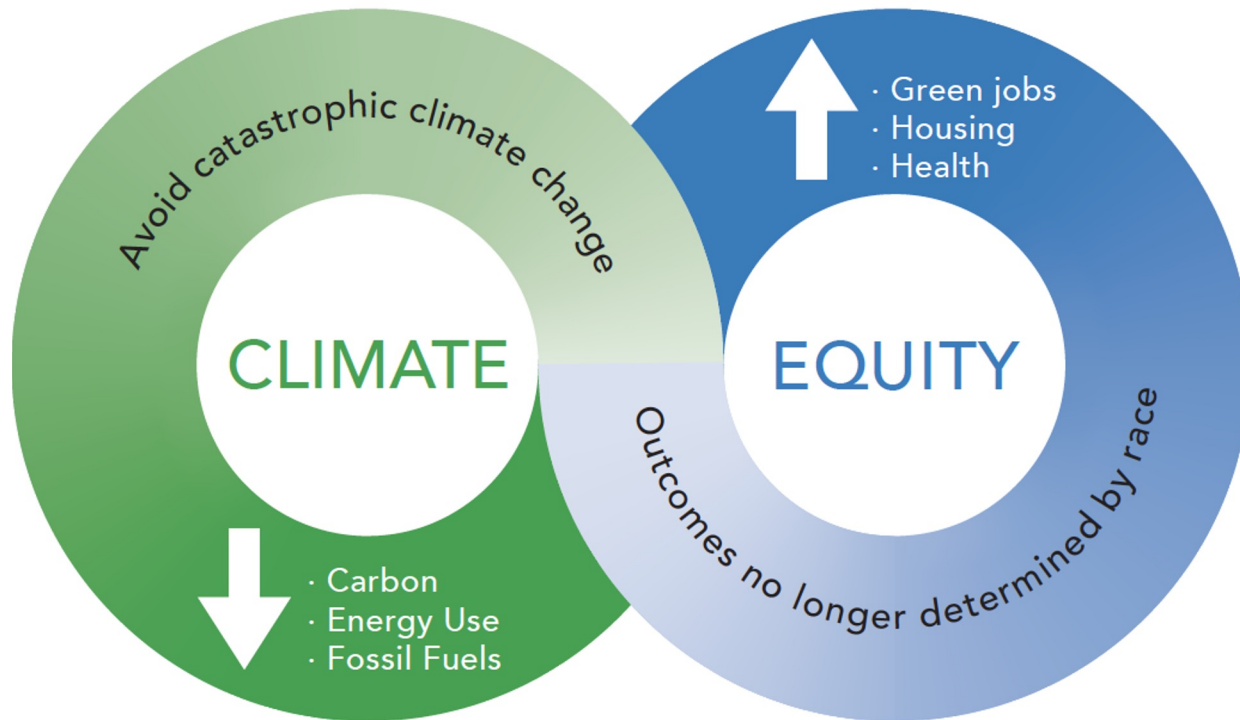


Equitable Approaches to Building Electrification

Completed September 2023

What is Equitable Building Electrification?

The Dual Goals of Climate and Equity



What Equity Means to BEI

- **Inclusive planning** and decision-making processes that center the voices of historically marginalized communities.
- **Improved outcomes** that advance the needs and priorities of historically marginalized communities.
- **Systems transformed** to repair harm, rebalance power, and increase wellbeing now and for future generations.

The Benefits of Equitable Building Electrification



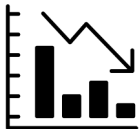
Create thousands of local clean energy sector jobs



Improved indoor and outdoor air quality



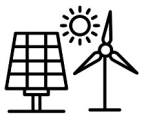
Address longstanding health, safety, and resilience needs



Potentially lower energy bills



Potentially more affordable housing



Invest in creating a local clean energy economy

Potential Risks of Building Electrification

- **Housing/rental cost increases**
 - **Energy bill increases**
 - **Tenant harassment/displacement**
 - **Long-term gentrification and displacement**
 - **Pushing smaller landlords out of business**
 - **Lack of community trust and buy-in**
- **Lack of access to opportunities for minority- and women-owned firms**
 - **Lack of opportunities for workers of color**
 - **Inability to create family-sustaining jobs**
 - **Benefits do not reach tenants or low-income communities**
- ...and more***

Spotlight | Housing and Affordability

- **At least 40% of renters are housing cost-burdened*** in most metro areas across the U.S., and this share is rapidly increasing in many parts of the country.
- If landlords choose to pass retrofit costs on to tenants, building electrification could exacerbate an already dire affordable housing crisis.

