

# Feedback on the '15-'16 Clean Energy Partnership Work Plan

A summary of the survey of Energy Vision Advisory Committee (EVAC) members

May 6, 2015

## Introduction

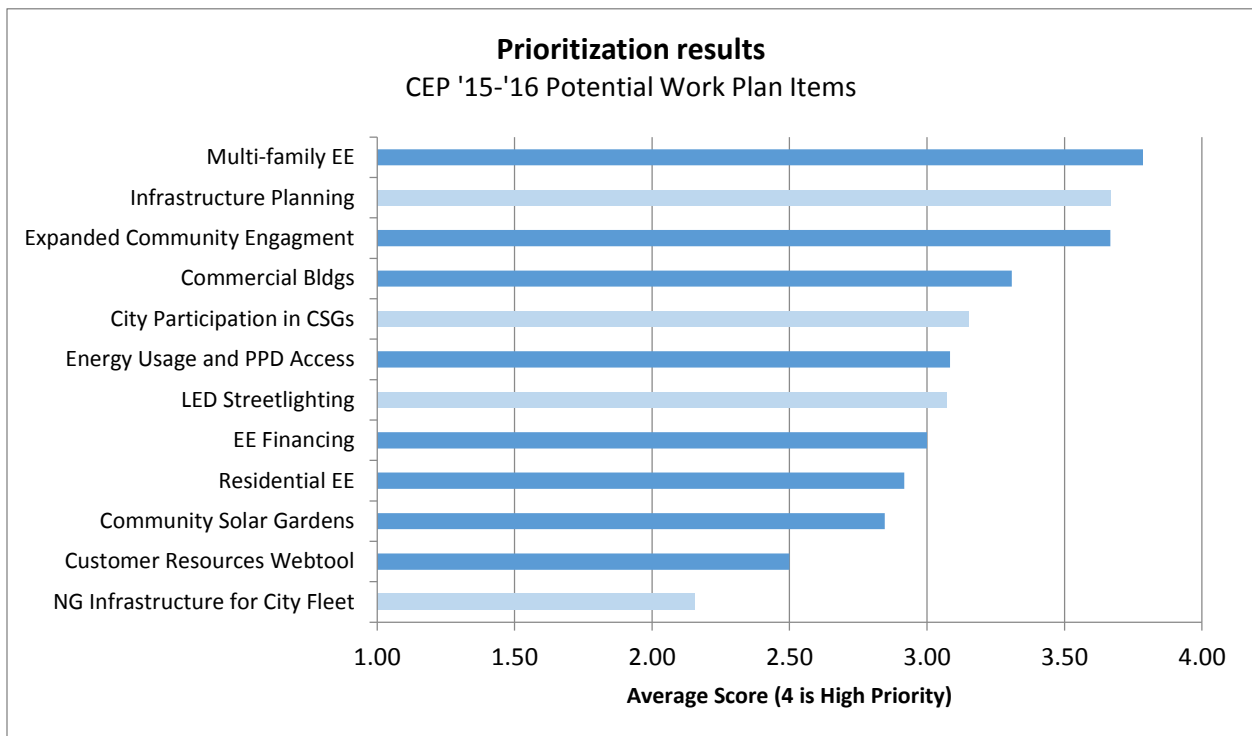
At their February 2015 meeting, the Minneapolis Clean Energy Partnership (CEP) Board adopted a set of [Potential Work Plan Items](#) to be reviewed by the Energy Vision Advisory Committee (EVAC). This list of potential items included high-priority items from the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan as well as the recommendations of the [Energy Pathways Study](#) and the [Memoranda of Understanding](#) between the City and Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy.

EVAC is charged with reviewing the Potential Work Plan Items and providing feedback to the CEP Board before the adoption of a final work plan. As part of the process of collecting this feedback, EVAC members were asked to complete a survey about all work plan items, and asked for ideas about additional work plan items. This document is a summary of how EVAC members prioritized the items, key themes drawn from the open-ended questions about each item, and a summary of the suggested additional ideas for the first Work Plan.

The full list of Potential Work Plan Items that EVAC provided feedback on is available here: <http://bit.ly/1IG4G56>

## Prioritization of Potential Work Plan Items

As part of the survey, EVAC members were asked to prioritize each potential item. The survey question was: "In your opinion, how should the Partnership prioritize this program?" Responses available were "Low", "Medium", "Medium-High" and "High". In the chart below, a score of 4 corresponds to a "High" response, while 1 corresponds to a response of "Low".



Items in light blue are city enterprise initiatives; darker blue are community initiatives.

