

# A Community Energy Plan for Pueblo County



*November 2020*

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## Executive Summary

This Community Energy Plan outlines tangible steps for Pueblo County to move the community toward its energy efficiency and resiliency goals. Xcel Energy Partners in Energy facilitated a series of workshops with the Energy Leadership Team (leadership team), starting in the spring of 2019, to develop this plan. The leadership team included representatives from Pueblo County, Black Hills Energy (BHE), San Isabel Electric Association (SIEA), Xcel Energy, and a myriad of other community organizations and representatives.

## Our Vision

*The Pueblo County community is committed to collaborative partnerships for our energy future that provides a just, equitable transition, and affordable opportunities that protect the environment and improve quality of life.*

## Our Goals

Pueblo County aspires to achieve the following energy goals in 2020-2021 and beyond:

- Engage at least 30% of low-income families (about 4,000 households) in low-income energy programming.
- On an annual basis, connect with at least 500 businesses to engage at least 100 in utility energy efficiency rebates and programs.
- Align business, workforce, education, human service, and economic development policies and programs to support Pueblo County’s energy transition.
- Achieve 100 percent renewable energy powering Pueblo County’s electric needs by 2035.
- Lead by example by investing in and showcasing energy efficiency, renewable energy, and innovative energy technologies at Pueblo County facilities.

## How Will We Get There?

To move toward its goals, Pueblo County’s Energy Leadership Team identified strategic initiatives and targets for four important focus areas. These focus areas and strategic initiatives are the working elements of the Community Energy Plan and will generate concrete actions and impacts. The focus areas are shown in Figure 1.

<p><b>Residential</b></p>	<p><b>Strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead residential outreach and engagement for energy efficiency and renewable energy programs</li> <li>• Target outreach to low-income households for energy efficiency programs</li> <li>• Investigate rental policies for energy efficiency and health</li> </ul>
<p><b>Commercial &amp; Industrial</b></p>	<p><b>Strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate and implement business energy outreach campaigns</li> </ul>

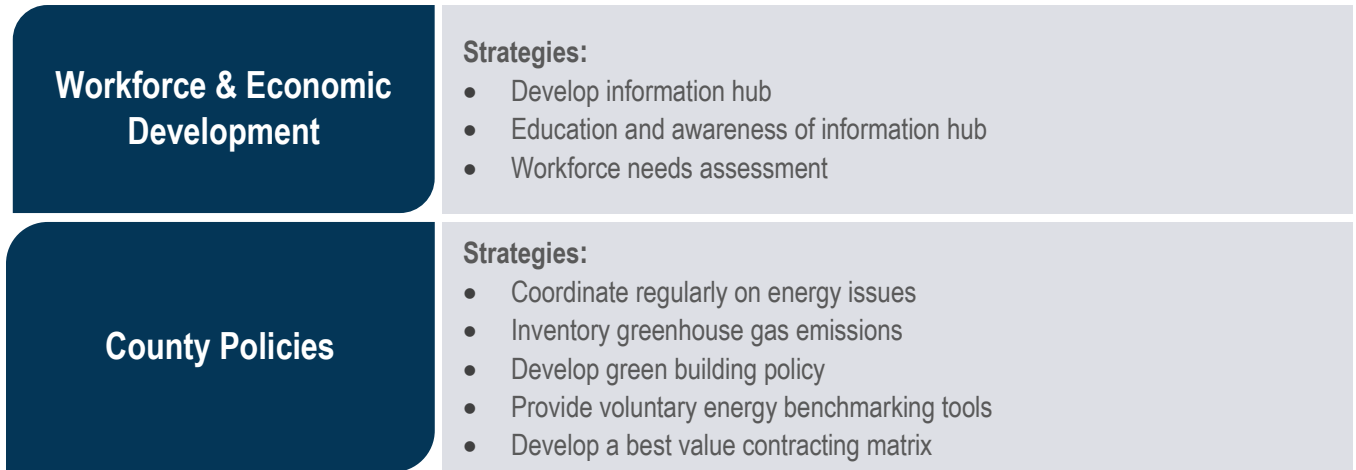


Figure 1: Focus Areas for Pueblo County's Community Energy Plan

The following playbook outlines key actions and timing, as well as what follows the Partners in Energy engagement period.

Table 1. Pueblo County Playbook for Achieving Strategic Goals

<p><b>Ongoing – Tracking</b></p>	<p><b>Immediate Actions</b></p>	<p><b>Longer Term Actions</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have regular check-ins to stay on course and adjust as needed</li> <li>• Quarterly meetings for provider coordination/co-branding efforts</li> <li>• Track implementation of strategies over time</li> <li>• Continue to identify new outreach channels to develop relationships with community liaisons</li> <li>• Recognize successes and high-performing community members</li> <li>• Regularly share outcomes with County Commissioners and the public</li> <li>• Refine strategy approaches to accommodate lessons learned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share Community Energy Plan with community through a press release and County website</li> <li>• Launch strategy teams</li> <li>• Determine calendar of activities and responsibilities for each strategy</li> <li>• Meet with Energy Coordinator / Economic Development director to onboard to strategies and begin assigning tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct workshops and coordinate community events</li> <li>• Plan and coordinate social media campaigns with other strategy efforts</li> <li>• Develop workforce development hub</li> <li>• Refresh/update outreach materials as appropriate</li> <li>• Begin developing co-branded residential outreach materials for general public and for low-income households</li> <li>• Begin researching rental policy for energy efficiency and health</li> </ul>

## Introduction

This Energy Action Plan outlines tangible steps for Pueblo County to move the community toward its energy efficiency and resiliency goals. The community’s main energy priorities are outlined below:

- Improving residential energy affordability
- Improving commercial and industrial energy efficiency
- Providing a just, equitable transition for Pueblo County’s energy workforce

This plan provides documentation of the Xcel Energy Partners in Energy planning process, an overview of Pueblo County’s demographics, the County’s baseline energy use and profile, a summary of the priority focus areas identified, and the near-term actions required to implement the plan. The plan was developed over the course of four, 2.5-hour workshops held in the spring, summer, and fall of 2019.

## Xcel Energy Partners in Energy

Xcel Energy is the main gas utility serving Pueblo County. In the summer of 2014, Xcel Energy launched Partners in Energy to support communities, such as Pueblo County, in developing and implementing a Community Energy Plan that supplements existing sustainability plans, strategies, and tools. The content of this plan is derived from a series of planning workshops held in the community, with a planning team committed to representing local energy priorities, following the process provided by Partners in Energy (Figure 2) and implementing plan strategies. Pueblo County’s planning team included the two electric utilities serving Pueblo County as well as community stakeholders from across the county.

Partners in Energy will work with Pueblo County to coordinate support for implementing the plan and will develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines specific support Xcel Energy will provide to help Pueblo County deploy its strategies and achieve its goals. Resources available from Xcel Energy to support implementation of the plan are illustrated in Figure 3.



Figure 2: Partners in Energy Process for Success



Figure 3: Resources from Xcel Energy for Implementation



## Who Are We?

Established in 1861, Pueblo County is located in southern Colorado, along the banks of the Arkansas River and Fountain Creek. Pueblo's history and identity is steeped in the railroad and steel industries, which are responsible for the community's vigorous work ethic and diverse cultural heritage. Today, Pueblo is a hub of industry and arts, serving as the commercial center of Southern Colorado and as a gateway to the Southwest. Three elected County Commissioners serve as the administrative and policy-setting authority of Pueblo County.

Bridging the gap between Southern Colorado and Colorado's Front Range, Pueblo is strategically located along the Interstate 25 corridor and the interstate rail line. In addition to EVRAZ, Xcel Energy's largest customer and the first solar-powered steel company in the United States, Pueblo is home to several industries that reflect Colorado's growing new energy economy and its abundant natural resources. Vestas, an internationally known wind turbine tower manufacturer, is a major employer and innovator in the field of renewable energy. Pueblo's cannabis industry has also flourished in recent years, and the County is a leader in innovative production, manufacturing, and research and development of cannabis.

The energy landscape in Pueblo County continues to change, and Pueblo is embracing clean energy solutions. Pueblo's wealth of land and solar potential makes it a natural hub for renewable energy projects. With the help of Xcel Energy, Pueblo is phasing out coal generation in favor of 525 megawatts (MW) of utility scale solar photovoltaic (PV) and 225 MW of battery storage. As Pueblo County continues to grow and attract new industry, it seeks to optimize clean energy opportunities and smart grid technologies as well as build resilience into its energy infrastructure.



Figure 4: Pueblo County Court House, Photo Credit: Brendle Group



## Geography, Population, and Demographics

With a population of approximately 166,447 (Esri, 2018), Pueblo County is the 10th largest county (by population) in the state of Colorado (Colorado Department of Local Affairs, 2019a). The County covers nearly 2,400 square miles approximately 120 miles south of Denver along the I-25 corridor and marks the southernmost point of the Front Range region (see Figure 5) (Esri, 2018). Pueblo County is home to the City of Pueblo, Pueblo West, Rye, Beulah, Boone, Avondale, and Colorado City.

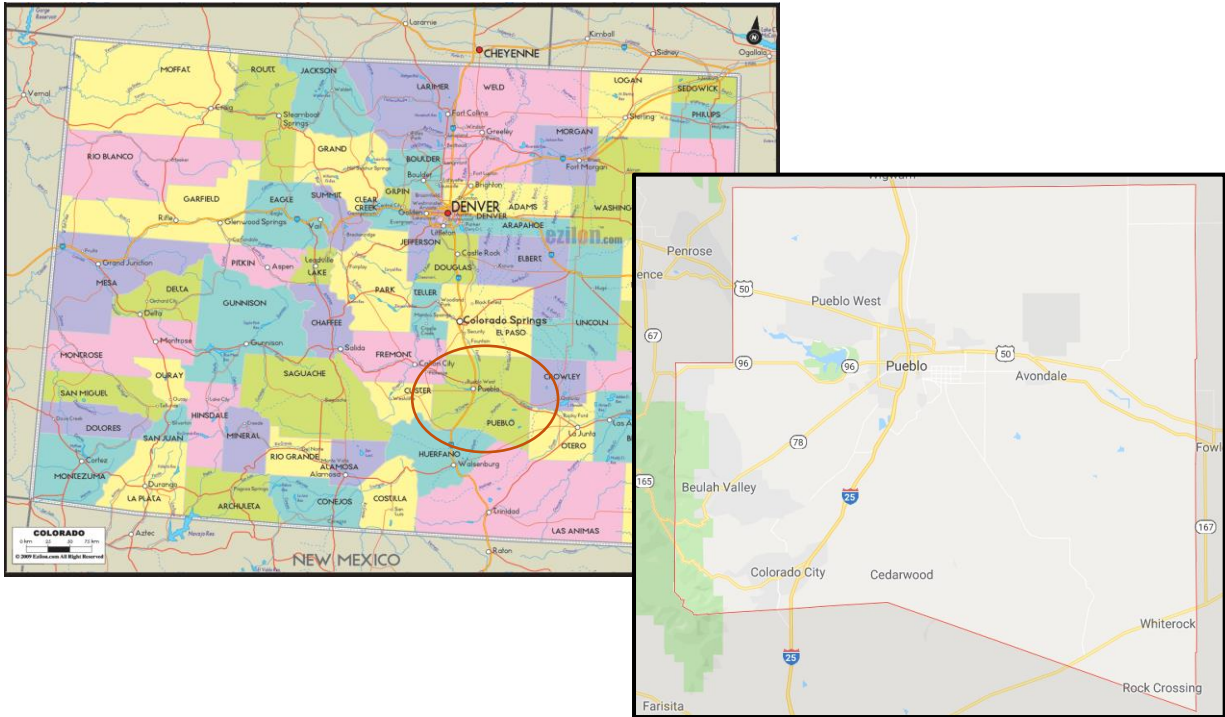


Figure 5: Map of Colorado and Breakout of Pueblo County

According to data from Environmental Systems Research Institute (Esri), Pueblo County grew 0.6 percent annually from 2010 to 2018 and is expected to grow 0.8 percent annually over the next five years (Esri, 2018). While this is a modest growth rate, increases in population can result in increased energy consumption. This population increase will also coincide with a more diverse community. Currently, Pueblo County is over 42 percent Hispanic/Latino, with an anticipated total increase of 1 percent in that population the next five years (Esri, 2018).

