

Instructions to reviewers

As you read, consider the following questions ...

- Should we recommend a single tag line for the citywide education and media campaign or feed forward several options?
- Given the results of the community workshops, what needs to be added, subtracted, or changed?
- What else needs to be fed forward to the Implementation Recommendations?
- Is the language clear?
- Does it work to have so many bulleted lists or do we need more text instead?—Clearly, Carl’s answer was not. Thanks for the work you did to create so much narrative instead.
- This is written as a set of recommendations to city government. Does it work to omit recommendations to other players (community organizations, residents, businesses, etc.)?

Chapter __ Community Engagement Strategy

Boston is ready to adopt bold goals for climate action that will reduce the city’s greenhouse gas emissions and prepare the city for sea-level rise and other effects of climate change. No one component of the Boston community—individuals, businesses, institutions, government—can achieve these goals for the city by acting alone. All must participate.

Climate change is not part of the daily lives of most people, nor of the regular business of most organizations. Climate action will require people and organizations to adopt new behaviors and new ways of thinking, which, in the long-term, can only be sustained when there are community-wide shifts in the norms that guide how we live and use resources.

To achieve these shifts, the Boston community, with the leadership of city government, must reach out to all its members by:

- Recognizing the need for community-wide responsibility
- Engaging at all levels of social organization, from individuals, to non-profit organizations, businesses, institutions, neighborhoods, and, finally, the city as a whole.
- Emphasizing the relationships between climate change and health, quality of life, community well-being, and economic vitality
- Showing many different and appropriate ways that residents, businesses, and institutions can begin to take action.
- Establishing clear, broadly understood goals—for overall city-wide change and for smaller components—against which progress is measured.

The recommendations for a community engagement strategy described in this report put those general principles in a more concrete form. The recommendations are directed to Boston City Government as the central catalyst—but by no means the only catalyst—for community-wide change. They call for an active, ongoing partnership between City Hall, community-based organizations, businesses, and individual residents.

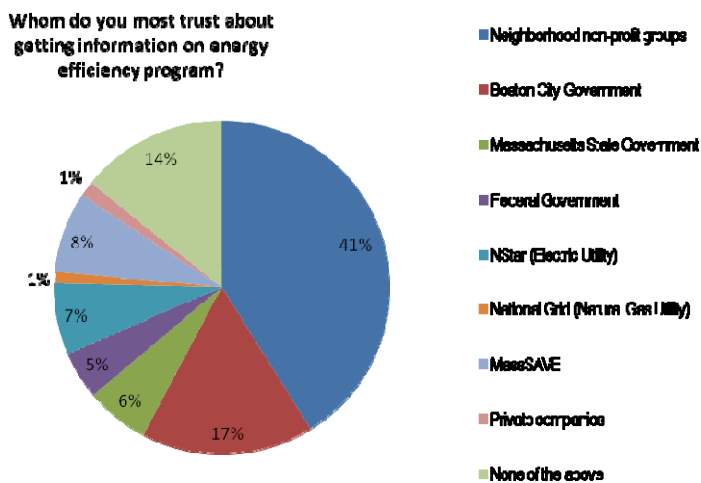
A five-element engagement strategy

Boston City Government should facilitate the engagement of the Boston community in climate action by adopting a strategy organized around five interlocking elements:

1. Partner with community organizations to promote climate action at the neighborhood level.
2. Encourage community involvement in policy development, program planning, and assessment.
3. Support a citywide awareness campaign that frames climate action in the context of broad community concerns, informs people about climate action, and motivates them to act
4. Equip individuals to take action and influence their peers
5. Continue to lead by example

Partner with community organizations to promote climate action at the neighborhood level.

Boston is a city of neighborhoods, each with its own traditions, vulnerabilities to climate change, and particular opportunities and challenges for climate action. Community organizations and networks typically have detailed knowledge of their communities and ongoing working relationships. Many work on a range of issues that are or could easily be linked to climate action. Neighborhood nonprofit groups are considered by many to be the most trustworthy sources of information (polling at the community workshops placed government sources in second place). They can be valuable partners to ensure that climate action policies and programs are effective street by street.



