

CITIES DRIVING CHANGE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

03

Impact

07

BEI History

04

Theory of Change

08

Mission, Vision, Values

05

Strategic Priorities

10

Commitment to Equity

06

Defining Success

18

INTRODUCTION

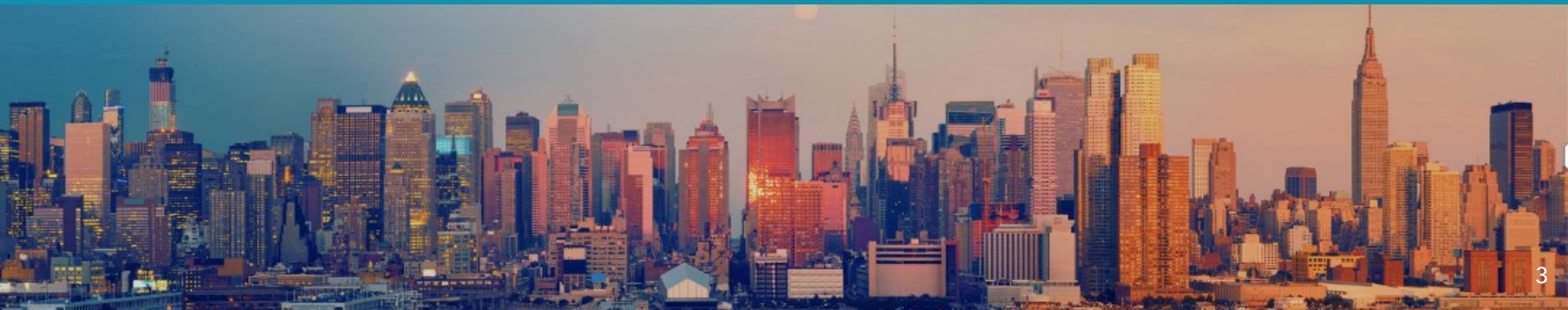
When the Building Electrification Institute (BEI) launched five years ago, no U.S. city or state had seriously pursued building electrification. Today, BEI's collaborative engagement with 12 cities has helped change the national conversation, redefine what is possible in building electrification at the local level, shifted markets regionally, and sparked long-stalled statewide policy moves. Crucially, BEI has led cities to co-create policies and strategies with local partners, ensuring that outcomes improve the lives of the communities that bear the heaviest burdens of poverty and environmental injustice.

BEI is the first U.S. organization to work with cities at the intersection of building electrification and housing affordability, workforce development, public health, community development, and resiliency. Equity is our north star. The movement to more affordable, healthy, and fossil fuel-free buildings cannot succeed if some buildings, workers, and communities are left behind, and governments cannot create effective

solutions without the critical perspective and expertise from frontline communities and a wide range of stakeholders.

Over the last five years, BEI has learned an enormous amount, including that cities are ready and willing to adopt policies before states, and that co-creating policies with communities leads to the most effective, equitable, and politically durable results. We've also learned that the work to develop approaches locally is an essential source of insight and the start - not the end - of widespread transformation.

BEI is committed to continuing our work with high-ambition cities and supporting equitable and effective implementation on the ground. We will bring the resulting insights and practical experience to state and federal policymakers to accelerate change. This strategic plan will guide BEI's work for the next three years, ensuring we build on our successes and progress to create a more equitable clean energy future for all.



BEI HISTORY



BEI began as a collaboration in 2016 between several cities working through the Urban Sustainability Directors Network and the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance. Through this work, staff from the cities of Boulder, Burlington, Washington DC, and New York City recognized the enormous challenge of electrifying millions of buildings and the need to center equity in the process. They understood that to be successful, local governments will need to learn quickly from one another and collaborate with a wide range of partners to achieve the pace and scale required – inspiring the launch of BEI in 2018 to support them on this path.

BEI'S VISION

Buildings are healthy, safe, resilient, and fossil fuel-free. As a result, our air will be cleaner, housing will be more affordable, and our communities will be healthier. The transition will create good local jobs for those who need them most and the benefits will be shared equitably among all.

BEI'S MISSION

BEI equips cities and communities with the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to co-create ambitious and equitable strategies to accelerate building electrification. We drive change at scale by swiftly translating cutting-edge best practices from cities to spur state, regional, and national progress toward fossil fuel-free buildings.