Pueblo County is also experiencing an aging population. In 2018, the median age was 39.5, with 18 percent over the age of 65 (Esri, 2018). By 2025, estimates show that the number of people over 65 will grow significantly (see Figure 6) (Colorado Department of Local Affairs, 2019b). This age group typically has limited and fixed incomes, making it more challenging to warrant spending on energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades.

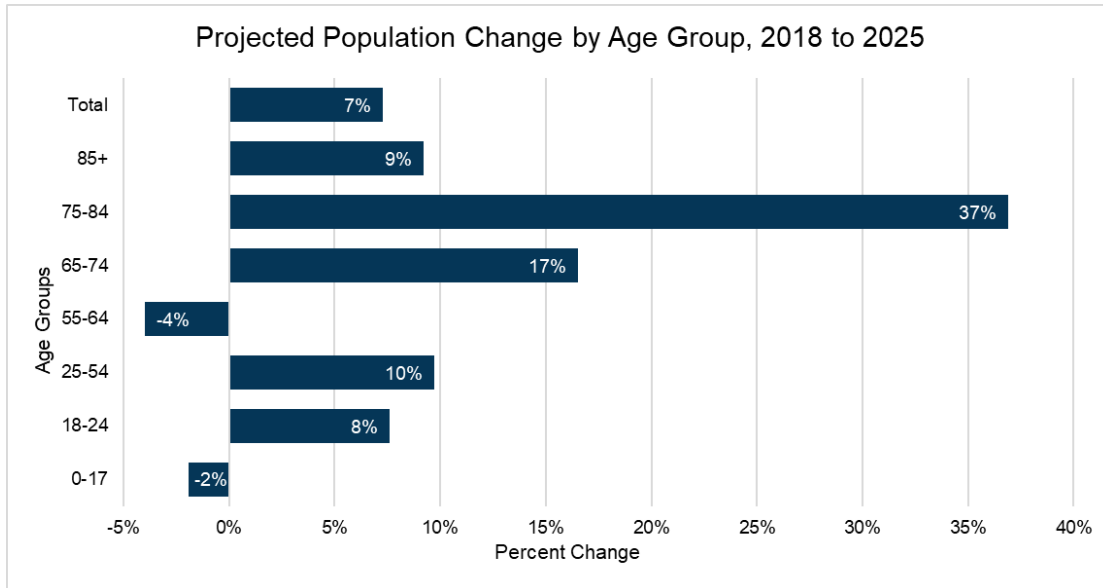


Figure 6: Pueblo County Population Change by Cohort, 2018 to 2025

Nearly 20 percent of Pueblo County’s population is considered to be living in poverty, compared to just over 11 percent state-wide, despite having an average lower cost of living (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017). The energy burden, or percent of income spent on energy costs, of this population is likely considerable; therefore, affordability is a key concern.

### Housing

According to the 2018 Esri Community Profile, there are 71,462 residential structures in Pueblo County, with 59 percent occupied by owners, and 33 percent occupied by renters. The remaining 8 percent are vacant. The majority of houses are in an urbanized area (nearly 86 percent) and are single-family homes (78 percent). Approximately 22 percent are considered multifamily homes (3 or more units), and just under 6 percent are mobile homes. Multifamily housing presents unique challenges for energy efficiency, due to the so-called “split incentive” where the occupant and owner are not the same.

Percent of Homes by Age, 2018

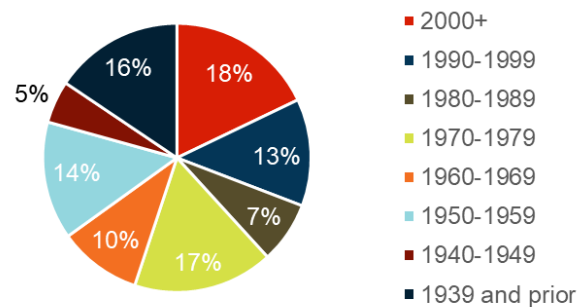


Figure 7: Pueblo County Housing Stock by Age

Figure 7 shows the distribution of the age of homes by decade (Esri, 2018). The housing stock in Pueblo County is aging, with 62 percent of homes built before 1980. These older homes may be in need of energy efficiency upgrades so could potentially benefit from rebate programs.

## Business and Economy

As of 2018, Pueblo County had an estimated labor force of 68,500 people, employed by nearly 3,500 businesses (United States Department of Labor, n.d.). The County has a 5 percent unemployment rate. The top industries are education and health services; trade, transportation, and utilities; leisure and hospitality; professional and business services; and manufacturing. As mentioned in the introduction to the “Who Are We?” section, several large manufacturing and energy companies, including Xcel Energy, have a strong presence in Pueblo County. The changing energy landscape in Pueblo County will have a significant impact on the County’s businesses and economy.

The cost of living and cost of doing business in Pueblo County is markedly lower than the state of Colorado at large, and than cities such as Colorado Springs and Denver (Pueblo Economic Development Corp, 2019). Pueblo County also has strong workforce development programs, training centers, and universities - to grow and strengthen the labor force. Many organizations, such as the AFL-CIO, LiUNA, and Pueblo County Community College, are actively supporting the construction and manufacturing trades.

Despite the lower cost of living and focus on workforce development, Pueblo County has an above-average poverty level (19.8 percent versus Colorado at 11.5 percent) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017). The strong workforce development and training network in Pueblo County provides an opportunity to connect the low-income population, along with others affected by the changing energy landscape, to jobs in the area. As the County transitions its energy profile in support of more renewable and low-carbon energy options, a number of new employment opportunities are likely to become available to Pueblo County residents. Leveraging and strengthening Pueblo’s existing workforce development system will help ensure this invigorated economy maximally benefits Pueblo County residents and businesses. Furthermore, this energy transition, in conjunction with access to energy efficiency and weatherization programming, could help significantly lower the energy burden for both residents and businesses, over time.

## Commitment to Sustainability

In 2016, the Comanche Solar project was developed in partnership with Xcel Energy as the largest solar project east of the Rockies, providing 120 MW of solar generation capacity, and marking a big step toward renewable generation in the County (Community Energy Inc., 2019). In April 2018, Pueblo County Commissioners passed Resolution 18-114, with the goal of powering the County’s electric needs with 100 percent renewable energy by 2035 (Mestas, 2018). In pursuit of this goal, the County remains very open to energy efficiency-related policies and the electrification of transportation. In addition to these commitments, Pueblo County is a SolSmart Bronze community, recognized for their commitment to spurring solar market growth.

Though Pueblo County recognizes the environmental and climate benefits of renewable energy generation, impacts to energy affordability, workforce development, and economic resilience have remained important drivers for Pueblo residents, businesses, and policy makers. Each of the County’s energy providers offers several assistance programs to low-income residents, and the County offers a workforce center to support the local community.

More holistically, the County is currently working through the LEED for Cities and Communities framework to update their Sustainability Plan. The Sustainability Plan, adopted in 2012, includes a comprehensive energy assessment, energy efficiency strategies, and renewable energy strategies. A Sustainability Plan

Action Team continues to meet monthly to implement initiatives outlined in the Sustainability Plan, along with new efforts.

### The Case for a Community Energy Plan

Pueblo County is faced with many energy challenges, including a changing energy economy and affordability concerns for residents and businesses. As such, Pueblo County is focused on finding ways to improve energy efficiency across the community - to address some of these challenges and make energy costs more affordable. Pueblo County is also committed to making the transition to 100 percent renewable energy just and equitable for all residents and businesses in the County. The Pueblo County Community Energy Plan will help ensure that affordable energy, environmental protection, and improved quality of life remain the foci as the County works to support its workforce and diversify its economy during this energy transition. Furthermore, this Community Energy Plan can serve as a roadmap for coordination and partnership among the various energy providers in Pueblo County - to leverage existing resources and maximize the impact of energy programs for all community members.

## Where Are We Now?

### Baseline Energy Analysis

An introductory step in the Partners in Energy planning process (see Figure 2) is to review energy consumption trends. Xcel Energy serves as Pueblo County’s gas provider, while Black Hills Energy (BHE) and San Isabel Electric Associate (SIEA) provide electricity to different parts of the County, shown in Figure 8 below.

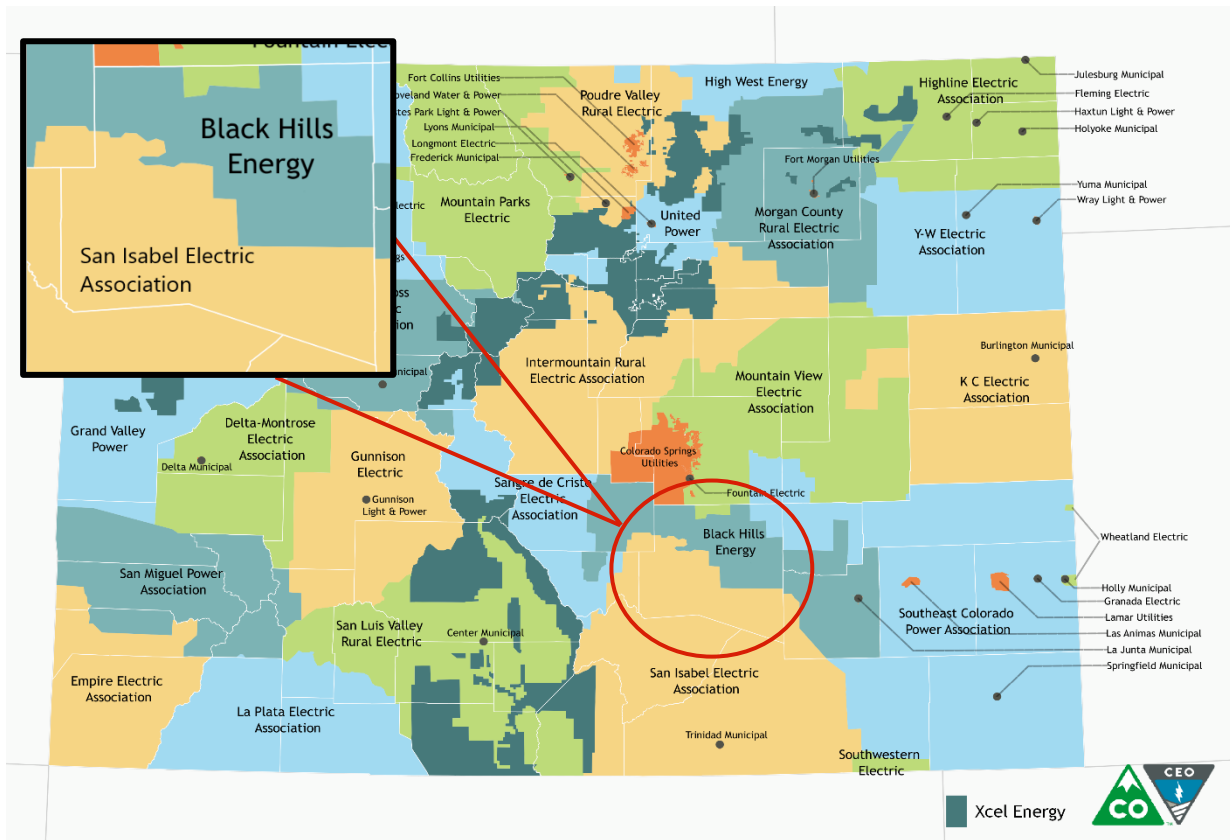


Figure 8: Map of Pueblo County Electricity Providers

The Partners in Energy team analyzed three years of historical energy data in Pueblo County by source (electricity, natural gas) and sector (residential, commercial and industrial, and County facilities) for each of the three utilities. Note that SIEA data includes their entire service territory, not just Pueblo County.