## Potential Work Plan Items Feedback Themes

EVAC members were provided with three open-ended questions about each Potential Work Plan Item in the survey. Below are some key themes that were drawn from the responses to the survey questions, organized by Work Plan Item.

### Community Initiatives

#### Community Solar Gardens (Prioritization score: 2.85)

*What is the best role of the Clean Energy Partnership in relation to this item?*

- Make it accessible and affordable
- Work with community organizations
- Target residents
  - Who are not homeowners
  - Especially low-income
- Educate and market to general public and businesses
  - Incentivize community, neighborhood groups and businesses to participate
- City should be anchor tenant/primary subscriber
- Use program to meet the city's 10% local energy goal
- Create and advocate for consumer protections

*Are there any elements missing from the program design?*

- Support local ownership
- Subscription/buy-in rates – not prohibitive
- On-bill financing
- Required to meet workforce hiring and training goals to ensure that low-income and minority workers have a chance to benefit from economic development created by CSGs
- Clear language, easy to understand diagrams and graphics
- Multiple citywide initiatives designed by competent agencies and organizations
- Clear articulation of next steps
- Clear articulation of impact initiative has on overall reduction targets

*What challenges come with this program concept? How should they be overcome?*

- Developing a plan/subscription options affordable for all
- Ensuring awareness of residents who qualify for the program
- Make it easy to take advantage of solar energy

#### Energy Usage and Program Participation Data Access (Prioritization score: 3.08)

*What is the best role of the Clean Energy Partnership in relation to this item?*

- Aggregating, interpreting and disseminating data to various institutions/maximizing data sharing
- Make energy usage data as public and accessible as possible
- City and utilities approach and engage PUC as a united front
- Require transparency in all real estate transactions

*Are there any elements missing from the program design?*

- Building-specific data (where there are multiple rate payers)
- Tool to allow citizens to explore public energy data/use in their neighborhood
- Data should be made public; transparency

*What challenges come with this program concept? How should they be overcome?*

- Willingness to propose and advocate for the change to the PUC
- Translate data collection into positive chance for residents of all income levels
- Ensure data is as accessible and easily understandable as possible

## **Large Commercial Buildings Energy Efficiency** (Prioritization score: 3.31)

*What is the best role of the Clean Energy Partnership in relation to this item?*

- Identify ways to combine/package multiple EE programs and financing tools
- Provide best data and clean energy strategies to:
  - Help save energy dollars
  - Adapt to their infrastructure
  - Incentivize/support/facilitate improving EE practices and technologies
- Use city disclosure data to target inefficient buildings to help (not shame) them into improving EE
- Encourage participation by showing how much money can be saved
- Encourage them to pursue deep level retrofits/upgrade existing inefficient systems

*Are there any elements missing from the program design?*

- Encourage deep level retrofits
- Encourage or require large commercial entities to meet goals for hiring women and people of color

*What challenges come with this program concept? How should they be overcome?*

- Funding to:
  - Research to locate best practices, case studies, implementation and monitoring methods
  - Supplement technologies and systems needed to increase energy efficiencies in commercial sector
- New program design and resources to reach customers
- Code requirement for new construction to meet more stringent energy efficient requirements
- Ensure that commercial sites have concrete incentives to save energy

## **Multi-Family Energy Efficiency** (Prioritization score: 3.79)

*What is the best role of the Clean Energy Partnership in relation to this item?*

- Aggregating knowledge around implementing increased energy-efficient practices
- Focus on intersection of city policies and utility programs
- Engage community groups to recruit buildings into the program
- Require transparency on EUI or another similar metric
- Promotion and education
- Engage/aid both residents and landlords
- Monitor development of jointly-filed CIP; report on successes and challenges
- Work with community groups, credit unions and others to find way to include low-income renters

*Are there any elements missing from the program design?*

- Renters should know upfront the building's energy profile and consumption
  - Landlords should be required to disclose and post publicly total cost of housing (rent + utilities)
  - Landlords should be required to have an energy audit for licensure
- Renters should benefit from energy savings

*What challenges come with this program concept? How should they be overcome?*

- Landlords are stretched thin; should take advantage of energy saving programs
- Utilities should seek feedback from city and community partners on initial CIP program before filing an updated request for future years

### **Residential Energy Efficiency** (Prioritization score: 2.92)

*What is the best role of the Clean Energy Partnership in relation to this item?*

- Track and evaluation appropriateness of pilot
- Coordinate city outreach and utility outreach
- Actively market/promote program with neighborhood groups and community partners
  - Advertise in monthly utility statements
  - Advertise online
- Implement first in low-income and underserved neighborhoods/communities