CORE VALUES

EQUITY: Prioritizing processes and outcomes that do no harm to historically marginalized communities, that actively address disparities, and that advance healing and justice. Continuously honing our organizational practices and individual learning and unlearning towards just outcomes.

GROWTH: Expanding knowledge and capacity through curiosity, ongoing learning, and ambitious innovation.

COLLABORATION: Working across a broad coalition of partners to build trusting relationships guided by compassion, flexibility, and humility. Improving outcomes for historically marginalized communities by elevating the expertise of those most affected.

HUMANITY: Centering joy, balance, and empathy as foundations for people's success, fulfillment, and long-term resilience.

TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP: Committing to groundbreaking goals, courageous strategies, radical hope for the future, and the belief that we can build a better world.



COMMITMENT TO EQUITY

Since BEI's founding in 2018, we have been committed to equity to ensure that the transition to healthy, fossil fuel-free buildings lifts up all communities and repairs harms from past racist policies. We recognize that leaving low-income communities and communities of color behind would put our climate goals at risk, and that local governments have both the ability and responsibility to advance racial equity through building electrification.

WHAT EQUITY MEANS TO US:

- Inclusive planning and decision-making processes that center the voices of under-resourced and historically marginalized communities.
- Outcomes that advance the needs and priorities of under-resourced, historically marginalized, or negatively impacted communities.
- Systems transformed to repair harm, rebalance power, and increase wellbeing now and for future generations.

OUR IMPACT

Since 2018, BEI has:



Spurred the launch of over 50 new local and regional policies, programs, and strategies, affecting nearly 60 million people across BEI's 12 cities and seven states.



Unlocked over \$100 million in investments from cities and their partners to drive the equitable transition to fossil fuel-free buildings.



Initiated new community co-creation models to craft equitable and effective policies and improve government accountability to frontline communities.



Engaged over 100 local governments to translate best practices and accelerate an equitable transition across the country.



Provided thought leadership to the field by authoring and sharing more than 30 original reports and resources.

BEI'S THEORY OF CHANGE

VISION

BY 2050...

Buildings are healthy, safe, resilient, and fossil fuel-free. The transition creates good local jobs, and the benefits are shared equitably among all.

GOALS

- **Policy requirements** ensure a managed transition away from fossil fuels in buildings.
- **Supportive programs and major public investments** to historically marginalized communities enable an equitable transition.
- **Government decision-making is inclusive, transparent, and shifts power** to frontline communities.

HOW WE GET THERE

- **The market evolves** to provide the right technologies and a high-skilled workforce in high road jobs.
- **There is broad and diverse political support** for ambitious policy goals and investments.
- **There are successful and equitable proof-of-concept programs and policies** in geographically diverse regions that inspire wider action.

ECO-SYSTEM

- Customers want heat pumps and can afford them, and contractors know how to install them.
- A burgeoning network of local, state, and federal programs create thousands of high road jobs, protect housing affordability, and improve community health and resilience.
- A broad and diverse coalition of partners support electrification and can fight fossil fuel interests.
- States and utilities have a regulatory framework for the transition.

BEI'S THEORY OF CHANGE (cont.)

CRITICAL ROLE OF CITIES

- Enact ambitious policies, design and implement equitable programs, target major investments to historically marginalized communities.
- Demonstrate and communicate results, and advocate for changes to state, regional, utility, and federal policy.
- Collaborate with a diverse set of stakeholders; shift resources and decision-making power to frontline communities.

BEI SPEEDS PROGRESS

- Raise the ambitions of cities to develop and implement equitable building electrification strategies.
- Translate rapidly evolving trends and research.
- Elevate best practices and lessons learned to other cities and in state and federal policy discussions.
- Conduct foundational research to help cities plan thoughtfully and intentionally.
- Support policy and program design based on community priorities and iterative implementation to ensure equitable outcomes.
- Facilitate community co-creation and relationship-building processes between cities and frontline organizations.
- Help cities secure resources through local, state, federal, and philanthropic sources.
- Amplify the voices of cities and communities to shift the narrative on equitable building electrification.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2023 - 2025

01

Hone the cutting edge in cities.

02

Amplify community voices and priorities.

03

Shape state policies with city innovations.

04

Implement IRA and IIJA equitably.

05

Expand BEI's geographic reach.