The baseline year was established as 2018. Data analyzed included energy consumption as well as total utility rebate and program participation. Note that a premise is a unique identifier for the location of utility service. In most cases, it is a facility location.

## Community Energy Use and Trending

### Xcel Energy – Natural Gas

Based on aggregated natural gas data provided by Xcel Energy, Pueblo County had 55,316 total natural gas premises in 2018 (see Figure 9). Of these, 93 percent are residential (51,425), 7 percent are commercial and industrial (3,872), and less than 0.03 percent are county facilities (19). While the number of commercial and industrial, and county facilities is small compared to the residential sector, these sectors account for 46 percent of natural gas consumption in Pueblo County (see Figure 10) and 35 percent of costs (see Figure 11). In 2018, Pueblo County consumed 67.4 million therms of natural gas, costing \$26 million community-wide.

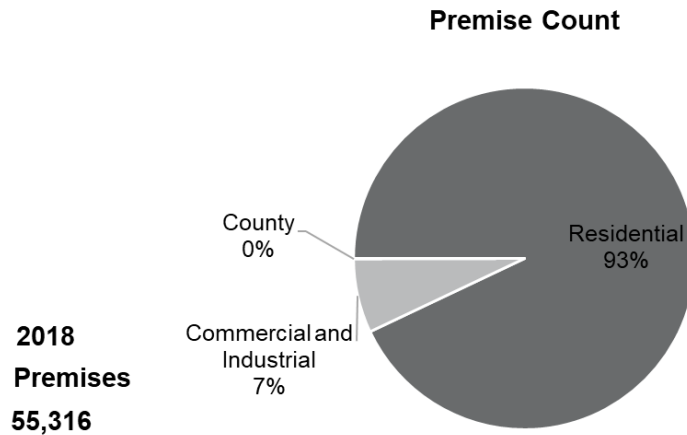


Figure 9: Pueblo County Natural Gas Premises

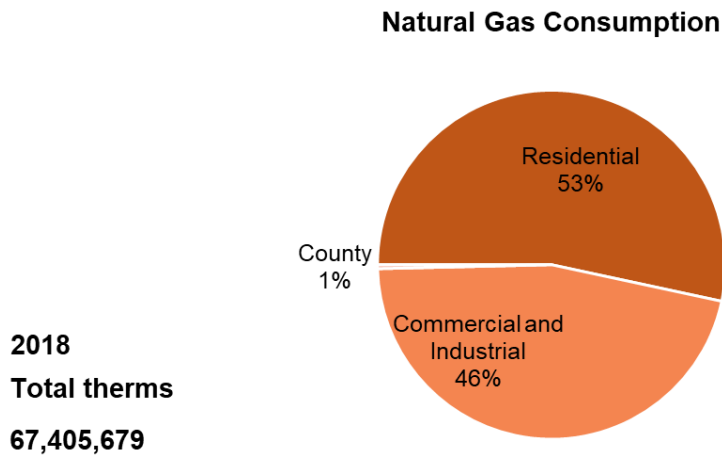


Figure 10: Pueblo County Natural Gas Consumption



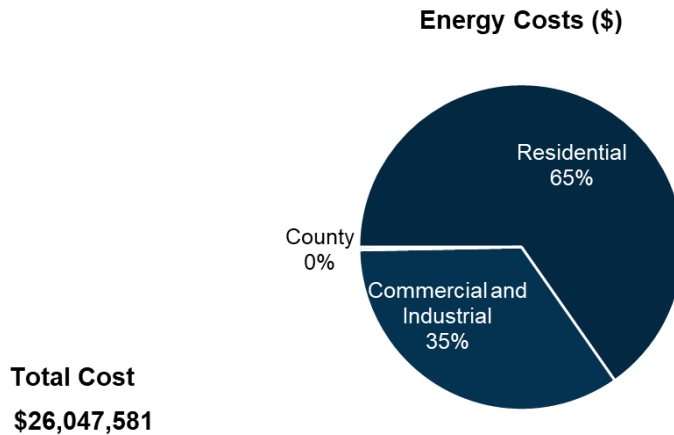


Figure 11: Pueblo County Natural Gas Costs

Natural gas consumption fluctuates from year to year, as shown in Figure 12. The residential sector maintains a slight edge over the commercial and industrial sector, and County consumption can be considered negligible in comparison. As shown on the chart, there was a decline, of nearly 5 percent between 2016 and 2017, in natural gas consumption and an increase of nearly 10 percent from 2017 to 2018. This data is not normalized for weather; but, looking at the number of heating degree days (HDD) shown below the chart, there is a fluctuation in HDD from year to year. HDD is the number of days where building heating is required (outside temperature is below 60°F). From this, we can see a correlation between the number of colder days and the amount of natural gas consumed for heating. Therefore, we assume that the more HDD in a given year, the more gas the community will consume.

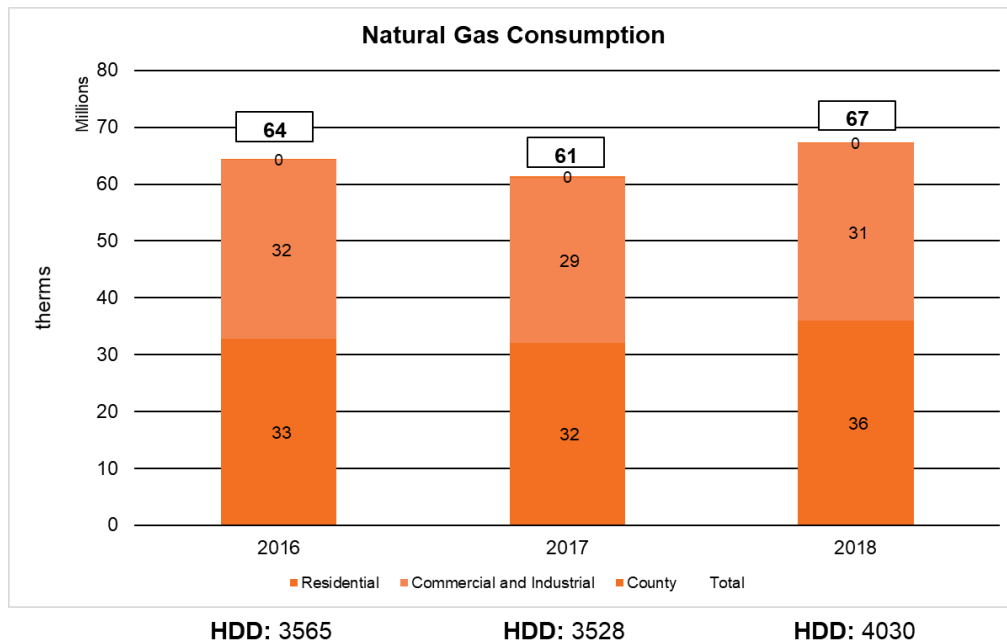


Figure 12: Year-to-Year Natural Gas Changes

Despite the negligible use on a community-wide level, the County facilities sector spent the most on natural gas per premise (Figure 13), at \$4,075 per premise in 2018. This is due to the operational needs of the County’s facilities, which use more natural gas in a single facility than other sectors. The commercial and industrial sector paid \$2,317 per premise, and residential paid \$331 per premise in 2018.

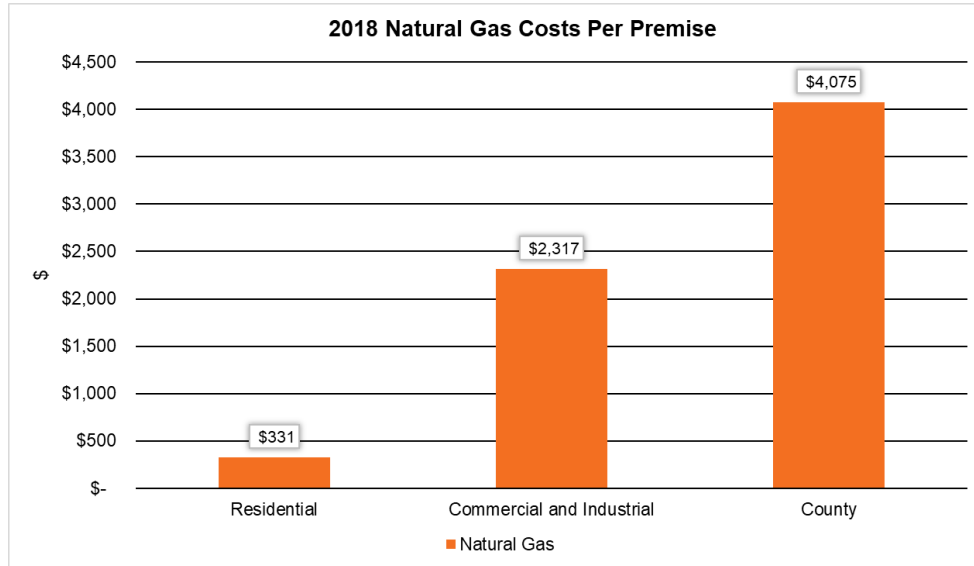


Figure 13: Natural Gas Costs per Premise

The year-to-year greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions profile parallels the use profile, shown in Figure 14. In 2018, Pueblo County’s natural gas consumption resulted in 357,729 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MT CO<sub>2e</sub>) - approximately the same as 76 passenger vehicles driven for one year.

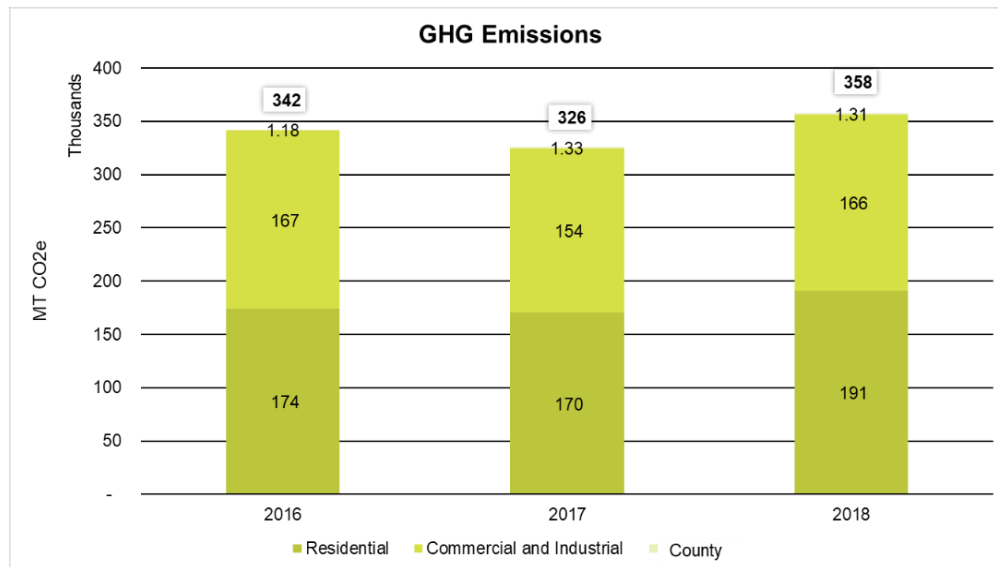


Figure 14: Year-to-Year GHG Emissions

Black Hills Energy – Electricity

Black Hills Energy serves 71,140 premises in Pueblo County with electricity. Similar to the Xcel Energy premises, the majority are residential (88 percent), followed by 12 percent commercial and industrial, and 0.5 percent public/governmental, some of which are also served by San Isabel Electric Association (e.g., County facilities) (see Figure 15).