Loss of Low-Rent Housing Stock, 2011-2019**

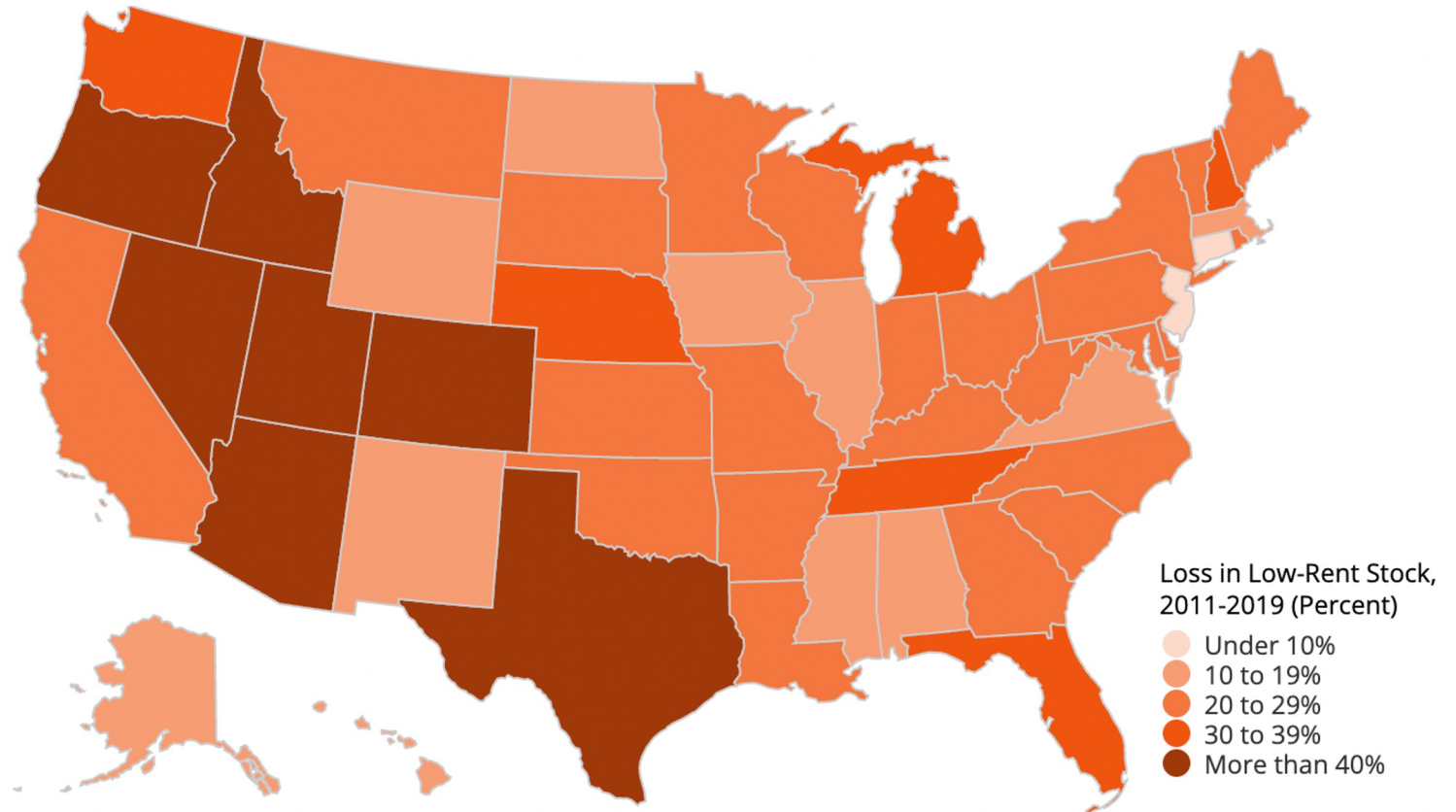
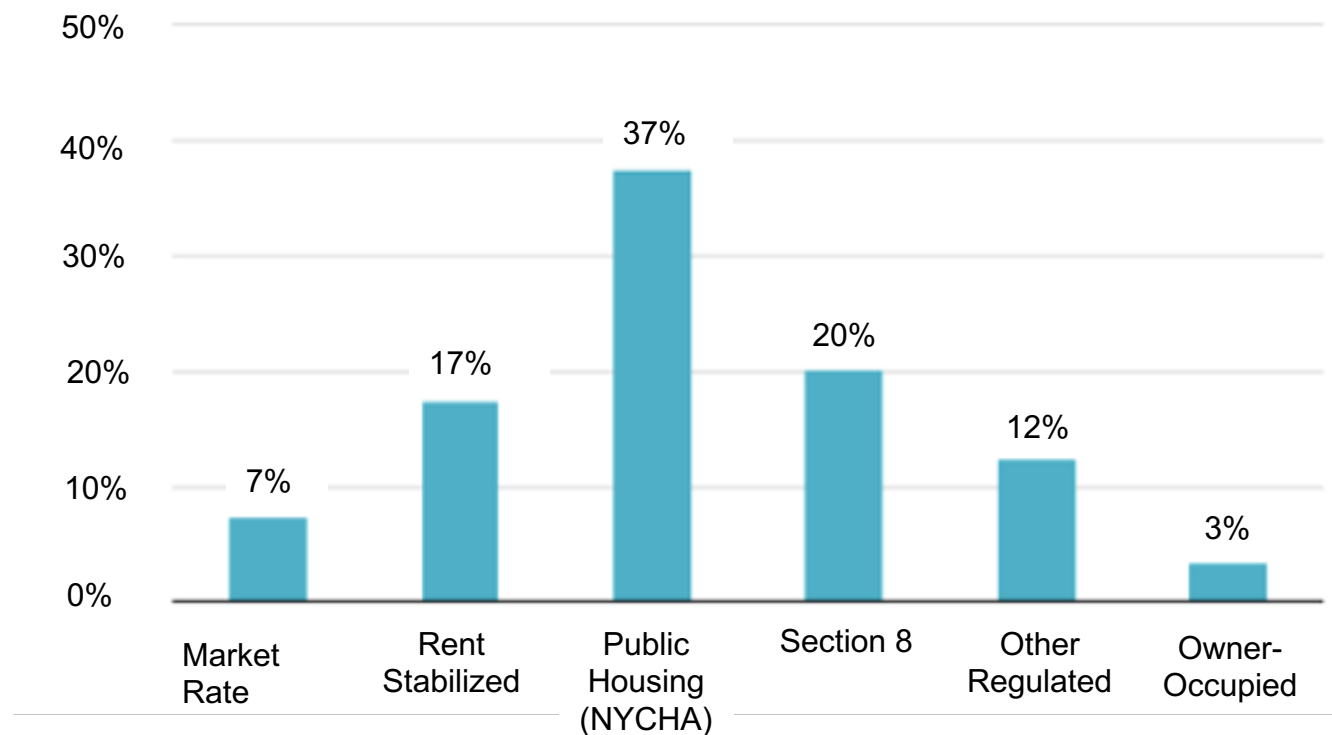


