

Energy & Conservation

Draft Policies and Strategies as of 12/13/17

Policy 1: Increase community involvement in decisions about energy and infrastructure investments.

Strategy 1: Annually benchmark and publish citywide energy use and emissions by source (ex: residential, commercial, industrial, healthcare, higher education, etc.) and type of utility including a metric to track change over time, such as total energy use per resident.

Strategy 2: Educate the community about the financial, social, and environmental costs and benefits of different energy sources, and how energy use relates to land use patterns.

Strategy 3: Organize an annual forum to engage nearby tribes and surrounding municipalities regarding regional resiliency and to share innovative projects and best practices for energy and conservation policies.

Strategy 4: Acknowledge Indigenous Peoples' sacred and longstanding ties to the earth and their role as protectors of the environment and consult with tribal leaders and the Indigenous community about our shared energy future.

Policy 2: Provide incentives for developers to encourage green buildings and renewable energy use in new residential and commercial buildings.

Strategy 1: Establish clear guidelines for green building and solar ready development in all zoning districts where solar is a permitted use, including guidelines for solar easements.

Strategy 2: Revise the sustainability points system in the UDC by increasing the minimum point value requirements and adjust the point values of individual actions to encourage more green buildings and more buildings built solar ready or with solar, or other renewable energy sources, already installed.

Policy 3: Incentivize commercial, anchor institution, and large residential building/facility owners to reduce energy use and increase energy efficiency in existing buildings/facilities and community gathering spaces.

Strategy 1: Incentivize building owners to voluntarily benchmark and publish building energy use by establishing a city-wide recognition program to promote energy efficient buildings/businesses and buildings/businesses that significantly increase energy efficiency over time.

Strategy 2: Update the UDC to offer incentives for cool surfaces like reflective roofs, green roofs, cool pavement and ground surfaces.

Strategy 3: Develop a policy for energy efficient outdoor lighting, such as LED, on public and private property and streets, while ensuring lighting doesn't negatively impact the aesthetics and quality of life of the city.

Strategy 4: Identify and promote opportunities and incentives for commercial building owners, commercial tenants to affordably invest in renewable energy.

Policy 4: Incentivize households and landlords to reduce energy use and increase residential energy efficiency.

Strategy 1: Partner with local utilities to encourage residential customers to reduce energy use by providing information about how customers' utility use compares to their neighbors' utility use.

Strategy 2: Prioritize residential energy efficiency retrofit programs and projects for low to moderate income residents with housing rehabilitation funds.

Strategy 3: Work with community partners and water, gas, and electric utilities to compile and widely publicize a list of energy efficiency resources for residents such as, rebates, low interest loans, and affordable energy retrofit programs, and update annually.

Strategy 4: Identify and promote opportunities for landlords, residential tenants, and homeowners to affordably invest in renewable energy.

Policy 5: Encourage community-wide investment in appropriate local renewable energy sources, including solar, wind, and biomass.

Strategy 1: Develop City-owned renewable energy resources to offset consumption and invest in renewable energy sources whenever feasible, seeking out opportunities to invest in partnership with private and nonprofit sector institutions and businesses.

Strategy 2: Identify wind and solar energy resources within the City, and revise the UDC and zoning code to enable development where land uses and natural resources do not conflict with other land uses, including otherwise unusable locations such as brownfield, closed landfills, and rooftops, and limit development where wind and solar resources are insufficient for capture or land use conflicts too great.

Strategy 3: Prioritize diversifying energy sources when considering energy investments, including supporting local energy production and storage, and community owned power as much as possible.

Strategy 4: Work with utility providers, local low income community members, and low income services providers and coalitions to identify how to better provide reasonable access to clean energy and relief of energy burdens for low to moderate income community members.

Policy 6: Adopt energy efficiency and energy saving targets for City owned facilities and City operations.

Strategy 1: Finalize and adopt a corporate City energy plan, including an annual City of Duluth GHG emissions reduction of at least 2.5%.

Strategy 2: Require annual public reporting of corporate city energy use and emissions.

Strategy 3: Develop a policy that explicitly prioritizes energy efficiency upgrades and repairs in the course of maintenance and operations of City owned properties and City operated facilities, including energy conservation measures such as low flow faucet aerators and LED light bulbs.

Strategy 4: Develop criteria for continued investment in City owned facilities that prioritizes energy efficiency as well as community use and social value, in order to equitably manage City owned facilities and have transparency in decisions to disinvest in facilities.

Policy 7: Increase efficiency of utilities and services.

Strategy 1: Require the Comfort Systems gas utility to increase energy efficiency to 1.5% annually from the 2007 state mandate of 1% and report annually on its progress.

Strategy 2: Regularly assess and repair water system leaks with the newest technologies and upgrade old pumps and motors with newer, more efficient versions during planned replacements, in order to reduce the amount of water lost through leaks to less than 10%.

Strategy 3: Conduct a study to determine the best investment in the Steam Plant, which considers options such as retrofitting for the use of cleaner fuel sources and decommissioning, and adopt a plan to reduce emissions from the Steam Plant by at least 50% over 30 years.

Strategy 4: Work with Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (WLSSD) to implement a curbside pickup composting program and sell the resulting compost using a sliding scale fee structure to increase low to moderate income community member's access to food growing resources.