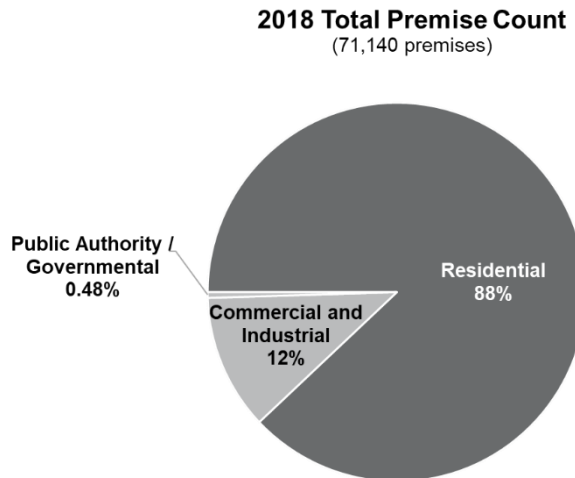


Figure 15: Black Hills Energy Electricity Premises

Electricity consumption, however, is primarily used by the commercial and industrial sector (59 percent), followed by the residential sector with 37 percent, and the public/governmental sector with 4.1 percent (Figure 16). This proportion of the public/governmental sector is notably larger for electricity consumption than natural gas consumption, representing opportunities for improved efficiency.

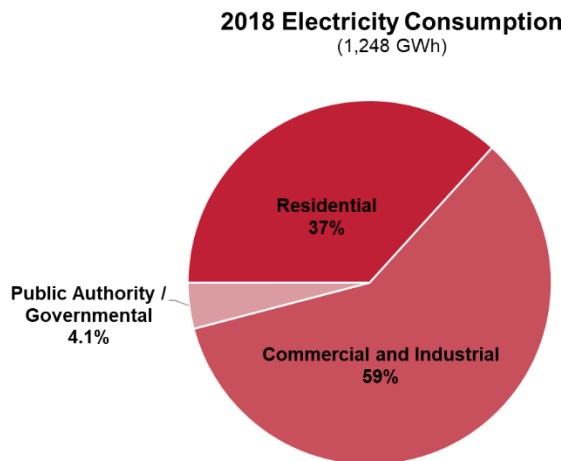


Figure 16: Black Hills Energy Electricity Consumption

Electricity costs follow a similar trend to natural gas costs, with the public/governmental sector having the greatest costs per premise, at \$147,357 (Figure 17) in 2018. The commercial and industrial sector spent \$10,658 per premise, and the residential sector spent \$1,188 per premise in 2018.

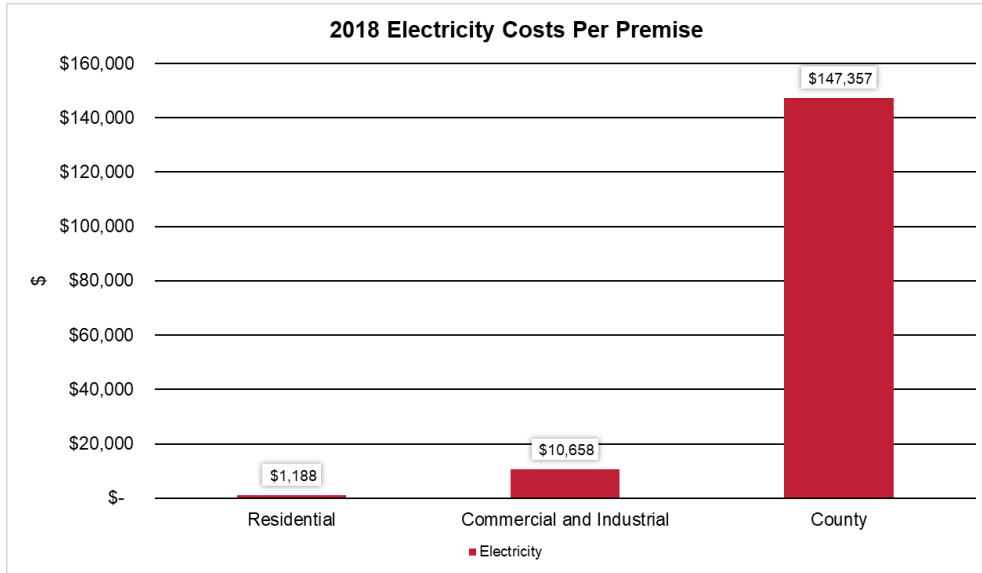


Figure 17: Black Hills Energy Electricity Costs per Premise

Similar to natural gas consumption, electricity consumption saw a decrease from 2016 to 2017 and an increase from 2017 to 2018, again without weather-normalized data (Figure 18). Cooling degree days (CDD), or the days above 65°F that require building cooling, provide some insight to these changes. From 2017 to 2018, there were more CDD, likely indicating the need for more cooling and therefore having a direct impact on electricity consumption.

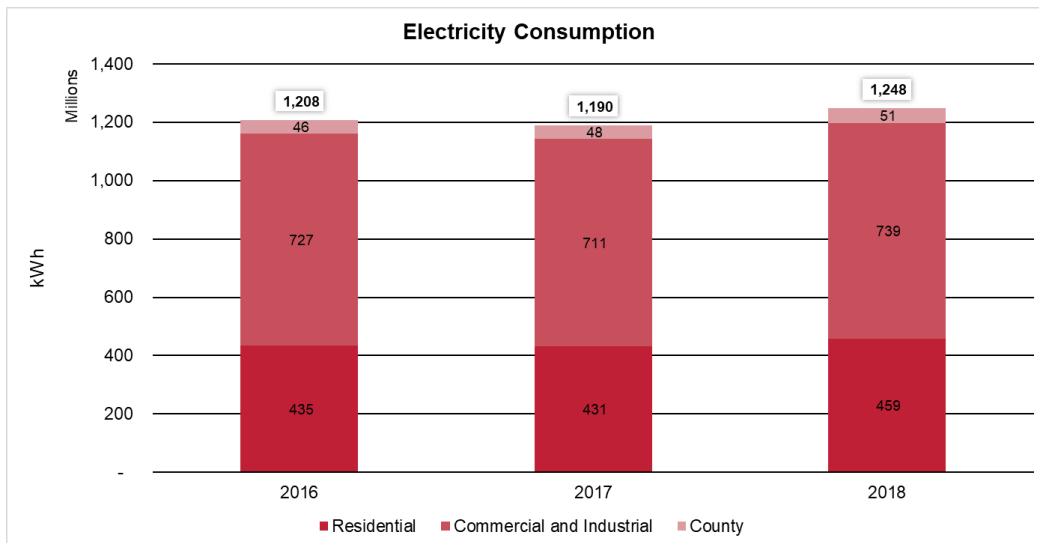


Figure 18: Black Hills Energy Year-to-Year Electricity Consumption

San Isabel Electric Association - Electricity

San Isabel Electric Associate (SIEA) serves 24,268 premises in their entire service territory, which includes Pueblo County. Figure 8 shows SIEA’s service territory. Of these premises, 89 percent are residential customers, while the remaining 11 percent are commercial and industrial customers (see Figure 19).

**2018 Total Premise Count**  
(24,268 premises)

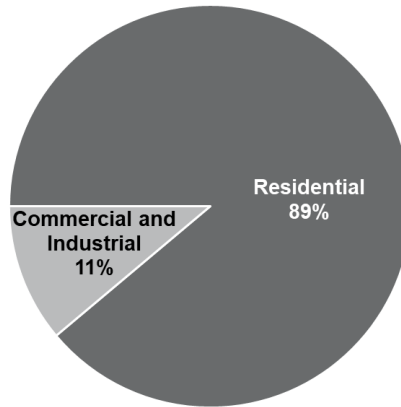


Figure 19: SIEA Electricity Premise Counts (entire service territory)

Similar to Black Hills Energy electricity data, the majority of SIEA’s electricity consumption is by the commercial and industrial sector (62%) and residential accounts for 38 percent, as shown in Figure 20.

**Electricity Consumption**  
(463.9 GWh)

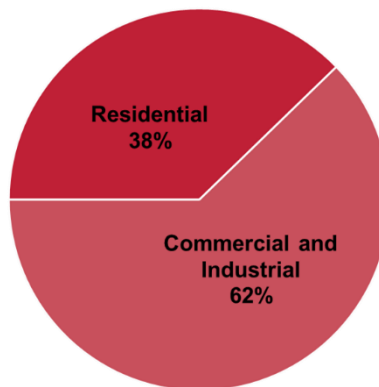


Figure 20: SIEA Electricity Consumption (entire service territory)

Costs follow a similar trend to both Black Hills Energy electricity and Xcel Energy natural gas costs, where the commercial and industrial sector paid the greatest amount per premise for electricity, at \$11,013 in 2018. The residential sector paid \$1,333 per premise in SIEA electricity territory (see Figure 21).

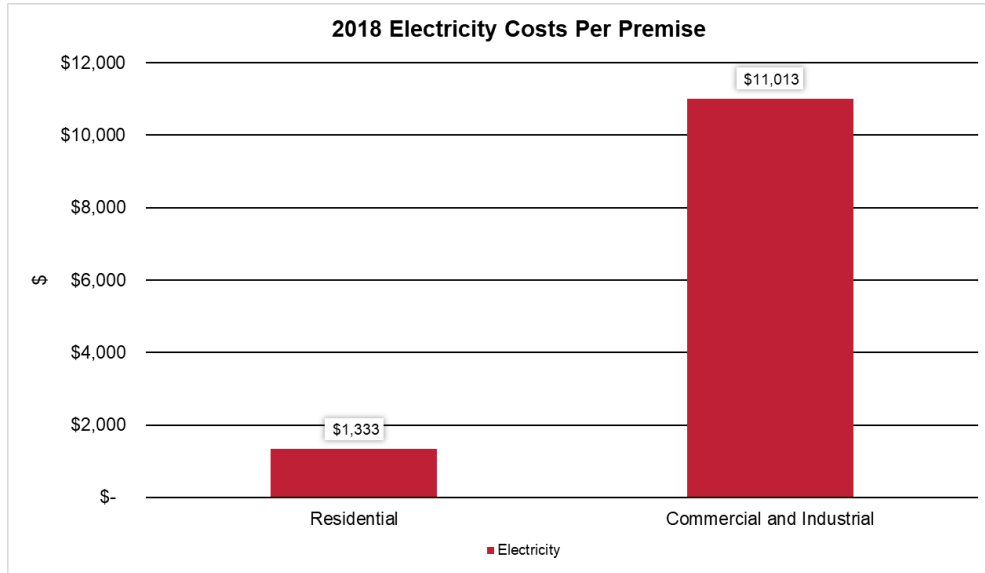


Figure 21: SIEA Electricity Costs per Premise

The year over year trends for SIEA electricity consumption vary slightly from those of Black Hills Energy, with a steady increase from 2016 to 2018, shown in Figure 22. These changes may be due to a variety of factors, such as increased number of premises or changes in operations at industrial facilities. These changes are minimal when taking the entire energy profile into account.