Boston City Government can take several steps to make these partnerships more effective. These include:

- Working with community groups and neighborhood networks to develop local priorities and identify sustainable funding sources for climate action
- Partnering actively with community groups and neighborhood networks to “green” local public institutions (e.g., schools, libraries)
- Facilitating communication among residents, businesses, government and organizations in neighborhoods and citywide to coordinate action and share information, strategies, lessons learned and best practices
- Sharing public campaign materials for all media (see below)
- Acknowledging the work of local residents, businesses, organizations, and networks
- Visibly involving community organizations in implementation of programs
- Creating incentives for collective participation in climate action (for example, a “Gold Star Neighborhood” designation when a certain percentage of the neighborhood has acted)
- Adding climate action to the portfolio of city liaisons to neighborhoods

Encourage community involvement in ongoing policy development, program planning, and assessment at the city, state, and federal levels

All segments of the community need to participate in the development, implementation, and assessment of Boston’s climate action policies and programs to ensure that everyone can participate and benefit.

An advisory committee of 10 to 12 members, including business, institutional, and neighborhood leaders and technical experts, should meet publicly at least twice a year to review Boston’s climate action progress and plans. To allow both this committee and the entire community to understand clearly what is being done, Boston City Government should develop specific, concrete citywide and neighborhood-based indicators and targets to gauge the progress of all climate action policies and programs and their impact on Boston’s residents, businesses and neighborhoods.

As the mitigation and adaptation chapters of this report make clear, the Boston community and its government can take major steps in reducing its greenhouse gas emissions and in preparing for the consequences of climate change. As those chapters also make clear, many of the policies and programs essential for successful climate action in Boston are under the jurisdiction of state, regional, and federal authorities—for example, control of the public transit system. It is the responsibility of all segments of the Boston community to be forceful advocates with their representatives and other officials at those levels of government for policies and programs that support the climate action goals of the Boston community.

Support a citywide awareness campaign that frames climate action in the context of broad community concerns, informs people about climate action, and motivates them to act ¹

Clear, compelling, and frequently repeated messages are key to producing long-term shifts in thought and behavior. Boston City Government, local communications media, organizations that control major advertising venues, and local media professionals must work together to develop and sustain a citywide awareness campaign that communicates, through messages and images, the risks and benefits of climate change and inform people how to take action, where to find resources, and how to track progress

The core message of the campaign must clearly link climate action to a broad range of community concerns, such as health, quality of life, community well-being, and economic vitality. This overall message must be supplemented by messages customized for specific constituencies determined by, for example, age, ethnic group, faith, or business, (See Appendix for examples of possible campaign messages.)

The climate action messages must be delivered through a long-term, multi-lingual, multi-cultural public campaign. In addition to employing traditional media such as news coverage and advertising on MBTA, posters, television, radio, and billboards, the campaign should:

- Reach out to youth (e.g., through school-based projects, sponsoring poster contests, etc.)
- Involve local sports teams and performers
- Find ways to employ new social media (for example, Facebook, Twitter) and other new media (for example, Iphone “apps”)
- Highlight stories of ordinary people taking actions that matter (e.g., on-line digital stories, face-to-face storytelling projects)

Equip individuals to take action and influence their peers

As community engagement motivates individuals to take action, they must have the tools and information needed to take action. Otherwise, motivation will turn to frustration, a feeling that can be as contagious in a neighborhood as commitment. On the other hand, successful action creates momentum and new norms—a new sense of what’s “normal” in how we use energy and resources, how we dispose of waste, and how we move around the city.