Image Source: Harvard University, Joint Center for Housing Studies

Spotlight | Health and Safety Needs

- **Between 20% to 60% of energy incentive program applicants are deemed ineligible** for common programs, including the federal weatherization assistance program, because they have structural, health, or safety repairs that must be addressed first.*
- **This is especially common in buildings housing people with low and moderate incomes**, which suffers from historic and ongoing disinvestment in the U.S.

Prevalence of 3+ Maintenance Deficiencies by Housing Type in NYC



Steps for Equitable Building Electrification

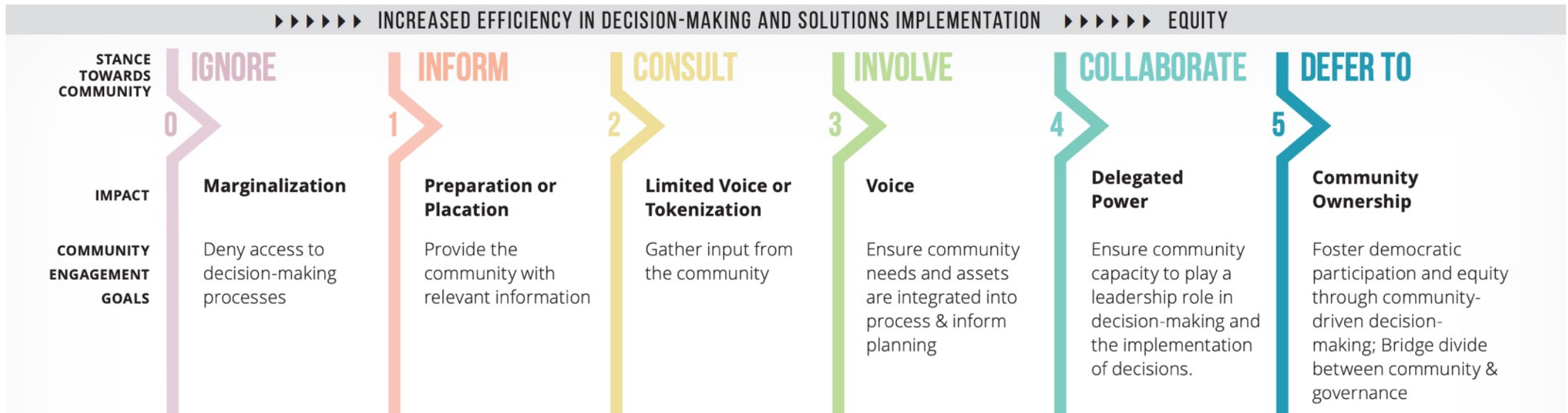
- 1. Engage in co-creation with communities**, prioritizing those that have been historically marginalized or are typically left out of the policymaking process.
- 2. Assess potential benefits and burdens of building electrification** and work with community stakeholders to understand how these may intersect with existing needs and priorities.
- 3. Collaboratively design and implement solutions** that mitigate the burdens and maximize the benefits for historically marginalized communities.

Step 1: Co-Creation with Communities

Community co-creation is a process of deep, iterative collaboration between government staff and leaders rooted in and accountable to historically marginalized communities.

The goal of community co-creation is to move from a position of ignoring or informing community stakeholders to a practice of involving, collaborating with, and eventually deferring to these stakeholders in the policy development process.

THE SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO OWNERSHIP



Why Community Co-creation?

A community co-creation process will help policymakers:

- **Gain critical expertise** from historically marginalized communities that government staff often do not have.
- **Develop relationships** based on mutual trust, respect, and shared power.
- **Build political support** for ambitious policies or investments.
- **Design policies and programs more effectively** to ensure they work for communities that have often been harmed by past government policies.
- **Address social and racial inequities** that persist in local communities.

Who Should be Prioritized for Co-creation?

Community co-creation processes should include people who:

- **Could be affected** by a potential policy or program
- **Are burdened** with current or past inequities
- **Have been historically excluded** from policymaking processes

Example Priority Audiences for Building Electrification

- Tenants
- Low-income residents
- Labor stakeholders and workers
- Women- and minority-owned contracting firms
- Unemployed or under-employed people
- Historically redlined communities
- Small businesses
- Nonprofits and places of worship

Co-creation Example | Electrify San José Framework

To develop its *Electrify San José Framework*, the City of San José hired two "community co-creation consultants," representing the Vietnamese and Latinx communities (the two largest communities of color in the City). These community consultants helped develop both the initial *Framework* and the strategy for engaging the broader community.