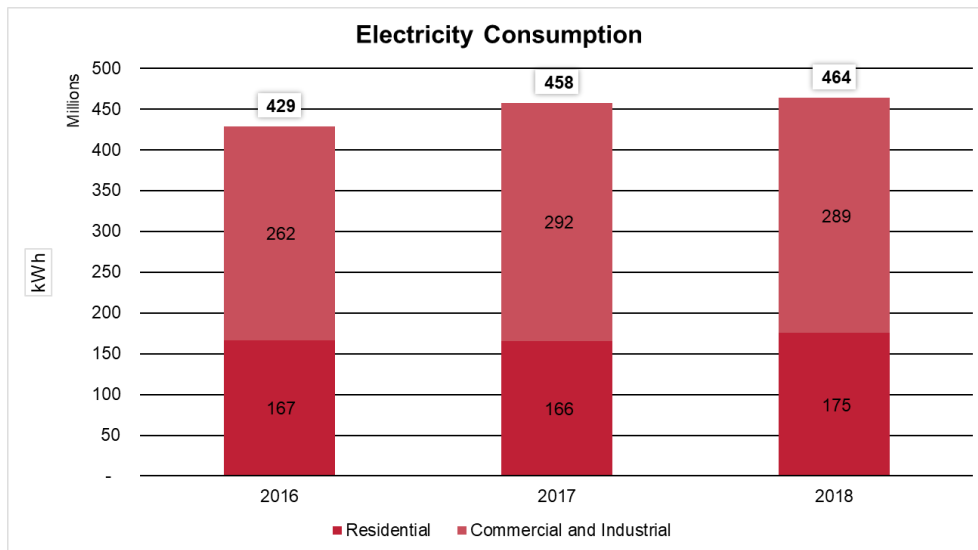


Figure 22: SIEA Year-to-year Electricity Consumption (entire service territory)



Table 2 below shows a comparison of electricity costs between the two providers for the residential and commercial sectors. The cost for residential is the same, while the cost for commercial varies slightly between the two providers.

Table 2: Electricity Provider Annual Cost Comparison, 2018

Sector	Electricity Provider	Electricity Use per Premise (kWh/premise)	Electricity Costs per Premise (\$/premise)	Electricity Costs per kWh
Residential	Black Hills	7,328	\$1,188	\$0.16
	SIEA	8,124	\$1,333	\$0.16
Commercial	Black Hills	89,901	\$10,658	\$0.12
	SIEA	107,054	\$11,013	\$0.10

### Efficiency Program Participation

The community energy profile also includes Xcel Energy, BHE, and SIEA historic demand-side-management (DSM) program participation for residents and businesses in Pueblo County. This shows a snapshot of what programs customers are using and to what extent. The data also show opportunities for greater participation in the available programs and the need for increased education and awareness of available energy savings opportunities.

Because Xcel Energy provides natural gas to Pueblo County, the number of Xcel Energy DSM programs available for gas-only customers is limited (in comparison to the number of programs available to customers in Xcel Energy’s electricity territory). Figure 23 shows historic residential participation in Xcel Energy programs over the last three years and Figure 24 show commercial and industrial participation in Xcel Energy programs over the last three years. While there was a slight increase in participation in 2018, there is still ample room for improvement. In 2018, participation in DSM programs saved Pueblo County 0.1 percent in natural gas consumption, representing less than 1 percent of eligible premises.

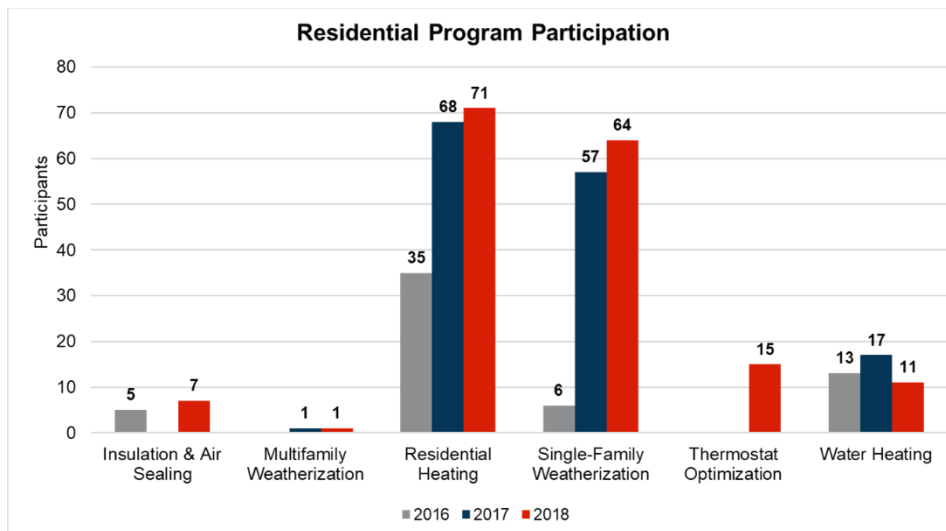


Figure 23: Xcel Energy Residential DSM Program Participation

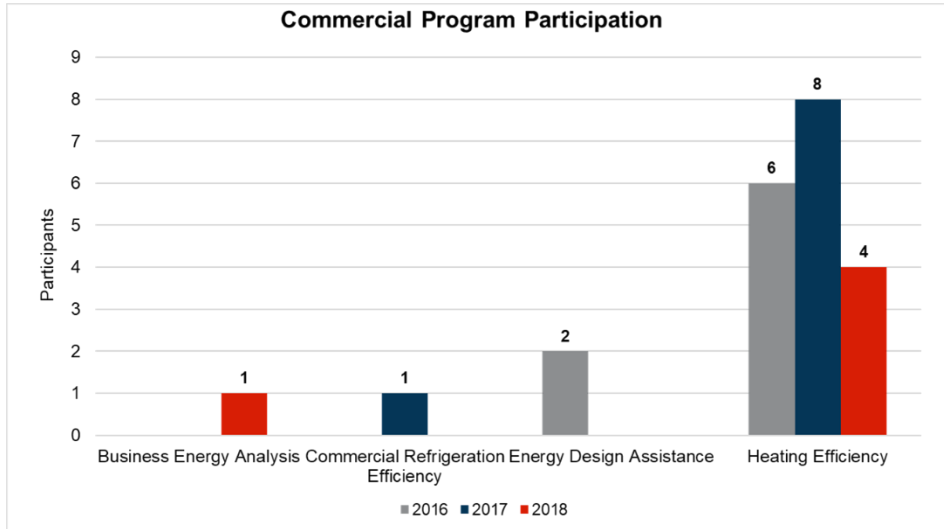


Figure 24: Xcel Energy Commercial DSM Program Participation

Black Hills Energy program participation, for their entire service territory, is shown below in Figure 25. Special programs include the Low-Income Assistance Program and School-Based Energy Education.

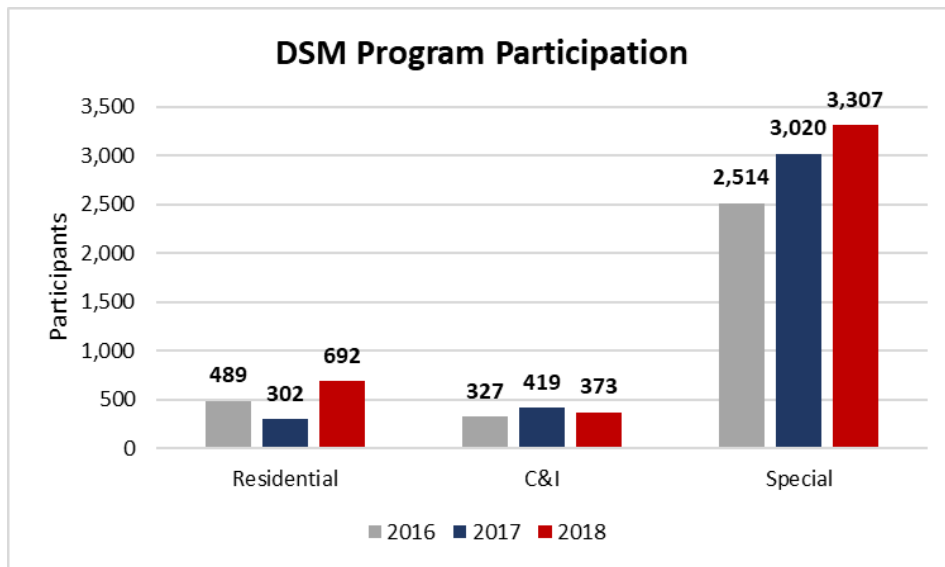


Figure 25: Black Hills Energy DSM Program Participation (entire service territory)

SIEA's DSM program participation, for their entire service territory, is shown below in Figure 26. There are also significant opportunities to improve program participation and savings.

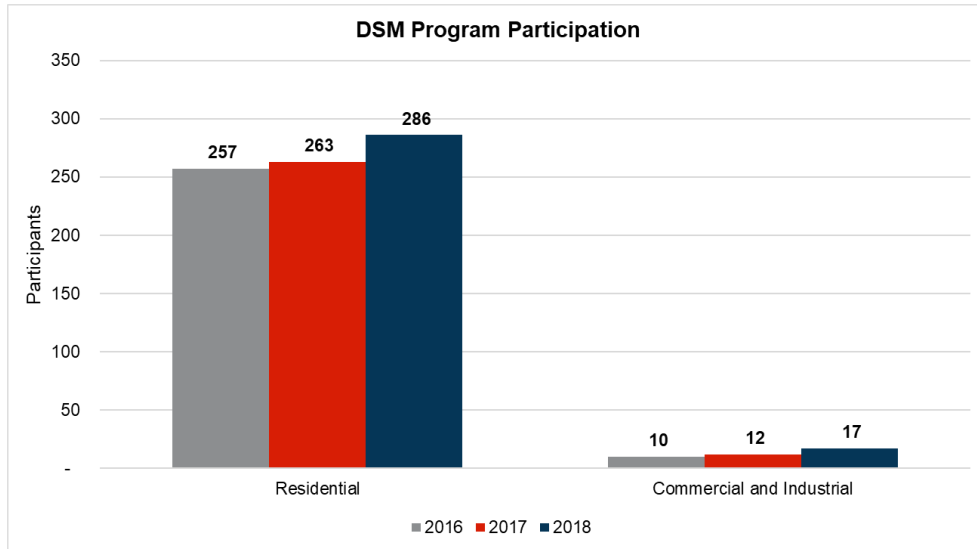


Figure 26: SIEA DSM Program Participation (entire service territory)

## Existing Energy Practices

Pueblo County is already leading several community energy initiatives and supports many others lead by non-County authorities. The following table highlights existing plans and programs that will help lay the foundation for successfully pursuing the goals outlined in this Community Energy Plan.

Table 3. Community Energy Initiatives

<b>Community Energy Initiatives</b>	
<b>County</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2012 County Sustainability Plan – Energy Efficiency &amp; Renewable Energy</li> <li>• Ready for 100% City &amp; County resolutions</li> <li>• Energy Performance Contracts</li> <li>• Energy bill analyses and building benchmarking</li> <li>• Grant writing</li> <li>• Workforce development initiatives</li> <li>• Low-Income energy programming</li> <li>• Educational classes                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Solar PV</li> <li>○ Vehicle Electrification</li> <li>○ Energy Efficiency</li> <li>○ Demand Management</li> <li>○ Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (CPACE)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and apprenticeship programs</li> <li>• CSU Pueblo leverages Black Hills Energy rebates for upgrades</li> <li>• CSU Pueblo is exploring additional on-site solar plus storage</li> <li>• Housing Authority is in the process of installing community solar garden where 60% is allocated for low-income customers</li> </ul>

## Local Outreach and Communication Channels

Engaging the community is critical to reaching Action Plan goals. Below are some of the ways residents and businesses currently receive information. These communication channels will be helpful during implementation efforts.

Table 4. Local Outreach

<b>Local Outreach Channels</b>
<p><b>Digital Communications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Pueblo County Energy Efficiency &amp; Renewable Energy (EERE) website</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">EDGIS Facebook page</a></li> <li>• Sustainability Plan Action Team (SPAT) <a href="#">website</a> and <a href="#">Facebook page</a></li> <li>• Pueblo Chieftain</li> <li>• KOAA News</li> <li>• The Pulp</li> </ul> <p><b>Events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pueblo Chile &amp; Frijoles Festival (September)</li> <li>• Renewable Energy Owner's Coalition of America (REOCA) events</li> <li>• Black Hills Energy Efficiency Events</li> <li>• San Isabel Electric Association Events</li> <li>• Pueblo Association of Home Builders Home and Garden Show</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Spaces for Collateral Distribution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rawlings Library</li> <li>• Community Centers</li> <li>• Catholic Charities</li> <li>• Department of Social Services</li> </ul>

## Where Do We Want to Go?

### Our Energy Vision

Prior to the first workshop, the Energy Leadership Team provided feedback via survey on words and phrases that represent Pueblo County’s energy vision. Figure 27 represents a word cloud developed to show the most common words and phrases. At the first workshop, the Energy Leadership Team crafted three vision statements using these concepts. Following the first workshop, County staff conducted public engagement sessions to get resident feedback on the vision statements.



