideas for Task Force consideration throughout the process)	Climate Solutions Work Group (discuss/frame ideas for Task Force consideration; likely to start in March)
Jonathan Cappelli	Jennifer Gremmert	Stephen Shepard	Sergio Cordova
Stephen Shepard	Jonathan Cappelli	Jennie Gonzales	Jonathan Cappelli
	Ariana Gonzalez	Eddie Bustamante	Jennie Gonzales
	Monique M. Dyers	Sergio Cordova	Christine Brinker

	Aaron Martinez	Mike Kruger	Steve Morgan
	Eddie Bustamante	Jenny Willford (maybe)	Ariana Gonzalez
	Jenny Willford	Frank Arellano	Aaron Martinez
	Sergio Cordova		Celeste Cizik
	Angie Fletcher		Mike Kruger (maybe)
			Scott Prestidge

Resources. As listed in the Task Force Charter, a number of resources are available and being developed to support Task Force deliberations. These will be shared as relevant over the next several meetings.

Wrap Up & Next Steps

Homework

- By 2/1 – Review and share any edits to the Task Force Charter with Katrina Managan and Ryan Golten
- On-going – share suggestions/requests for technical resources to help inform Task Force decisions

Meeting Evaluation

Positive/build upon – small group discussions! (with sector-specific groups meeting first, then mixed groups)
Suggestions going forward – prioritize deliberation/decision-making at meetings (assume everyone will review materials and targeted pre-meeting questions); for background resources, use links rather than attachments

Meeting Attendees

The meeting was attended by the following Task Force members and City staff:

City of Denver – Office of Climate Action, Sustainability and Resilience

Grace Rink, Executive Director

Katrina Managan, Buildings Team and Task Force lead

Liz Babcock, Climate Action Team Manager

Amber Wood, Energy Program Administrator

Jan Keleher, Building Electrification Lead

Maria Thompson, Buildings Program Administrator

Jarrett Vigil, Buildings Intern

Task Force Members

Present			
x	Arellano	Frank	LBA Realty
x	Barstnar	Kathie	NAIOP Colorado
x	Brinker	Christine	Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP)
x	Buerge	Jon	Urban Villages
x	Bustamante	Eddie	LiUNA! Local 720
x	Cappelli	Jonathan	Neighborhood Development Collaborative
x	Cizik	Celeste	Group 14 Engineering
x	Clark	Jolon	Denver City Council District 7
x	Cordova	Sergio	Pipefitters Local Union No. 208
x	Dyers	Monique	Ensign Energy Consulting, LLC
x	Fletcher	Angela	Denver Housing Authority
x	Gonzales	Jennie	IBEW 68
x	Gonzalez	Ariana	Natural Resources Defense Council

x	Gremmert	Jennifer	Energy Outreach Colorado
x	Knaizer	Sam	BPX Energy, BP America
x	Kruger	Mike	Colorado Solar and Storage Association (COSSA)
x	Martinez	Aaron	Urban Land Conservancy
x	Mayhew	Amie	Colorado Hotel & Lodging Association
x	Morgan	Steve	Rocky Mountain Association of Energy Engineers
x	Muccio	Peter	Apartment Association of Metro Denver
x	Pace	Lori	Denver Metro Association of Realtors
x	Prestidge	Scott	Colorado Oil and Gas Association
x	Scheitler Smith	Kirk Tyler	Xcel Energy (<i>substitute for Jan mtg, due to extenuating circumstances</i>)
x	Shephard	Stephen	Denver Metro BOMA
x	Wilford	Jenny	Colorado Sierra Club