Community Energy Strategic Planning
Better Buildings Alliance

Step 2
Identify and Engage Stakeholders
Community Energy Strategic Planning Process

1. Form Leadership Team
2. Identify & Engage Stakeholders
3. Develop an Energy Vision
4. Assess the Current Energy Profile
5. Develop Energy Goal & Strategies
6. Identify & Prioritize Actions
7. Put Together a Financing Strategy
8. Develop a Blueprint for Implementation
9. Plan to Evaluate
10. Adopt & Publicize
Developing a stakeholder outreach strategy is typically the first item of business for the Leadership Team.

The Plan Manager and Leadership Team will want to allow 4-6 weeks to create and launch a stakeholder engagement strategy. The engagement itself will continue throughout the energy planning process.
As you identify specific people or organizations, think about how they may fill general categories of stakeholders. The Stakeholder Matrix Template included at the end of this chapter can help organize your search. The completed matrix that follows provides examples of groups within each category to consider.
Discover Your Government Stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Areas of Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buildings &amp; Facilities</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Public Works</td>
<td>City Fleet Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing &amp; Neighborhood Development</td>
<td>Waste and Recycling Dept.</td>
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<tr>
<td>School District Facility Manager</td>
<td>Parks &amp; Rec: bike path mgmt.</td>
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</tbody>
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**Elected Officials and Their Policy Staff**

- Who among potential stakeholders are perceived to be allies? Who is important to engage that may be harder to convince?

- Who are the strongest local leaders – those who speak for or motivate the primary audience for CESP activities (e.g., government staff, community members)? Who are the gatekeepers – those who can facilitate or prevent access to the primary audience?

- What political and civic authority do potential stakeholders and governing bodies have – who has the authority and ability to shape the plan and its outcomes?

- Who has the ability and resources to help implement the plan once it is created?

- Who are the non-local stakeholders that would be useful to engage? Whatever strategies are adopted, they will be implemented within the context of existing regional and state-wide energy strategies. To better understand the energy-related policies and programs that exist at those levels, include representatives from the State Energy Office and any county or regional planning offices.
## Discover Your Community-Wide Stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Areas of Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category</strong></td>
<td><strong>Buildings &amp; Facilities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Community Energy Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-governmental</td>
<td>Low-Income Advocates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions</td>
<td>Local Hospital System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Utilities: electric &amp; fuel</strong></td>
<td>Energy Service Companies (ESCOs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Interests</td>
<td>Environmental Groups (Sierra Club, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Elected Officials and Their Policy Staff**
Many large planning efforts establish advisory committees or task forces of local “experts” to inform various aspects of the planning or represent various constituencies.

While engaging stakeholders, keep an eye out for groups who may be effective partners in the planning effort. Partnerships can broaden the reach of the planning process, provide additional support, and add credibility.

As the process moves forward, working groups can help dive deeper into certain aspects of the plan.

Be sure to also include the media in the outreach planning. Good media coverage, guided by real stories of the ways energy planning can affect local concerns, is invaluable to establishing broad support for the process and motivating stakeholders to get involved.

Like any public process, there will likely be critics of the CESP effort. The most effective tactics to engage these parties in a positive manner are the same as those used with supporters – find a way to understand their specific concerns and motivations, and
Stakeholder Engagement Example – Baltimore, MD

- 21 member Sustainability Commission
- 6 Working Groups
  - 12-20 subject area experts
  - Met 4-8 times to scope for challenges and opportunities
- 30+ Sustainability Ambassadors
  - Volunteers trained to communicate plan process and gather feedback
  - Attended 35+ Community meetings
- Youth Involvement
  - 20 members of Youth Advisory Group
- Open Houses
- Online Draft Posting
  - 300+ comments received
Good media coverage, guided by real stories of the ways energy planning can affect local concerns, is invaluable to establishing broad support for the process and motivating stakeholders to get involved.

Like any public process, there will likely be critics of the CESP effort. The most effective tactics to engage these parties in a positive manner are the same as those used with supporters – find a way to understand their specific concerns and motivations, and then lay out how a solid planning effort can speak to their interests.

While stakeholders may have opinions and ideas at any stage of the planning process, obtaining their input and help will be most valuable when:

• Building support for the plan (early and throughout).
• Creating a future energy vision (Step 3).
• Understanding what has already been accomplished (Step 4).
• Gathering ideas for actions, strategies, resources, and funding (Steps 6 & 7).
• Prioritizing ideas (Step 6).
• Identifying potential resources and partners for implementation (Steps 7 & 8).

Maximizing Stakeholder Value

- Include media in outreach planning
- Engage potential critics early
- Map out right timing for each type of interaction
- Identify associated needs and resources
- Formally plan meetings – keep scopes focused on discrete objectives
- Coordinate ongoing communication to keep stakeholders looped in
### Step 2: Tips & Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tips</th>
<th>Tools</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Clearly define the role of each stakeholder</td>
<td>• Stakeholder matrix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consider teaming up with your public affairs staff, and/or finding inexpensive help from interns or local students</td>
<td>• Invitation to participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stakeholder meeting agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Appendix of engagement strategies</td>
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