Figure 27: Energy Vision Word Cloud

During the second workshop, the Energy Leadership Team took these concepts and public feedback to craft the final energy vision statement:

***The Pueblo County community is committed to collaborative partnerships for our energy future that provides a just, equitable transition, and affordable opportunities that protect the environment and improve quality of life.***



## How Are We Going to Get There?

To realize this vision, the Energy Leadership Team chose four focus areas to target their efforts: Residential Affordability, Commercial & Industrial Facilities, Workforce & Economic Development, and County Policies. All focus areas will have common themes of energy efficiency, renewable energy, and outreach and education.

These focus areas were chosen based on the baseline utility data, local priorities and needs, existing programs and initiatives, and identified opportunity gaps. To address the focus areas, actionable strategies that all utility partners and additional partners can take to achieve the goals of this plan, were developed.

### Focus Area 1: Residential Affordability

Pueblo County residents pay an average of \$331 per premise per year for natural gas and an average of \$1,261 per premise per year for electricity. As mentioned in the “Who Are We” section of this plan, nearly 20 percent of Pueblo County residents are living in poverty. Further, the population over age 65 is expected to grow significantly in the next five years, which could increase the number of residents living on a fixed income. Residents living in poverty or on a fixed income are more likely to have a higher energy burden, (percent of monthly income spent on energy bills) making affordability a key concern.

All of the utilities involved in developing this Community Energy Plan have specific programs designed to reduce the energy burden of these customers. Additionally, the County runs their own weatherization program in partnership with the Colorado Energy Office (CEO) (Pueblo Colorado, 2014). However, participation in these programs has been limited, which means there are opportunities to engage more customers in programs so they can improve the energy efficiency of their homes. With so many existing efforts focused on providing weatherization and energy efficiency services to Pueblo County residents, there exists a unique and significant opportunity to leverage resources to improve residential energy affordability. Furthermore, this Community Energy Plan presents new channels for utility providers to work together to identify efficiencies they can use to deliver similar programs in their shared service territories.

#### Goal

***Engage at least 30% of low-income families (about 4,000 households) in low-income energy programming.***

#### Strategies

The priority strategies identified by the Energy Leadership Team to support the residential affordability focus area include the following:

- Residential outreach and engagement for energy efficiency and renewable energy programs
- Targeted outreach, to low-income households, for energy efficiency and renewable energy programs
- Investigate rental policies for energy efficiency and health

#### Estimated Impacts

The strategies outlined in this section are estimated to result in a 460% increase in natural gas savings over the 2018 baseline year through Xcel Energy program participation. This accounts for 0.3% of countywide natural gas use. The strategies are also expected to have significant electricity savings for Black Hills Energy and San Isabel Electric Association.

## Strategy 1: Residential Outreach and Engagement for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Programs

### Description

Engaging a significant portion of low-income households, as identified in the residential goal, will require a strong foundation of more general outreach and engagement. Whereas targeted outreach to low-income households will require more involvement from both the County and local non-profits, general outreach can be coordinated primarily among the County's energy providers.

### Targets

- Reach at least 10,000 households with residential energy efficiency and renewable energy program information.

### Scope

- Preliminary meeting(s) or workshops attended by BHE, SIEA, and Xcel Energy to identify areas of program alignment and opportunities for streamlined delivery, coordination, and/or co-branding
- Develop co-branded outreach materials, in English and Spanish, that provide comprehensive information about programs across all providers and that compare program features (e.g., a flyer that explains all weatherization programs available through the County, BHE, SIEA, and Xcel Energy)
- Communicate program offering changes and distribute materials to community messengers
- Regular provider meetings/check-ins to keep program materials up to date
- Conduct outreach and engagement to share consolidated program information with community (e.g., tabling at farmers markets, social media campaigns, school programming)

### Responsible Parties

- Lead: County Energy Coordinator
- Support: Residential program representatives from BHE, SIEA, and Xcel Energy; Avondale Residential Team, and residential focus area team - to help distribute information and attend events

### Timeline

- Q3 2020 – Coordination meetings to identify potential program coordination
- Q4 2020 – Development of co-branded program information
- Q1 2021 – Initial outreach including farmers' markets, social media campaigns, and community events
- Q2 2021 – Continued outreach, possibly including door-to-door outreach
- Ongoing – Quarterly provider meetings to track program participation progress and to update coordinated outreach materials

### Funding/Resources

- Coordinated program flyers
- Volunteers
- Tabling event materials (tables and chairs, tent, table cloth/banner, interactive activity, giveaways)
- BHE – DSM programming funds

- SIEA – Energy auditing programming budget
- Xcel Energy – Outreach materials development assistance and implementation support per MOU

### **Outreach Channels**

- County and community libraries
- Chamber of Commerce
- Latino Chamber of Commerce
- Places of worship
- Local news outlets (The Pulp, Pueblo Chieftain, KOAA News, Public Access Channel, etc.)
- Social media (County, Xcel Energy, SIEA, BHE)
- Pueblo's Energy Future
- Flyers in City-County Library District
- Schools
- Eagles and Veterans Clubs
- Coffee Shop bulletin boards (Solar Roast, Gypsy Java, 5th & Main)
- Continuum of Care/other non-profits
- Avondale Community Center
- House parties
- Door-to-door

### **Measurement**

- Number of co-branded marketing collateral disseminated
- Number of residents signed up for programming
- Energy savings realized
- How did you hear about the program (referral, word of mouth, marketing collateral, etc.)

## Strategy 2: Targeted Outreach to Low-Income Households for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Programs

### Description

Once providers develop a strong base of coordinated outreach, more targeted efforts to low-income households will be needed to achieve the residential goal. Successful outreach to low-income households will require trust between providers and community members and may require more relationship-based outreach, such as door-to-door efforts, block parties, and communicating through trusted neighborhood liaisons. Outreach materials for low-income households should be accessible to seniors and those with low-English proficiency.

### Targets

- Engage 4,000 low-income households in energy efficiency programming.

### Scope

- Identify all existing services and programs offered to low-income households (by energy providers, non-profits, Pueblo County, etc.)
- Identify areas of alignment and opportunities for synergy/program consolidation between programs/providers/organizations
- Develop outreach materials accessible to Spanish-speakers and older adults - to communicate identified programs and garner participation
- Conduct interpersonal outreach and engagement through relationship-based strategies such as house parties, meetings held in places of worship, and word-of-mouth

### Responsible Parties

- Lead: County Energy Coordinator
- Support: Residential program representatives from BHE, SIEA, and Xcel Energy, Energy Outreach Colorado, Centro de Los Pobres, Sister Nancy Crafton

### Timeline

- Q3 2020 – Coordination meetings to identify potential program coordination
- Q4 2020 – Development of co-branded program information
- Q1 2021 – Begin developing relationships, to cultivate avenues of outreach, with community resource centers, libraries, schools, places of worship, etc.
- Q2 2021 – Continued outreach including door-to-door outreach and attendance at community events such as resource fairs
- Ongoing – Quarterly provider (including non-profits) meetings to track program participation progress and to update coordinated outreach materials

### Funding

- Coordinated program flyers
- Volunteers
- Tabling event materials (tables and chairs, tent, table cloth/banner, interactive activity, giveaways)
- BHE – DSM programming funds
- SIEA – Energy auditing programming fund

- Xcel Energy – Outreach materials development assistance and implementation support per MOU

### **Outreach Channels**

- Door-to-door
- Resource centers
- Centro de los Pobres
- Sister Nancy Crafton
- Bi-lingual program information
- Latino Chamber of Commerce
- Places of worship
- Local news outlets (The Pulp, Pueblo Chieftain, KOAA News, Public Access Channel, etc.)
- Social media (County, Xcel Energy, SIEA, BHE)
- Pueblo's Energy Future
- Bi-lingual flyers
- City-County Library District
- Coffee shop bulletin boards (Solar Roast, Gypsy Java, 5th & Main)
- Schools
- Eagles and Veterans Clubs

### **Measurement**

- Number of flyers disseminated
- Number of low-income residents signed up for programming
- Number of weatherization / income-qualified program visits
- Energy savings realized
- Dollars saved via weatherization / energy efficiency program participation
- Number of resources available in Spanish
- Number of programs delivered in Spanish

### Strategy 3: Investigate Rental Policies for Energy Efficiency and Health

#### Description

Rental properties present a unique challenge with respect to renewable energy and energy efficiency upgrades. The disconnect between building ownership and building occupancy often means building upgrades are put off or never completed. This disconnect can lead to poor living conditions and may place the cost burden on the renter. A rental policy for energy efficiency and health would present one possible solution, by developing a database of rental properties and requiring these properties to pass an inspection for health and safety, as well as energy efficiency, prior to being registered.

#### Targets

- Complete a rental policy feasibility analysis by 2021

#### Scope

- Research existing policies and best practices and identify political climate
- Engage renters - to understand renter challenges and needs related to energy efficiency
- Engage rental property companies - to understand landlord challenges and needs related to energy efficiency
- Compile findings and develop recommendations
- Develop database of registered rentals –require aspiring rentals to undergo an inspection for health and safety and energy efficiency in order to become registered.
- Identify requisite energy standards and enforcement protocol
- Identify grants to fund improvements at a free or reduced cost

#### Responsible Parties

- Lead: Energy Coordinator
- Support: Partners in Energy team, landlord/property manager associations, rental community, Pueblo City-County Health Department

#### Timeline

- Q3/Q4 2020: Conduct research, develop outreach plan
- Q1/Q2 2021: Conduct outreach to renters, landlords
- Q3/Q4 2021: Compile findings, develop recommendations

#### Resources/Funding

- Facilities for community engagement
- Programs to provide free upgrades to rentals (via grants)
- Pueblo County budget to include as part of Energy Coordinator's work plan

#### Outreach Channels

- Social media
- County website
- Direct outreach to rental property companies
- Direct outreach to renters

#### Measurement

- Number of renters engaged
- Number of landlords engaged



## Focus Area 2: Commercial & Industrial Facilities

There are approximately 3,500 businesses in Pueblo County. Of those, about 186 are very large commercial or industrial facilities over 100,000 square feet, 257 are large facilities between 40,000 and 99,999 square feet, and 269 are mid-sized facilities between 20,000 and 39,999 square feet. Most Pueblo County businesses are smaller facilities (under 20,000 square feet).

The largest commercial and industrial facilities typically have high energy consumption and/or demand. Very large energy users typically have an energy manager as well as a dedicated utility account manager, so they are often already coordinating on energy needs and making improvements to increase efficiency and manage demand.

Sometimes large- and mid-sized facilities have an on-site energy manager and/or utility account manager, but often their facilities managers also play the role of energy coordinator. Some have participated in utility programs and rebates, but many cite concerns like lack of time, resources, or staff expertise as reasons why they may not be making efficiency or renewable energy improvements.

Small- and medium-sized businesses typically do not have a dedicated energy manager on staff, and often navigate the complexities of energy efficiency programs and rebates on their own. Similar to larger businesses, lack of time, limited resources, and uncertainty about return on investment from energy improvements often results in inaction.

In recent years, Pueblo County has been sharing information about energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities for commercial and industrial facilities through the County's website. The information includes details about the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (CPACE) financing opportunity, utility programs and rebates, how to understand energy bills, and grant information.