*Are there any elements missing from the program design?*

- Measures to determine acceptable/unacceptable outcomes
- Provide free energy audits to qualified low-income residents
- Specific strategies to serve those who have historically been under-served (i.e., inefficient, low-income) by residential programs
- Description of “natural gas engagement strategies”
- Clear and transparent language

*What challenges come with this program concept? How should they be overcome?*

- Program too complicated
  - Provide simple, easy-to-understand examples that customers can relate to
  - Partner with Menards, Home Depot, others to give demonstrations on home improvements to make homes more efficient and that would qualify for utility rebates
- Utilities should collaborate on residential energy efficiency CIP filings
- Tracking data

### **Energy Efficiency Financing** (Prioritization score: 3.00)

*What is the best role of the Clean Energy Partnership in relation to this item?*

- On-bill financing/repayment
- Focus on financing programs that fall at the intersection of city policies and the utilities
- Show leadership and commitment to move this forward in a timely manner

*Are there any elements missing from the program design?*

- On-bill financing/repayment; funding sources available for all types of rate payers and types of properties
- Marketing plan rooted in equity and fairness, considering existing disparities (especially economic gap)

*What challenges come with this program concept? How should they be overcome?*

- City should be first organization considered as a possible lender for on-bill financing
- Other funding sources: credit unions, other groups

### **Expanded Community Engagement for Partnership Initiatives** (Prioritization score: 3.67)

*What is the best role of the Clean Energy Partnership in relation to this item?*

- Identify funding and enable coordination
- Actively partner with community organizations and neighborhood associations
  - Equip organizations and community leaders with correct information and support networks

*Are there any elements missing from the program design?*

- Target areas that have high per capita energy use and poverty rates, low past participation in programs

*What challenges come with this program concept? How should they be overcome?*

- Utilities have siloed programs that do not integrate with city or community-based organizing
  - Identify and financially support an organizing effort that has sophistication on energy issues and experience reaching city residents/businesses
- Too many programs can be confusing to the public
  - Create a catchy phrase, such as “My Minneapolis”, that would encompass all energy initiatives
  - Involve local artist community to provide inspiration to make community engage cool

#### **Customer Resources Webtool** (Prioritization score: 2.50)

*What is the best role of the Clean Energy Partnership in relation to this item?*

- Update and expand resources frequently
- Ensure webtool:
  - Works properly, is easy to navigate, is readily accessible, and is being used
  - Can be used on mobile devices

*Are there any elements missing from the program design?*

- Offer the webtool in multiple languages
- Accessible by mobile devices

*What challenges come with this program concept? How should they be overcome?*

- Making webtool as broadly accessible and usable as possible
- Keeping up with changing technology and programs
- Website might not get enough traffic
  - Include with Xcel and CenterPoint bills
- Many city residents are not computer-literate or don't have good access to online resources

## **City Enterprise Initiatives**

#### **City Participation in Community Solar Gardens** (Prioritization score: 3.15)

*What is the best role of the Clean Energy Partnership in relation to this item?*

- Utilities and City work together to select developers that propose to City's RFP(s)
- Educate general public and businesses on benefits of CSGs and how to participate
- City should promote Xcel projects that increase community usage of solar and other renewable
- Collaborate to make City's CSG effort as big and innovate as possible
- Mandatory inclusionary practices as pertains to MBE/WBI and Vets on both contracting and employment side of developer
- City should lead on community solar gardens

*Are there any elements missing from the program design?*

- Focus on equity hiring for construction, project development, and potential subscribers
- Simple, easy to understand diagrams and graphics depicting what CSGs look like and explaining how they work
- Easy to access opportunities to become CSG subscribers at a low or no upfront cost
- Plan that will make sure that there is local workforce, included along with MBE/WBE/Vet participation

*What challenges come with this program concept? How should they be overcome?*

- CSG subscription outreach in multiple languages and focus on low-income communities
- City should require a portion of city-subscribed solar gardens be located in the City

## **Discussion of Infrastructure Planning and Economic Development** (Prioritization score: 3.67)

*What is the best role of the Clean Energy Partnership in relation to this item?*

- Use infrastructure outreach endeavors as opportunities to update residents about other programs
- Ensure that when the City digs up a street or redevelops a property, infrastructure is laid to enable substantial energy savings and GHG reductions
- Coordinate discussions and identifying/directing staff to coordinate
  - Determine priorities in negotiation where utility and City priorities conflict
- Promote meetings outside of same group of people who tend to participate in civic engagement and neighborhood activities
- Work with community organizations who work in city planning and infrastructure in an equitable way
- Ensure city infrastructure are models of conservatism, and that all departments are charge with a mandate for reduction

