



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT THE CHICAGO BUILDING
DECARBONIZATION WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT**

"I'm excited to hit the ground running with these recommendations," said Emily Purcell, Working Group Member and Sustainability Lead at Solomon Cordwell Buenz. "Chicago's design and construction community are ready to build to a higher standard of climate performance. The Working Group put a great deal of effort into setting ambitious targets as well as strategies to make them achievable on the ground."

"It's a known fact that there are health disparities by zip code and that the doorways to green collar jobs aren't fully open in an equitable way from a training, education, and opportunity perspective to all Chicagoans," said Patricia Lloyd, Working Group Member and Director of Sustainability at Leopardo Companies, Inc. "By approaching the Chicago Decarbonization plan with a lens on leading with equity, the City of Chicago, Elevate Energy, NRDC, American Cities Climate Challenge, and the working group members had an incredible opportunity to not only put in place concrete plans to measurably reduce the city's carbon emissions from the built environment but also to further open these doors and help to create equity and opportunity at the same time."

"The current way we heat our homes and businesses is bad for the climate, our health, and is increasingly unaffordable for broad swaths of Chicago," said Abe Scarr, Working Group Member and Director at Illinois PIRG. "Through energy efficiency, building electrification, and thoughtful forward planning we have an opportunity to improve the well-being and economic security of all Chicagoans. While there will be challenges along the way, those are best met by convening diverse stakeholder perspectives as Mayor Lightfoot did with the Building Decarbonization Working Group."

"The City of Chicago building decarbonization recommendations not only will reduce pollution but are key to equitably improving the health and resiliency of every Chicago neighborhood," said Brian Imus, Working Group Member and Executive Director at Illinois Green Alliance. "Even more meaningfully, these recommendations



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



are truly community-based thanks to the inclusive and innovative working group process that considered perspectives from so many different stakeholders.”

“As we here at Loyola Chicago implement our Climate Action Plan towards carbon neutrality and climate justice, I support the City of Chicago’s report on decarbonizing our built environment and engaging all Chicagoans toward a clean and just transition,” said Aaron Durnbaugh, Working Group Member and Director of Sustainability at Loyola University Chicago.

“Chicago has demonstrated leadership by engaging a wide-ranging group of experts and community members to develop a solid list of recommendations,” said Jeannette LeZaks, Working Group Member and Director of Research and Innovation at Slipstream. “It was inspiring to see the process unfold from initial ideas and brainstorming to a well-defined path toward building decarbonization. The recommendations build upon and expand existing efforts happening around the City and position Chicago to effectively and equitably advance climate change solutions.”

“It is imperative that we center equity in every conversation around sustainability, circular economies, and decarbonizing our infrastructure,” said Jonathan Pereira, Working Group Member and Executive Director at Plant Chicago. “Too often the most vulnerable and marginalized people are left out. This plan is an excellent and necessary first step to ensure that all residents of Chicago will benefit in the transition away from fossil fuels.”

“Many have suggested that electrification of cold climates is difficult,” said Luke Leung, Working Group Member and Sustainable Engineering Studio Director at SOM. “Anchoring the Northern Midwest climate, Chicago’s bold move to decarbonize through electrification can inspire what is possible, along the legacy of a city that is known for its innovation through Chicagoans collaborating together.”

“Chicago’s Building Decarbonization Strategy is a long time coming and has come to fruition with intentional leaders and members,” said Linda Sanchez, founder of Green Chicago Real Estate. “I look forward to rolling up my sleeves, with an eye toward sustainable affordable housing, to meet and exceed the goals necessary for Chicago to decarbonize all buildings equitably.”

“Carbon Free Chicago, a coalition of professionals committed to building decarbonization, values the work of the Building Decarbonization Working Group in bringing an environmental justice lens to our Common Agenda — a campaign to encourage the private sector to embrace building decarbonization to accelerate the passage of more progressive building codes,” said Doug Farr, Working Group Member and President at Farr Associates.



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



“At LUCHA, many residents live paycheck to paycheck making reducing utility costs and thus housing costs the primary reason for pursuing energy efficiency,” said Charlene Andreas, Working Group Member and Director of Affordable Housing at LUCHA. “At a larger, macro level, it is important to address the impact our use and reliance on fossil fuels has on the global economy and various markets, which further restrict our residents’ ability to live on a limited income. And of course, we always have an eye on air quality, both indoor and outdoor, and the relationship that has on the health of our residents, which is another cost impact. We support all measures — in particular, those pushing building decarbonization to reach all communities as outlined in the report.”

“Powering Chicago, the labor-management partnership between the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 134 and the Electrical Contractors’ Association of Chicago and Cook County, is proud to stand in support of the City’s Building Decarbonization Working Group as we look for ways to provide a greener future for Chicagoans,” said Elbert Walters III, Director of Powering Chicago. “The unionized electrical industry is deeply committed to a cleaner tomorrow by providing the expert contractors and the skilled workforce that are able to meet the growing demand of renewable energy components, such as solar systems, battery storage systems, electrical vehicle charger systems, and more. Powering Chicago’s contractors and union electricians stand ready to meet the City’s goal of powering 100% of buildings citywide with renewable energy by 2035.”

“I am so proud of our city and architectural community coming together to tackle our building emissions,” said Chyanne Husar, AIA, Principal at HUS Architecture and member of the AIA Small Firm Exchange/Small Project Design Knowledge community. “What’s even more exciting is the way we’ll be able to utilize these solutions to bring equality to our disadvantaged communities. I am looking forward to being a part of these monumental changes through our work at HUSarchitecture in partnership with the AIA Small Firm Exchange/Small Project Design Knowledge Community, IL Green, and with the rest of our Chicago neighbors.”

“The benefits of healthier and more efficient buildings are massive,” said Valeria Rincon, Project Partner and Clean Energy Fellow at NRDC. “Chicago’s buildings have to be weaned off gas and transition to cheaper, cleaner energy sources, especially in communities where energy bills are a big part of a family’s budget.”

“At Blacks in Green and frontline organizations across America, Black and Brown ratepayers have been the heat and light organized to usher in this new energy age — marked by the end of energy poverty,” said Naomi Davis, Founder and Executive Director of Blacks In Green. “Thanks to active listening and leadership in the Office of Sustainability, Chicago is prepared to prioritize funding to communities traditionally



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



denied life essential services — such as affordable, reliable, safe, and clean energy — and to deliver fuel switching essentials of auditing, weatherizing, and upgrading homes. Our communities are overdue to benefit from the full power of the new generation high performance and efficient clean energy systems. And our Black Energy Justice Campaign is here to partner to ensure the just transition of decarbonization happens with the infrastructure, interconnections, appliances, training, employment, and financing that will rebuild the wealth of our communities. “

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