For this focus area, the Energy Leadership Team discussed the need to tell local stories and highlight area businesses' success stories in order to increase participation and engagement in energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities. They also discussed the importance of sector-specific and sustained outreach to businesses, to address some of the barriers associated with business participation - reinforcing that more time and attention may be needed for some small and medium sized businesses (due to their lack of on-site staff or familiarity with energy issues).

### Goal

The Energy Leadership Team set the following goal for commercial and industrial engagement:

**On an annual basis, connect with at least 500 businesses to engage at least 100 in utility energy efficiency rebates and programs.**

### Strategies

The following strategies were identified as priorities to help achieve the goal:

- Coordinate and implement business energy outreach campaigns
- Implement commercial and industrial energy benchmarking (see Focus Area 4: County Policies)
- Adopt a green building policy or incentive program (see Focus Area 4: County Policies)

## Strategy 4: Coordinate and Implement Business Energy Outreach Campaigns

### Description

Area utility providers currently conduct their own outreach campaigns about energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities. Additionally, Pueblo County's Business Energy Challenge helps connect businesses with energy information, savings, and prizes. This strategy focuses on developing coordinated marketing and outreach campaigns across utilities, in coordination with Pueblo County, to improve awareness of and participation in energy-related rebates and challenge activities.

The coordinated campaigns will employ a targeted sector-based approach, meaning they will focus on tailoring messaging, marketing tactics, and opportunities for specific community destinations and business sectors. They will showcase area businesses that have implemented exemplary energy efficiency improvements and/or renewable energy projects.

Preliminary sectors and destinations to target for campaign development and piloting include: (1) the Riverwalk/Downtown/Runyon Baseball Complex area; and (2) restaurants. Future campaigns could focus on automobile dealerships, the hospitality industry, health care providers, the cannabis industry, and agriculture.

### Targets

- Connect with at least 500 businesses annually through targeted outreach campaigns

### Scope

- Develop a preliminary marketing strategy framework for each targeted campaign
- Research businesses, property ownership details, and energy efficiency needs and opportunities through phone calls or visits with target sectors
- Identify applicable utility audit processes and energy efficiency rebates/programs for target sector/location
- Clarify processes, contact information, and other logistics/information for utility resources
- Identify business success stories related to target sector and develop key messages and local examples to include in collateral and outreach
- Create targeted outreach collateral (e.g., website content, flyers/brochures, presentation slides, speaking points)
- Develop a communications schedule to disseminate information
- Train community and business leaders on key messages and resources
- Implement outreach campaign per marketing strategy framework and communications schedule

### Responsible Parties

- Lead: Partners in Energy creates coordinated marketing material
- Support: Black Hills Energy, San Isabel Electric Association, and Xcel Energy provide program content; Pueblo County provides access to outreach channels; other supporting partners to be identified in marketing strategy framework development

### Timeline

- Q4 2020 – Confirm first targeted sector/location and begin marketing strategy framework development and research

- Q1 2021 – Coordinate program information, create draft collateral materials, and develop communications schedule for campaign #1.
- Q2 2021 – Train community and business leaders and launch first targeted campaign; confirm second targeted sector/location and begin marketing strategy framework development and research.
- Q3 2021 – Complete first campaign implementation; coordinate program information, create draft collateral materials, and develop communications schedule for campaign #2.
- Q4 2021– Train community and business leaders and launch targeted campaign #2; confirm third targeted sector/location and begin marketing strategy framework development and research.
- Q1 2022 – Complete second campaign implementation; coordinate program information, create draft collateral materials, and develop communications schedule for campaign #3.

### **Funding/Resources**

- Utility communications staff and resources can be leveraged for some marketing support.
- Pueblo County and Partners in Energy to provide support for print collateral development and website content development.
- CoCreate LLC has a marketing framework that can be used for campaign design and development.

### **Outreach Channels**

- Share campaign via County website, utility websites, business groups and chambers of commerce
- Press release(s) about sector-specific opportunities

### **Measurement**

- Utility program participation
- Collateral distributed
- Website views

### Focus Area 3: Workforce & Economic Development

As Pueblo County transitions to renewable energy, the community wants to ensure a just and equitable transition for workers in the energy sector. As this energy transition occurs, it will be important to have opportunities available that bolster workers and the economy. An economic impact analysis by University of Colorado Boulder has shown that the energy transition will result in net job growth and increased disposable income for residents of Pueblo County (Leeds School of Business - Business Research Division, 2018).

There are many resources already available in Pueblo County focusing on training and connecting workers to jobs, in the area, with livable wages; but, information can be hard to find and the gaps and needs of the workforce are not always understood. The goal and strategy for this focus area is to bring this information together to provide a better resource for the Pueblo County workforce.

#### Goal

***Align business, workforce, education, human service, and economic development policies and programs to support Pueblo County's energy transition.***

#### Strategies

The following strategies were identified as priorities to help achieve the goal:

- Develop information hub
- Education and awareness of information hub
- Workforce needs assessment

Additional strategies identified by the Energy Leadership Team for future consideration or implementation include the following:

- Industry needs assessment – similar to workforce needs assessment, but focused on filling the gaps that employers have

## Strategy 5: Develop Workforce Information Hub

### Description

While Pueblo County has many resources available to aid workforce development, information about what is available can be difficult to find and is spread out across many organizations. This strategy focuses on streamlining the available information into a single online information hub, to provide a single place to go for a listing of all opportunities.

### Targets

- Launch of webpage on County website by end of 2020

### Scope

- Gather information about all available qualified contractors, trainings, programs, classes, certifications, etc. available in Pueblo County
- Contact responsible organizations to ensure information about each opportunity is up to date
- Develop web landing page to host information on County website
- Maintain information on biannual basis

### Responsible Parties

- Lead: Pueblo County Energy Coordinator and Economic Development Director (Marisa Stoller)
- Support: Partners in Energy staff, Energy Leadership Team, LiUNA, AFL-CIO, CSU-Pueblo, Pueblo County Community College, Southern Colorado Manufacturers Group, PEDCO

### Timeline

- Q4 2020 – Meeting with Energy Coordinator / Economic Development director to onboard to strategies and begin assigning tasks
- Q1/Q2 2021 – Research available opportunities, compile information
- Q1-Q3 2021 – Develop web landing page
- Q4 2021 – Launch information hub
- Bi-annually – add new information, keep existing information and resources up to date

Important dates to keep in mind:

- September – Colorado Workforce Month
- October – Manufacturing Month

### Funding/Resources

- Funding may be required for web development if this cannot be done by Pueblo County.
- Outside services (e.g., student intern and/or consultant resources) may be necessary, depending on Energy Coordinator and Web Developer skillset and workload.

### Outreach Channels

- See Strategy 6

### Measurement

- Number of organizations represented on website
- Number of opportunities represented on website

## Strategy 6: Education & Awareness of Information Hub

### Description

Following the development of the information hub, a concerted effort to educate the community and raise awareness of the webpage and the resources it provides will be important for it to be effective. This strategy focuses on providing information to organizations and the community to encourage the use of the hub.

### Targets

- Launch of webpage on County website by the end of 2020

### Scope

- Develop communications plan to disseminate information about the hub
- Create coordinated outreach collateral (e.g., flyers/brochures, social media, presentation content) that can be used across the community
- Implement outreach campaign per communications plan
- Host open houses, meet & greets, or other informational events with representatives from partner organizations, companies & contracting agencies, and those in the workforce
- Partner with local organizations for events and information sessions
- Develop success stories and testimonials

### Responsible Parties

- Lead: Pueblo County Energy Coordinator and Economic Development Director (Marisa Stoller)
- Support: Partners in Energy staff, Energy Leadership Team
- Partners: LiUNA, AFL-CIO, CSU-Pueblo, Pueblo County Community College, Southern Colorado Manufacturers Group, PEDCO, Latino Chamber of Commerce, Civic Groups, Pueblo Workforce Center

### Timeline

- Q3 2020 – Develop communications plan
- Q4 2020 – Draft collateral
- Q1 2021 – Ongoing: Begin outreach with launch of webpage

Important dates to keep in mind:

- September – Colorado Workforce Month; considering partnering with organizations to host event
- October - Manufacturing Month

### Funding/Resources

- Print collateral
- Digital collateral for website, newsletters, social media, etc.
- Slides and speaking points for meetings and events
- Facilities for open houses, meet & greets, other events

### Outreach Channels

- Job fairs

- Community events
- Social media
- Low-income focused organizations (e.g. Catholic Charities, Salvation Army)
- Local chambers of commerce (PEDCO, Latino)
- Civic groups (e.g., Rotary Club)
- Southern Colorado Manufacturers Group

#### Measurement

- Unique visitors to website
- Flyers distributed
- Social media analytics
- Attendees at events

### Strategy 7: Workforce Needs Assessment

#### Description

This strategy focuses on identifying what needs are preventing people from entering the workforce or changing jobs, as well as ways to fulfill those needs. It focuses specifically on people entering or already in the workforce, rather than the industry at large.

#### Targets

- Assessment report completed by end of Q2 2021

#### Scope

- Develop survey to assess workforce gaps and needs
- Distribute survey to gather information
- Use other information-gathering techniques, such as focus groups, to provide additional data
- Analyze and report results
- Identify existing resources available in Pueblo County to address needs and gaps

#### Responsible Parties

- Lead: Pueblo County Energy Coordinator and Economic Development Director (Marisa Stoller)
- Support: Partners in Energy staff, Energy Leadership Team

#### Timeline

- Q3/Q4 2020 – Determine if additional funding or third-party is required to conduct assessment
- Q4 2020 – Identify funding source and third-party (if required)
- Q1 2021 – Develop survey
- Q2/Q3 2021 – Distribute survey and conduct other information-gathering efforts
- Q4 2021 – Analyze results and produce report
- Ongoing – Identify resources for addressing identified needs, and coordinate to begin addressing needs with partner agencies

### **Funding/Resources**

- Additional funding may be required for survey development and/or third-party to conduct assessment
- Survey platform – easy to use and understand, accessible on many devices and/or in print

### **Outreach Channels**

- Social media
- County websites
- Partner organization websites
- In-person sessions

### **Measurement**

- Number of respondents



## Focus Area 4: County Policies

The Pueblo County Energy Office serves the citizens of Pueblo County by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy programs and projects that save residents and businesses money, reduce energy consumption, improve community health, increase resilience, and advance social justice. Pueblo County's Energy Coordinator serves as a full-time staff position charged with managing the County's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) efforts. The Energy Coordinator also convenes the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) Team monthly meetings.

In addition to continuing funding for the Energy Coordinator position for the administration of programs and projects to serve residents and businesses, Pueblo County can adopt and implement policies and codes to help shape the community's energy future. These can range from aspirational goals and policies related to energy supply, to regulatory tactics such as building code adoption for the Pueblo region.

Pueblo County's Facilities Department provides extensive grounds, maintenance, and custodial services for approximately 730,000 square feet of buildings and 253,000 square feet of grounds. With respect to energy, the County has opportunities to increase energy efficiency of existing facilities, implement renewable energy projects for County facilities and grounds, and establish policies for new facility design and construction. Various Energy Performance Contract (EPC) projects have already been implemented at County facilities to increase energy efficiency and building performance, and opportunities exist to continue EPCs at additional facilities.

### Goals

The following goals specify the intentions and aspirations for Pueblo County's policies and facilities:

***Achieve 100 percent renewable energy powering Pueblo County's electric needs by 2035.***

***Lead by example by investing in and showcasing energy efficiency, renewable energy, and innovative energy technologies at Pueblo County facilities.***

### Strategies

The priority strategies identified by the Energy Leadership Team to support the County Policies focus area include the following:

- Coordinate regularly on energy issues
- Inventory greenhouse gas emissions
- Develop green building policy
- Provide voluntary energy benchmarking tools
- Develop a best value contracting matrix

**Strategy 8: Coordinate Regularly on Energy Issues**

**Description**

The Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) Team meets monthly to coordinate on energy issues. This strategy focuses on continuing the momentum of this coordination meeting including some additional energy stakeholders who have not participated in the past (including but not limited to Xcel Energy and City of Pueblo representatives). Potential topics for future meetings and consideration include project labor agreements, green building policy adoption for County facilities, building code updates, voluntary high-performance building incentive program, greenhouse gas inventory development, and energy benchmarking.