Co-created Plan Development



Community Co-creation Consultants



City Team



Strategic Partners

Community Engagement & Review

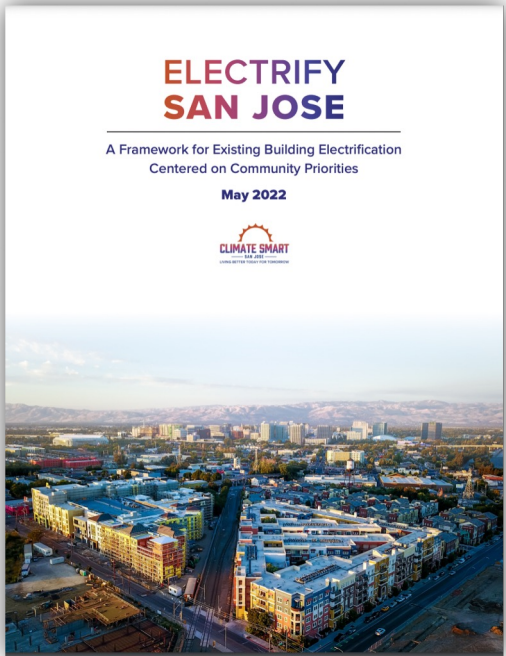


Broader community voices



Other City Departments

Integration of Community Input

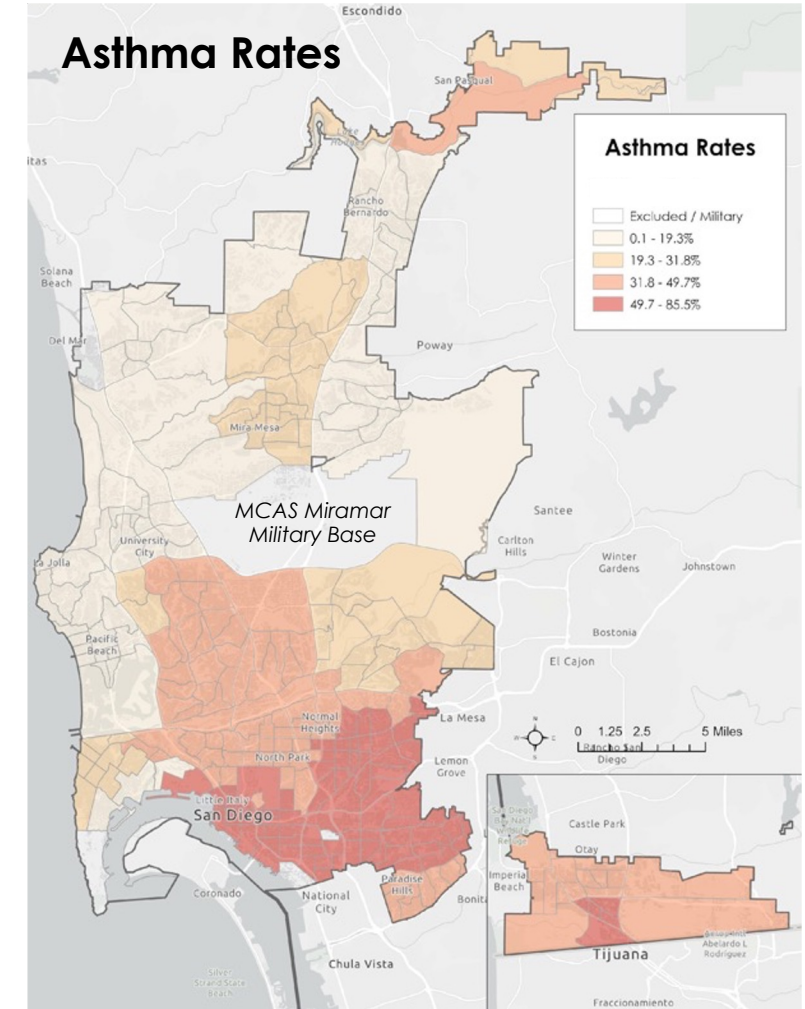
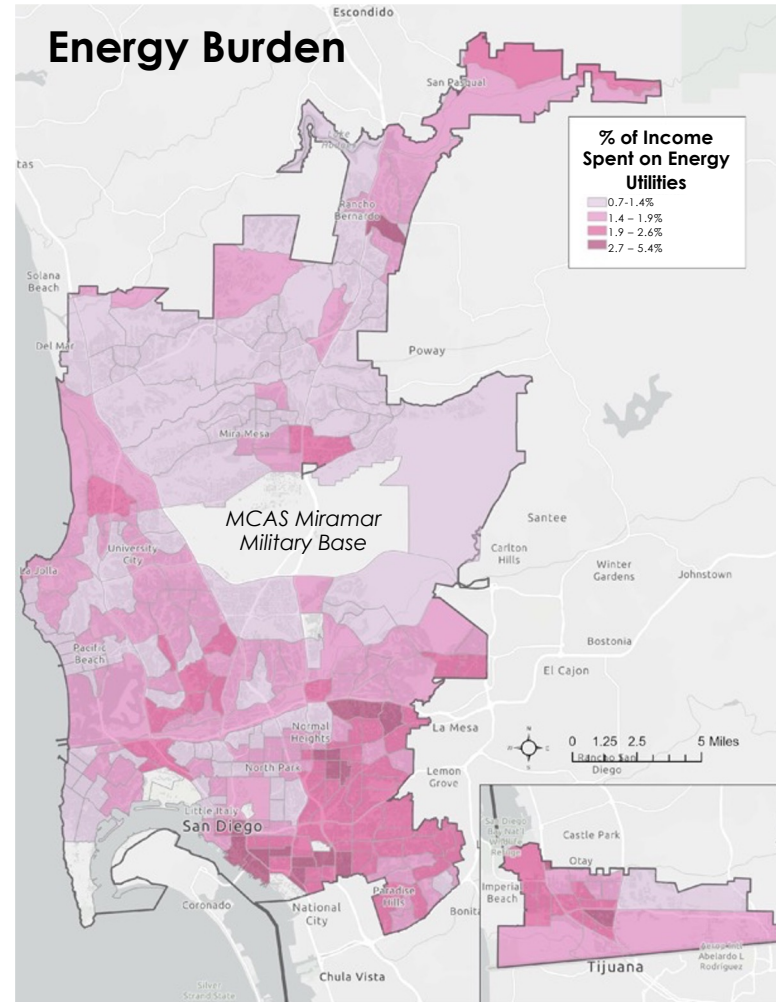
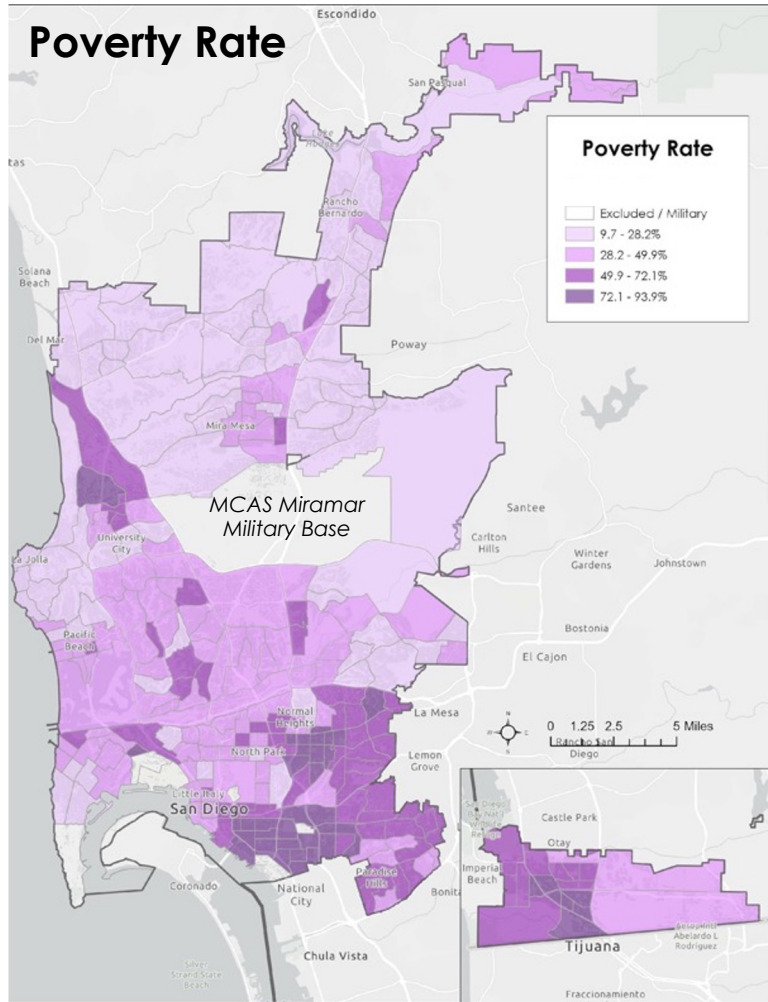