The opportunities and resources presented by the many climate action policies and programs of Boston City Government alone – not to mention other resources – will create a bewildering array of information for residents and businesses unfamiliar with this subject. Therefore, the primary tool that Boston City Government must supply is well organized information. Today, that means, above all, an easily accessible, multilingual website. The website should be organized by type of actor (for example, resident, business, and so on) and provide specific recommendations for action and links to sources of assistance. The website should also include interactive features that allow users to ask questions, share ideas, seek encouragement, and discuss problems, and tools to track individual and communitywide progress. Libraries, schools, community health centers, and

¹ In 2009, the City of Boston sponsored the contest “Get a Little Greener” contest to generate ideas for a citywide media and education campaign. The design of this recommended citywide media and education campaign builds on the work of contest winner and CAC member, Jess Lerner, of Green on the Inside.

other neighborhood institutions could also serve as climate information centers. And, Boston City Government could open a Climate Hotline or provide information through existing constituent services mechanisms.

Education, in its many forms, is a central way to equip individuals with the tools they need. Boston City Government should sponsor workshops and other face-to-face events to build the skills and nurture the network of climate actors from across Boston. Because climate action is a project that will extend to the next generation and beyond, it is particularly important that climate change and climate action also enter the curriculum of our schools. As efficiency and other climate measures continue to take concrete form in Boston's schools, the buildings themselves will teach. And the large and energetic participation during this planning process at the community workshop for teens showed that Boston's young people are ready to engage with this topic.

Continue to lead by example

Successful public engagement will foster climate leaders at all levels of the community, and Boston City Government has a unique and important role to play. Therefore, Boston City Government must not only establish good policies and programs that will help the community as a whole take effective climate action. It must set a prime example through its internal operations and through the visible behavior of City workers.

Mayor Menino's 2007 executive order on climate action and his 2008 executive order on greening municipal operations have already set a high standard for municipal operations—standards of which all Bostonians can be proud. The mitigation section of this report makes recommendations for additional steps specific to municipal buildings, transportation, energy sources, and other areas. From the perspective of the public engagement strategy, it is important that, to the greatest possible extent, municipal climate action projects should be visible in prominent locations to inform and inspire people in every neighborhood of the city.

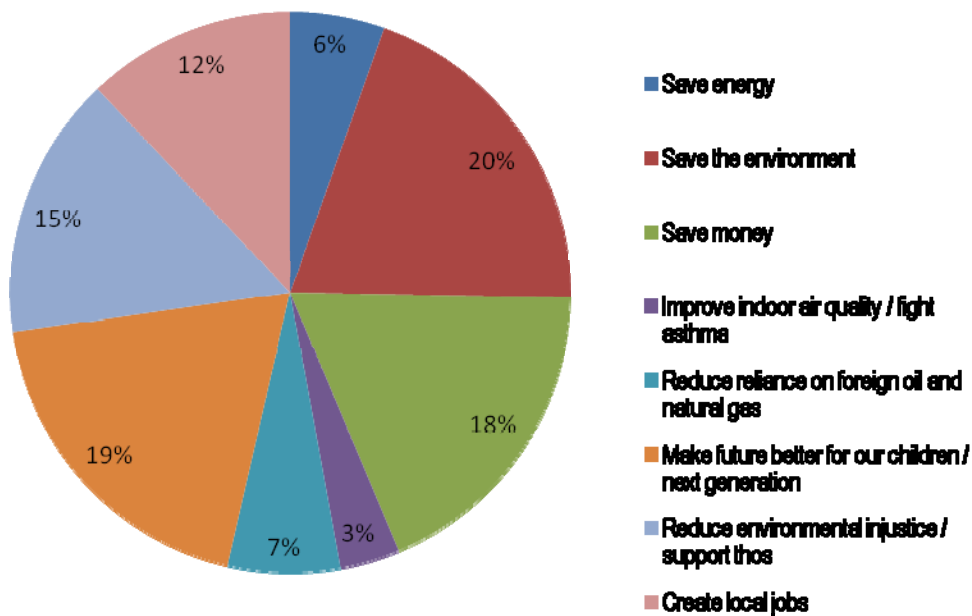
It is also important the City workers be models of climate action. All City staff, particularly those in most regular contact with the neighborhoods—for example, staff in the Office of Neighborhood Services, the Office of New Bostonians, Main Streets, the Department of Neighborhood Development, and the Boston Redevelopment Authority—should be able to link residents and businesses with the programs and resources related to climate action, as many of them already do. In addition, City workers need to pay particular attention to the individual actions over which they have direct control. This has significant symbolic value. For example, a needlessly idling City vehicle, however infrequently encountered, will send the dispiriting message that different rules apply to different people, despite what we know about the Mayor's commitment to climate action.