*Are there any elements missing from the program design?*

- Public needs a better understanding of the needs of our aging infrastructure, as well as the promise that grid modernization can bring
- Community engagement to determine priorities
- Discussions on infrastructure, planning and economic development should be highly-publicized, open and transparent

*What challenges come with this program concept? How should they be overcome?*

- Public education
  - Might best be done by outside organization that understands these issues
  - City council members will also be important to adequately fund mandates
- Reluctance by utilities to embrace new infrastructure, training programs

## **LED Street lighting** (Prioritization score: 3.07)

*What is the best role of the Clean Energy Partnership in relation to this item?*

- Getting it accomplished in a short time frame/by the end of 2016

*Are there any elements missing from the program design?*

- Speed

*What challenges come with this program concept? How should they be overcome?*

- [no identifiable common theme]

## **Natural Gas Infrastructure for City Fleet** (Prioritization score: 2.15)

*What is the best role of the Clean Energy Partnership in relation to this item?*

- Researching best practices, case studies and other technologies
- Convert their fleets first as a test pilot program to determine viability
- Confirm cost benefit of a natural gas infrastructure/fleet with dollar amounts for an estimated GHG and other pollutant reductions per ton

*Are there any elements missing from the program design?*

- Supporting scientific data

*What challenges come with this program concept? How should they be overcome?*

- Cost difficult to justify
- Lack of understanding regarding the technology and potential for an alternative solution

## Potential new ideas for the '15-'16 Work Plan

EVAC members were given the opportunity to submit ideas for new programs or concepts that were not included in the Potential Work Plan Items adopted by the Board.

The responses received were organized into three groups:

1. Responses that included items appropriate for inclusion as new programs or concepts in '15-'16
2. Responses that dealt with how the Clean Energy Partnership carries out its work, or metrics that could be used to track progress
3. Responses that included items that were deemed by the Planning Team as beyond the scope of the Partnership. For each of these items, the planning team has provided a brief description of why they made this determination in parentheses.

### Items that could be appropriate for inclusion as a new program or concept

1. Electric vehicle adoption and charging infrastructure
2. Small Commercial Energy Efficiency program, possibly modeled on Lake Street Coaching Program
3. Pass-through tariff for municipal electricity purchases & RFP for projects if necessary
4. District energy program for large redevelopment/infill – consider using Prospect North redevelopment as a pilot
5. Capturing more energy through small hydro on the Mississippi
6. Thermal imaging flyover of the city to aid targeting of community organizing
7. Residential asset rating/benchmarking score made available to buyers at time of sale

### Items related to how the Partnership works/metrics to measure progress

1. Explore policy levers/city regulatory authority
2. Shrink disparities
3. Clean up pollution in EJ neighborhoods
4. Work towards equitable participation in programs
5. Workforce development in energy efficiency/climate action industries, especially target unemployed, underemployed, women, and communities of color
6. Metrics, benchmarks and targets by sector
7. City should use local developers for acquisition of community solar
8. Green Zones concept
9. Clear evaluation and communication of initiatives (reporting?)
10. Possible metrics (from one respondent):
  - a. Track energy (kWh or therms)
  - b. Track GHG emissions
  - c. Track dollars (bills, wages, within/outside Minneapolis)
  - d. Track employment
  - e. Track participation rate, touches, how reached across city, utility, and all contractors. Something as robust as the Voter Activation Network
  - f. By Ward, income, ethnicity, RCI, age of building, per capita
  - g. % renewable energy and MW equivalent served for municipal use and all user economic activity generated by partnership activities, dollars, WHERE,
  - h. energy savings generated by partnership activities, by geography
  - i. Track % and \$ of energy dollars, e.g. what percent of \$1 spent on energy by a Minneapolis resident stays within the city
  - j. Implementation rate for recommendations/workplan

### Items that are beyond the scope of the Partnership

1. Creating a tiered utility pricing structure based on household income (This is a major change to utility rate structures and would likely require state legislation as well as significant action by the Public Utilities Commission.)

2. Energy non-use incentives paid for avoiding energy-consuming appliances altogether. Example: people who do not have air conditioning at all versus those who purchase slightly more efficient versions. (This would entail a wholly new approach to the State's Conservation Improvement Program. It would likely require legislative action as well as significant action by the Public Utilities Commission.)