06

Shift the narrative.

07

Build capacity for the future.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Priority 1: Hone the cutting edge in cities.

Drive high-capacity cities to raise their ambition, accelerate learning, and develop model approaches that center the voices of frontline communities.

- Help city staff revamp their policymaking approaches through co-creation with diverse stakeholders and communities, building on lessons learned from other cities, and providing space for ongoing discussion and reflection.
- Motivate ambitious city action by pushing for high potential policy approaches, translating policy goals into detailed implementation plans, and creating foundational learning resources.
- Create opportunities to convene city staff, community groups, and partners to learn from each other.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Priority 2: Amplify community voices and priorities.

Deepen BEI's work with community-based organizations (CBOs) to support collaboration with policymakers at all levels to design solutions that advance racial and social justice.

- Increase the power of frontline community organizations by leveraging BEI's relationships, technical skills, and resources to center these voices and priorities.
- Partner with CBOs in BEI cities, learning their histories and goals, and create spaces to collaborate with city staff on building electrification efforts.
- Elevate the voices and priorities of frontline communities to local, state, and federal policymakers, including for implementation of the federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Priority 3: Shape state policies with city innovations.

States regulate utilities and building codes, and states will also administer federal IRA and IIJA funding for building electrification. State policies ensure consistency, create economies of scale, and simplify compliance.

- Target several high priority states to begin shaping building electrification policies and programs based on city innovations and lessons learned, beginning with a focus on IRA and IIJA implementation in key states.
- Build and leverage existing relationships with values-aligned organizations to engage and accelerate progress in target states.
- Share on-the-ground insights from cities with state policymakers and advocacy groups and provide technical expertise and equity practices needed to translate high-level goals into implementation plans.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Priority 4: Implement IRA and IIJA equitably.

The federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) bring unprecedented levels of funding for building electrification.

- Help cities and communities co-create equitable building electrification strategies and design complementary programs to leverage federal funding, such as one-stop-shop retrofit hubs, workforce training programs, and high road employer/labor standards.
- Work closely with key partners to advocate for the equitable design of federal and state programs to ensure funding flows to under-resourced and historically marginalized communities.
- Develop resources to support cities and CBOs outside of BEI's partner cities with IRA and IIJA implementation, including tracking tools, sample proposals, example strategies, and webinars.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Priority 5: Expand BEI's geographic reach.

Grow the geographic and political diversity of jurisdictions working on equitable building electrification to fill in strategic gaps and scale up the transition to healthy, affordable, and fossil fuel-free buildings.

- Create principles and a process to bring on new jurisdictions based on their commitment to ambitious and equitable climate action, willingness to co-create solutions with frontline communities, and staff capacity.
- Develop and adapt approaches to policymaking that work in places with different politics, geographies, demographics, utility configurations, electric grid scenarios, and stakeholder interests and priorities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Priority 6: Shift the narrative.

Help policymakers, advocacy organizations, and the public understand the health, safety, environmental, and affordability benefits of electrification and feel motivated to take action.

- Enable priority audiences to envision the pathway to an equitable and fossil fuel-free future, understanding the necessary suite of policies, programs, and strategies.
- Articulate the potential pitfalls of programs and policies that leave communities and buildings behind, while elevating the effectiveness of equitable electrification solutions that emerge from community engagement and co-creation.
- Amplify stories from BEI's track record of success to increase the ambition and optimism of policymakers at all levels of government.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



7

Priority 7: Build capacity for the future.

- Grow BEI's organizational capacity to build a healthy, sustainable, and values-aligned work culture.
- Expand BEI's capacity and expertise in housing, health, resiliency, labor, workforce development, and community engagement.
- Develop processes to document and accumulate institutional knowledge to accelerate learning and innovation.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

1

Up to 20 BEI cities enact policies requiring electrification in millions of new and existing buildings as part of a managed transition away from fossil fuels.

2

Billions of federal, state, and local dollars flow to under-invested communities to support equitable building electrification and create thousands of high road jobs.

3

State and federal policies integrate best practices from BEI's leading cities, drawing upon expertise of frontline communities and setting the country on a transition path that repairs past harms and leaves no one behind.

4

Coalitions form across the country to push back on fossil fuel industry misinformation, support ambitious action, and chart equitable transition pathways for fossil fuel workers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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