Step 2: Assess Benefits and Burdens

Best Practices for a Successful Process:

- Work deeply with community stakeholders to validate the assessment of benefits and burdens.
- Look for areas with overlapping vulnerabilities and inequities.
- Acknowledge harmful histories and reflect on the impacts that have caused existing inequities.
- Present technical discussions and considerations in approachable ways.
- Keep an open mind and allow space for iteration, discussion, and debate.

Assess Benefits and Burdens | San Diego Example



Step 3: Design & Implement Equitable Solutions

Continue working closely with community stakeholders to co-design equitable solutions.

Examples of Solutions Include:

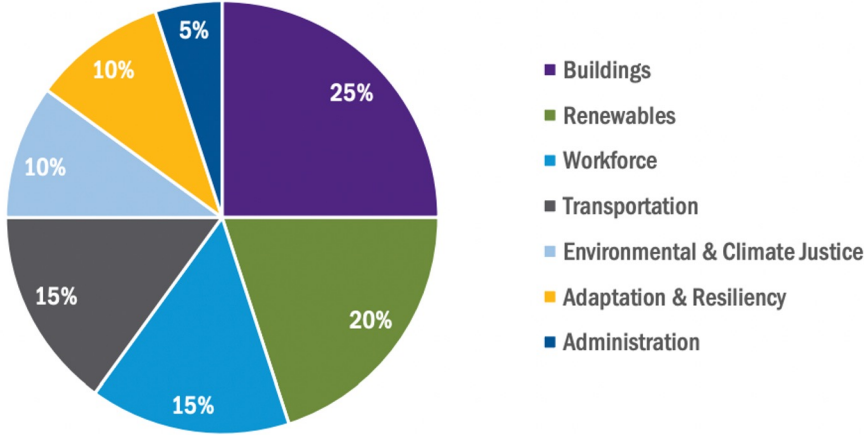
- Dedicated funding to retrofit under-resourced buildings, including necessary health, safety, and structural upgrades
- Wrap-around technical assistance for building owners and tenants
- Workforce and contractor support
- Policy iteration and co-creation of additional solutions

Equitable Solutions | Funding for Upgrades

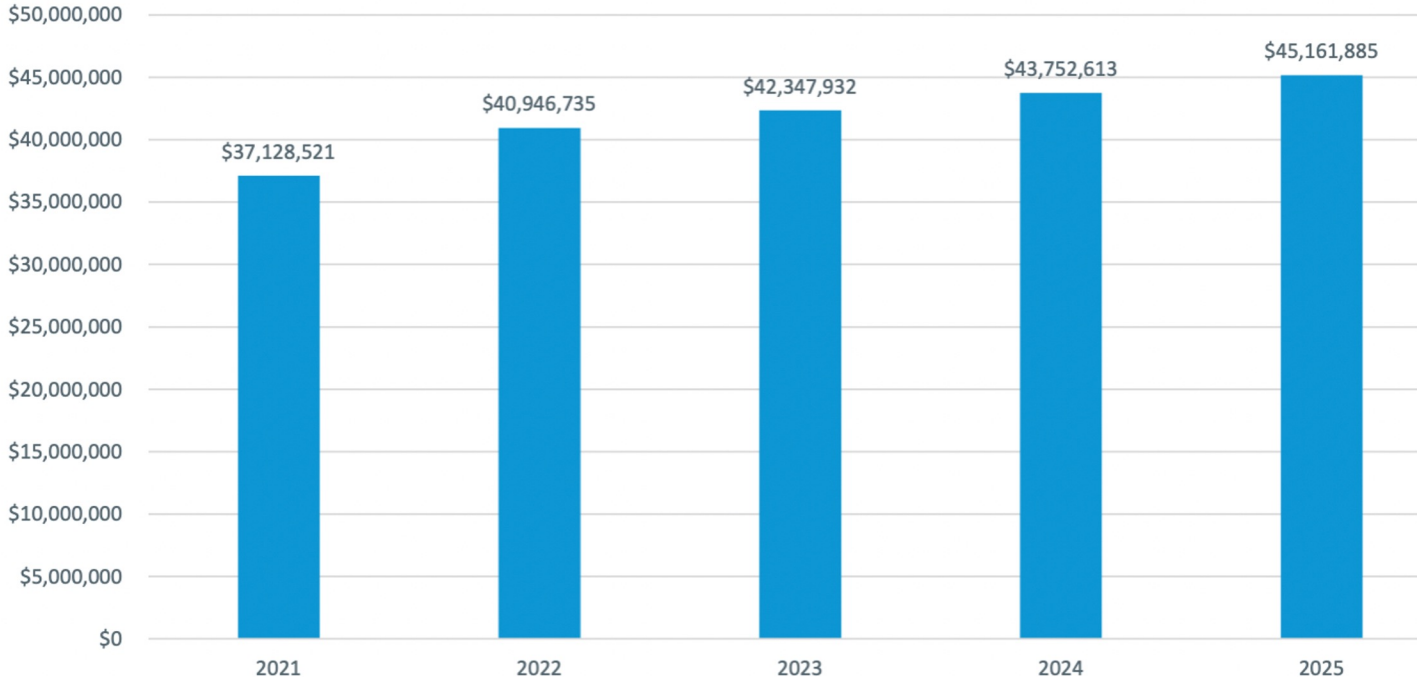
Denver Climate Protection Fund

Generates \$40-50 million annually, with a substantial portion of the funding for building electrification upgrades in under-resourced buildings.

