



Boulder's Energy Future: Developing a Clean Energy Plan

Proposed Public Scoping Process / September – October 2010

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During the past several months, City Council has discussed the need to develop a clear strategy for achieving a clean energy future. Between now and November, city staff plan to engage Boulder residents, businesses and key stakeholders in shaping the scope of work.

The **PURPOSE** of the proposed "scoping process" will be to:

- 1 **Provide information** for key stakeholders and the public about why we are engaging in this effort, how it relates to the franchise discussions with Xcel and the Climate Action Plan, and what it might mean to them and to Boulder's future.
- 2 **Facilitate dialog** regarding the upcoming planning process, the scope of work for that process, and issues related to achieving a clean energy future, including the key questions we hope to answer through the planning effort.
- 3 **Get input and feedback** regarding specific aspects of the proposed study, including preliminary objectives, proposed process and schedule, key topics for analysis, and potential representatives for both the currently proposed Community Steering Committee and National Experts Panel.
- 4 **Engage institutional partners** that may want to collaborate on the planning process and its outcomes, including the County, CU, the federal labs, BVSD, and others.

The **COMPONENTS** of the proposed scoping process will include:

- **Targeted focus groups with key stakeholder representatives**, including but not limited to large utility customers; recognized local experts from CU, the labs and other organizations; small and medium size businesses; environmental groups; neighborhood associations; affordable housing groups; faith-based and school-based groups; and community advocates.
- **Community-wide open house events** to provide an opportunity for the general public to learn about the project and give input. These may be co-hosted with some of the stakeholder groups and potential partners listed above.
- **City website, Twitter feed and YouTube video** to provide up-to-date information and create additional input and feedback opportunities.
- **Farmer's Market booth** and similar venues to distribute printed information and encourage public participation, including potential distribution of information through schools.

Early Thinking re: A Clean Energy Planning Process

The scoping process will provide opportunities for structured “brainstorming” regarding the Clean Energy Plan’s development as well as more targeted review and input on specific topics. Topics where initial thoughts may be presented with the opportunity for input, feedback and refinement are listed below:

Process **OBJECTIVES** may include:

- *Draw on the knowledge of leading experts* to help define realistic clean energy options that are technically, financially and legally feasible.
- *Develop the most reliable data possible* to inform decision making regarding Boulder’s local energy supply and trade-offs between alternative scenarios.
- *Focus on renewables* to achieve the maximum feasible level of “decarbonization” while ensuring reliability, long-term affordability and price stability.
- *Ensure a public-centric process*, involving key stakeholders and partners as well as Boulder residents and businesses, to review study results, evaluate options, and determine the most viable and desirable path forward.
- *Create a viable strategy* that achieves community-defined objectives, appropriately balances trade-offs, and is widely understood and supported.
- *Be quick about it*, ensuring a timely and efficient process as well as flexibility to make near-term decisions as information becomes available and opportunities arise.
- *Inform a decision by Council* related to Boulder’s energy future, with the aim of presenting a preferred option to Boulder voters in November 2012.

QUESTIONS to explore and analyze might include but are certainly not limited to:

- **Energy Demand**
 - What is our current and projected energy profile?*
 - How much energy is “lost” between generation and use?*
 - How much can we realistically lower energy demand through efficiency improvements?*
 - What happens if everyone drives electric vehicles?*
- **Local Generation Opportunities**
 - How much distributed generation can be supported by the grid?*
 - What is the cost of local solar generation vs. other options in the near-term and long-term?*
 - What other distributed renewable technologies are on the horizon?*
 - What might changes in energy generation mean for how we plan and manage the city, especially if there is more generation within or close to the urban area?*
- **Aggregated Energy Purchases**
 - What would be the cost of procuring a “renewable energy portfolio,” both now and in the future?*
 - What would “the mix” be and how might it shift over time?*
 - What are the potential sources for those purchases? Are there potential purchasing partners?*
- **System Capacity, Integrity and Reliability**
 - What is the quality of the local transmission and distribution system?*
 - What reliability issues are there currently? How might those change in the future?*

What does implementation of the smart grid mean in terms of local energy efficiency programs, system reliability, distributed generation, new technology opportunities, and long-term maintenance costs? What kind of back up power supply will be needed at different levels of renewable generation? How technically feasible is that and at what cost?

➤ **Cost and Rate Impacts**

What would be the potential rate impacts of alternative scenarios, both near-term and long-term? How do those rate projections compare to alternative scenarios that rely on fossil fuels and potential price increases for coal and natural gas? How much are Boulder rate payers willing to bear to achieve renewable energy goals?

➤ **Legal and Legislative Hurdles**

What policies or laws might need to change in order to achieve specific outcomes? How realistic are those changes? How would they occur and how long will they take?

Process **STRUCTURE** could include:

- An ongoing and robust **public participation program** to provide information, review work products and get public input on options and desired outcomes.
- A **Consultant Team** hired through a competitive RFP process based on the scope of work defined through the scoping process and direction from council.
- Convene a **Community Steering Committee** to oversee the participation process, provide review and input on consultant work products, engage with the National Experts Panel, and provide recommendations as needed. The CSC would include representation from key stakeholders. The public scoping process will include an opportunity to define the groups that should be represented.
- A **National Experts Panel** convened at key points in the process to inform the scope of work, review consultant work products and respond to questions posed by staff, council and the CSC. The scoping process will provide an opportunity to identify potential panel members.
- An **Integrated Staff Team** to ensure appropriate representation of all partners and skill areas, provide staff-level review of consultant work products, prepare materials for public review and input, facilitate the public process and keep key decision making bodies informed regarding the project's progress and outcomes.

The process **TIMELINE** might look something like:

<i>Dec 2010 – Jan 2011</i>	Develop and refine the Request for Proposals (RFP)
<i>Jan – Mar 2011</i>	Release RFP and select consultant team
<i>Apr – Jun 2011</i>	Phase 1: analyze base data and define options
<i>Jul – Oct 2011</i>	Phase 2: evaluate and refine options
<i>Nov 2011 – Jan 2012</i>	Phase 3: select preferred option
<i>Feb – May 2012</i>	Phase 4: prepare and refine strategic plan based on preferred option
<i>Jun – Aug 2012</i>	Phase 5: final public approval process and potential ballot language
<i>Nov 2012</i>	Vote on the approved plan and its implementation