



2023-2024 Energy & Environmental Policy Agenda

In service of A Better City's mission to ensure the equitable long-term growth, sustainability, economic vitality and competitiveness of Greater Boston, the Energy and Environment Unit advocates for legislative change, provides technical expertise to government administrators, supports and partners with community-based organizations and community leaders, and ensures that members are engaged with climate and clean energy policy and climate justice opportunities through their organizations and across the Greater Boston business community. We work to ensure the best possible design, governance, equitable financing, and implementation of city, state, and federal climate and clean energy policies, in a people- and community-centered approach that promotes climate, environmental, and energy justice whenever possible.

GOAL 1: MITIGATE THE PROGRESSION OF CLIMATE CHANGE & SCALE UP DECARBONIZATION OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Promote and advance sustainability in buildings to support the City and State in meeting their stated climate goals by leveraging the expertise of ABC members, prioritizing consistent and aligned buildings policies for existing buildings and new construction, and ensuring safe, affordable, healthy, and energy efficient buildings.
 - Provide insight on behalf of the Commercial Real Estate Sector as Boston enacts its 2019 Climate Action Plan update and implements BERDO 2.0, a Zero Net Carbon Zoning Standard, and the Home Rule Petition for a potential fossil fuel ban.
 - Track and inform progress on the implementation of the 2025, 2030, and 2050 Clean Energy and Climate Plans, the 2021 and 2022 MA climate bills that include a municipal building reporting standard and fossil fuel-free demonstration projects, updates to the Massachusetts building codes, including the updated Stretch Energy Code and the Specialized Municipal Opt-In Stretch Energy Code, and other relevant City-, State-, and Federal-level climate commitments.
- Pursue equitable workforce development opportunities in smart building operations to help large buildings meet emissions reduction goals and support emerging opportunities for equitable workforce development in the clean energy and technology industries.

GOAL 2: ADAPT TO THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE & PROMOTE CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

- Develop a coordinated strategy across the financing, governance, and implementation of regional resilient critical infrastructure and community resilience projects.
- Coordinate adaptation policies across federal, state, and city levels to promote regional collaboration including Boston's Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District, Wetlands Ordinance, Heat Plan, and the 20-Year Urban Forest Plan, as well as the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan.
- Promote community resilience by supporting work that combats extreme heat, protects environmental justice communities, promotes community-owned energy resilience, and prioritizes positive community health and well-being outcomes for all Greater Boston communities.
- Track the effective, transparent, verifiable, and permanent efforts for carbon removals in Massachusetts' anticipated sequestration accounting and market frameworks strategy and incorporate best practices for tools like offsets.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE THE DECARBONIZATION, RELIABILITY, AND RESILIENCE OF OUR ENERGY SUPPLY

- Track regional and federal energy policy regulators, including ISO-NE and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), in their role addressing regional energy challenges and the decarbonization, reliability, affordability, and resilience of our electricity grid.
- Track large-scale renewable energy deployment including offshore wind, commercial solar energy deployment, community solar, and networked geothermal, and identify opportunities and challenges for renewable energy procurement.
- Support and advise the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council's 3-Year Plan for utilities, including how 3-Year Plans interact with emerging legislation and expanded statutory mandates for the D.P.U., as well as how to ensure that proceeds are distributed equitably, and are fulfilling programs such as the C&I working group.
- Support grid modernization and grid capacity expansion efforts to help the State and City meet their decarbonization goals, to ensure equitable access to clean, reliable, safe, resilient, and affordable energy, and to support efforts to reduce energy burdens.
- Promote the expansion and modernization of generation, transmission, distribution, and interconnection infrastructure systems to support increased electricity demand from electrified buildings and transportation.
- Track and inform the transition of district energy plants and users to decarbonized, resilient, diversified, and reliable energy portfolios.
- Support energy resilience through on-site renewables, micro grids, district-based energy solutions, energy storage, and the exploration of tools like distributed generation, aggregation, and diverse energy portfolios.

GOAL 4: SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF EQUITABLE CLIMATE FUNDING AND FINANCING OPPORTUNITIES

- Support and inform developments of a Boston/MA Climate Bank pilot project and how it may interact with federal green bank efforts, as indicated in the Inflation Reduction Act, as well as an anticipated climate bank from the Healey-Driscoll administration.
- Leverage federal funding opportunities to scale up building decarbonization, resilient critical infrastructure projects, and community resilience projects in Massachusetts.
- Track and inform the disbursement of funds from climate policies like BERDO 2.0 in Boston, Mass Save, and other emerging building performance standards like BEUDO in Cambridge.
- Promote the development of equitable climate funding and financing opportunities that can: be distributed regionally, work across climate mitigation and adaptation, and promote community benefits whenever possible.