Five-Year Estimated Expenditures by Allowable Use (% of Total)



CPF Revenue Projection



Images Source: [Denver CPF Five-Year Plan](#)

Equitable Solutions | Technical Assistance



More information at: www.accelerator.nyc

Example: NYC Accelerator

New York City launched the NYC Accelerator to provide free technical advisory services to help building decision-makers comply with New York City's Building Emissions Law. Program staff coordinate financing, incentives, and provide other services to help simplify the building retrofit process.



Financial & Technical Assistance

Plan, finance, and complete building energy efficiency and renewable energy projects



Connect with Contractors

Find experienced and qualified contractors in your area



Understanding Local Laws

Assist building owners and operators to meet LL97 targets and other NYC laws



Access Incentives

Find incentive awards from local utilities and New York State to help you save costs



Trainings

Join an online training to improve your skills or learn something new

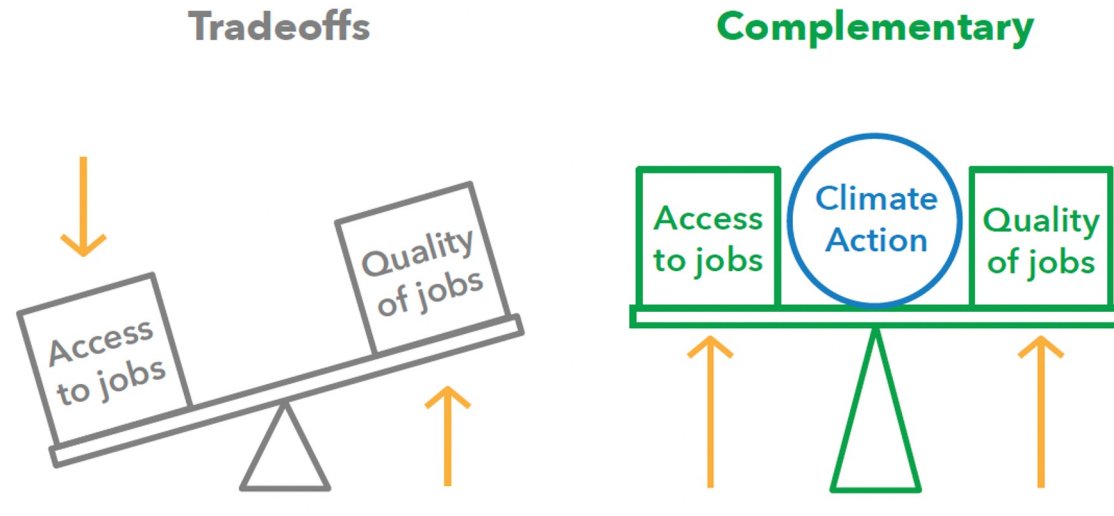


Build High Performance

Prepare for the future by building your next project to a High Performance standard

Equitable Solutions | Workforce Support

With proactive government policy, we can avoid tradeoffs between high quality jobs and inclusive access to jobs.



Example: SF Bay Area High Road Training Partnership

- Collaboration of regional partners committed to creating an equitable worker transition
- Assessing regional workforce and employer needs
- Identifying policy solutions for advancing high road building decarbonization jobs across the Bay Area

Image Source: Inclusive Economics, [High Road Workforce Guide for Climate Action](#)

For more Information, see the [High Road to Building Decarbonization in the San Francisco Bay Area Overview](#)

Equitable Solutions | Policy Iteration

Successful and equitable program and policy implementation requires ongoing reflection and iteration.

Example: Boston's BERDO Review Board

Boston's BERDO Review Board works to ensure the equitable implementation of the City's Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO).^{*} An official oversight or review board with strong community representation creates a formal space for reflection, co-creation, and ongoing accountability to community priorities.

Of the nine members who comprise the BERDO Review board:

- Six are nominated by a community-based organization
- Two are nominated by anyone, including self-nomination
- One is reserved the Chair of the Boston City Council's Environmental Justice, Resiliency, and Parks Committee, or their designee

The Review Board has power to:

- 1 Review, accept, or deny applications for flexibility measures
- 2 Decide how to disperse the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund
- 3 Recommend updates to BERDO regulations and policies



BEI Building
Electrification
Institute
CITIES DRIVING CHANGE