Appendix... Or possibly sidebar/boxes

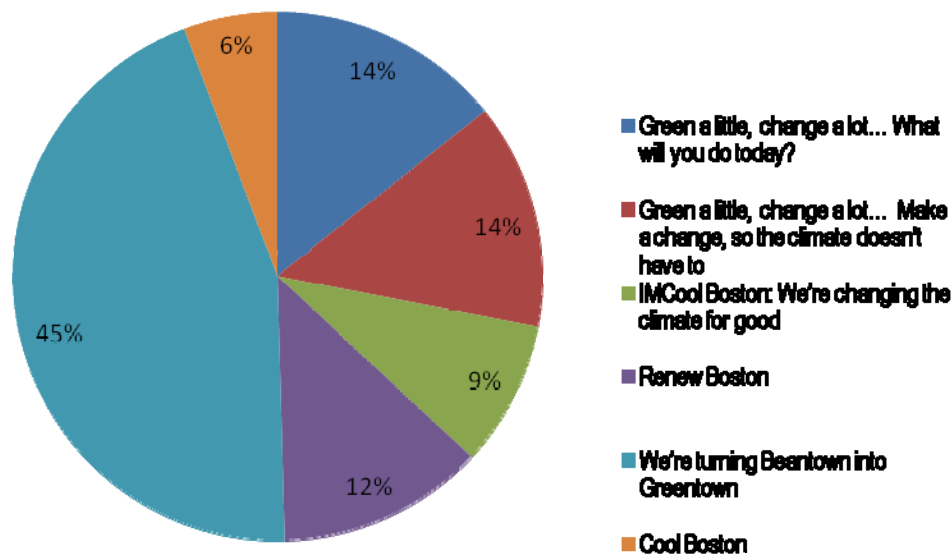
Possible Messages and Tag Lines for Citywide Awareness Campaign

At the community workshops, participants were asked to identify what would most motivate them to take action. Saving the environment, making the future better for our children, and saving money were the clear favorites.

Select the top 2 reasons for getting involved with climate action that would most motivate you to act?



We also asked participants to react to several possible brand and “tag lines” for a citywide education and media campaign. “We’re turning Beantown into Greentown” was the clear favorite.



Open ended responses yielded a few more ideas to consider:

- Green a little, save a lot
- Old Boston → Renew Boston
- From Beantown to Greentown (not, “We’re turning...”)
- Renew Boston is not intuitive – highlight city program cost and results
- Better Boston
- Commuting without polluting
- It’s cool to bike to school
- Burn fat, not fuel
- Going green is a “cool thing”
- What’s in it for you?

Examples of community-based educational events and action campaigns

- Ad campaign linked to citywide campaign, with signs for shop windows
- Inter-neighborhood competitions
- Identify “shovel ready” projects
- *Need to complete this list from CAC and workshop notes*

Details to support ongoing outreach

- Compile list of grassroots organizations, businesses
- Reach into under represented communities (e.g., houses of worship) and specific ethnic communities
- Create a Volunteer Coordinator role, housed in a community-based organization

- Neighbor-to-neighbor social networking/social capital development
- Offer public spaces for convenings, e.g., like library
- City officials come to existing community meetings
- *Need to complete this list from CAC and workshop notes*