**Targets**

- Monthly EERE meetings

**Scope**

- Review list of current participants and updates to include representatives from all local energy utilities and City of Pueblo.
- Meeting agendas issued in advance of each meeting.
- Meeting notes or minutes issued following each meeting.

**Responsible Parties**

- Lead: Pueblo County Energy Coordinator convenes meetings
- Support: Black Hills Energy, San Isabel Electric Association, and Xcel Energy attend meetings

**Timeline**

- Immediate: Ongoing, on a monthly basis, after Energy Coordinator position is filled (meetings are typically on the third Tuesday of each month)

**Funding/Resources**

- No additional funding needed
- Supporting parties could provide venues or refreshments for meetings periodically if interested

**Outreach Channels**

- Email distribution list
- Meeting calendar on Pueblo County website
- Potential posting of meeting notes on County website or shared via email

**Measurement**

- Number of meetings annually
- Meeting attendance

## Strategy 9: Inventory Greenhouse Gas Emissions

### Description

This strategy focuses on establishing a baseline of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for all major sources (including but not limited to energy) and sectors in Pueblo County. It also includes a more detailed inventory of emissions from County facilities and operations. The purpose of the GHG inventory is to document and understand current conditions in order to inform future emissions-reduction strategies.

### Targets

- Complete a Community and County GHG Inventory by the end of 2020

### Scope

- Energy Coordinator leads the development of a GHG inventory for community-wide and County facility emissions.
- Outside services (e.g., student intern and/or consultants) may be necessary to complete technical inventory work and support documentation.

### Responsible Parties

- Lead: Pueblo County Energy Coordinator leads inventory development
- Support: Black Hills Energy, San Isabel Electric Association, and Xcel Energy provide energy consumption data and energy emissions factors
- Support: City of Pueblo could collaborate to develop a municipal and/or citywide inventory in coordination with this effort to maximize and share resources

### Timeline

- Q3 2020 – Finalize scope of work for project, including which protocol and software will be used, and any schedule modifications.
- Q3 2020 – Identify and secure any outside resources to support effort.
- Q3/Q4 2020 – Receive and review all data inputs; prepare preliminary calculations and draft inventory report.
- Q1 2021 – Refine inventory and finalize report.

### Funding/Resources

- Outside services (e.g., student intern and/or consultant resources) may be necessary, depending on Energy Coordinator skillset and workload.

### Outreach Channels

- Share inventory results on County website

### Measurement

- Total GHG emissions by source and sector community-wide
- Total GHG emissions by source and sector for County facilities and operations

## Strategy 10: Develop Green Building Policy

### Description

This strategy focuses on meeting the prerequisites for the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Cities and Communities certification effort for existing cities, which includes adoption of a green building policy for County facilities. It also includes exploration and potential adoption of an updated building and energy code and/or a voluntary high-performance building incentive program for all new construction in the community.

### Targets

- Adopt a green building policy for County facilities by Q3 2021
- Adopt and implement an updated building code or voluntary high-performance building incentive program by the end of 2022

### Scope

- Energy Coordinator facilitates a roundtable discussion with County Facilities staff and other stakeholders about green building policy options for County facilities.
- Energy Coordinator facilitates a roundtable discussion with community stakeholders about updates to building and energy codes and/or voluntary high-performance building incentives.

### Responsible Parties

- Lead: Pueblo County Energy Coordinator organizes and leads roundtable discussions
- Support: Pueblo County Regional Building Department, County Facilities Staff, and stakeholders help shape recommended policies.

### Timeline

- Q4 2020 – Identify stakeholders for County facility policy discussions; convene meetings.
- Q1 2021 – Develop recommended policy for County facilities for potential adoption.
- Q2 2021 – Support adoption process for County facility green building policy.
- Q3 2021 – Identify stakeholders for building code/high-performance incentive policy discussions
- Q4-Q1 2021/2022 – Convene meetings for building code updates/incentive program policy discussions.
- Q2 2022 – Develop recommended building code updates/incentive program for consideration.
- Q3 2022 – Support adoption process.

### Funding/Resources

- Outside services (e.g., student intern and/or consultant resources) may be necessary depending on Energy Coordinator skillset and workload.
- The Colorado Energy Office (CEO) and Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEET) may have resources to support discussions and policy/code research and amendments.

### Outreach Channels

- Share process details on County website
- Press release(s) about meetings and recommendations

### Measurement

- Number of participants in stakeholder discussions

### Strategy 11: Provide Voluntary Energy Benchmarking Tools

#### Description

This strategy focuses on providing voluntary tools for commercial and industrial building owners and managers to track, report on, and compare energy consumption so they can compare costs and identify opportunities for energy efficiency improvements and savings. It would require coordination with utility providers, to leverage their existing energy benchmarking tools and platforms, as well as development of an online platform for building owners and managers to upload their energy and facility data for ongoing sharing and monitoring. It is assumed that all major Pueblo County facilities would participate in order to pilot the benchmarking system and to also provide transparency to the public about County energy consumption.

#### Targets

- Implement a voluntary energy benchmarking platform by the end of 2021

#### Scope

- Energy Coordinator researches and develops an online platform and parameters for benchmarking program administration (e.g., software needs, reporting parameters).
- Utilities provide coaching and support for reading and understanding utility bills and leveraging existing benchmarking program resources (e.g., EnergySTAR Portfolio manager for Xcel Energy).

#### Responsible Parties

- Lead: Pueblo County Energy Coordinator leads program design and implementation
- Support: County Facilities staff tests the process for County facilities; Black Hills Energy, San Isabel Electric Association, and Xcel Energy provide data and support

#### Timeline

- Q1 2021 – Refine data platform and tools for program.
- Q2 2021 – Refine platform logistics and program details; develop communications plan for community outreach.
- Q3 2021 – Test platform tools and functionality for County facilities.
- Q4 2021 – Implement communications plan and launch program.

#### Funding/Resources

- Outside services (e.g., student intern and/or consultant resources) may be necessary, depending on Energy Coordinator skillset and workload.

#### Outreach Channels

- Share benchmarking data on County website
- Detailed communication plan to be developed for program launch

#### Measurement

- Number of participants in voluntary energy benchmarking program

## Strategy 12: Develop Best Value Contracting Matrix

### Description

This strategy focuses on developing criteria for hiring skilled labor contractors in the area and goes beyond focusing on cost as the primary driver for decision-making. These criteria will be developed into a best value contracting matrix (BVCM) for selecting contractors on County projects. Other considerations may include quality of work, diversity of workforce, and local preference, among other criteria to be determined by the County. Existing workforce organizations should be consulted to develop and implement the matrix to ensure a variety of factors are considered.

### Targets

- Develop a best value contracting matrix by the end of 2021

### Scope

- Energy Coordinator conducts research and convenes stakeholders to develop criteria and decision-making processes into a working matrix for use on County projects. Works with County officials to implement use of matrix.
- Workforce organizations (e.g. LiUNA, AFL-CIO) provide feedback about criteria and best industry practices to ensure needs are being met.
- Criteria to be considered include, but are not limited to: Contractor qualifications, safety record, local workforce inclusion, availability of training & apprenticeship opportunities, livable wages & benefits, diversity, past/present work performance, bonding capabilities, and past debarments.
- Explore Project Labor Agreements as a method of implementing BVCM criteria.

### Responsible Parties

- Lead: Pueblo County Energy Coordinator leads stakeholder engagement, criteria, and matrix development
- Support: Workforce organizations involved in process and provide feedback

### Timeline

- Q3/Q4 2020 – Conduct research on existing best value procurement practices, identify stakeholders for developing matrix.
- Q1 2021 – Convene stakeholders to discuss, develop, and refine criteria.
- Q2 2021 – Develop draft of BVCM; solicit input from stakeholders
- Q3/Q4 2021 – Approval of BVCM and implement use

### Funding/Resources

- Outside services (e.g., student intern and/or consultant resources) may be necessary, depending on Energy Coordinator workload.
- Leverage existing best practices and knowledge of contractor network

### Outreach Channels

- Share process details on County website
- Press release(s) about meetings and recommendations

### Measurement

- Number of stakeholders involved in discussions and development
- Number of non-financial criteria considered

## How Are We Going to Stay on Course?

The Energy Leadership Team has worked hard to develop ambitious and achievable goals that align with the energy vision and build off other efforts in Pueblo County. To achieve the targets and goals outlined in this plan, Pueblo County and the partners identified in the strategies above will work to maintain consistent and clear communication among themselves and the community at large. Each focus area will have sub-teams that will communicate regularly to work out the details of implementation, carry through on identified actions, and share progress and results. In the first months of implementation, a core subset of the planning team will meet as a large group via online meetings to ensure effective group coordination and communication.

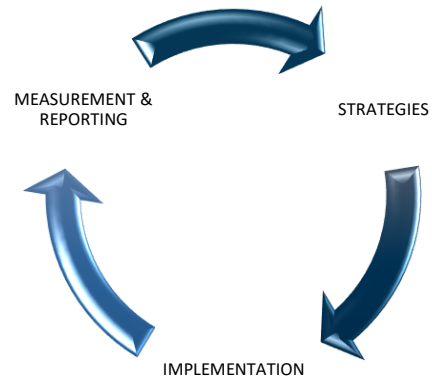


Figure 28. Actions and Tracking

### Operational Actions and Tracking

Partners in Energy staff will track energy data for Pueblo County on a biannual basis and will report on quantifiable progress. This tracking and reporting will include participation in Xcel Energy, Black Hills Energy, and San Isabel Electric Association programs, along with associated energy savings. Each focus area team also will track supplemental quantitative and qualitative information about implementation, such as social media and website analytics, number of materials distributed, event dates, number of estimated participants, etc.

### Communication and Reporting

Pueblo County, Partners in Energy staff, and the Energy Leadership Team have established communication channels as outlined previously in this plan. These groups will coordinate the use of various communication channels to support the strategies with outreach efforts, updates, progress, and successes.



Figure 29: Southern Colorado Energy Collaborative Logo

In addition to the previously outlined channels of communication, the Energy Leadership Team also developed a cohesive brand to represent the efforts undertaken for the Community Energy Plan, known as the Southern Colorado Energy Collaborative. This brand is intended to be inclusive of all participants in the Partners in Energy effort and showcase a joint

effort. The logo, shown in Figure 29, will be used on outreach materials and communications associated with this plan, within required guidelines and with approval. It is not intended to replace other logos or brands, and approval to use in conjunction with other organizations' logos should still be sought.

### Changing Course: Corrective Action

Even though this Community Energy Plan is designed for greatest impact over the next 18 months, the residual effect and momentum gained by showcasing efficiency, raising awareness, and encouraging action will have long-term positive implications. An effective energy plan is cyclical in nature (see Figure



28). In addition, the nature of implementation requires staging, flexibility, and course adjustments when necessary - to be successful and to sustain progress. To ensure this plan remains on track, the planning team will review biannual tracking information and compare it against any supplemental strategy tracking metrics and information to assess whether the efforts appear to be making an impact.

To accommodate the fluid nature of action and implementation, and to learn from experience early in the process, the regularly scheduled team meetings as well as the biannual data check-ins will be a forum for agreeing on course adjustments or new approaches necessary to reach plan targets. Any adjustments will be documented and shared with the broader group and community as they occur.

During the implementation period, the best process for obtaining involvement from team members will be determined and lined up with appropriate cycles. These may include budget cycles, school calendars, seasonal events, etc. As these cycles and the appropriate review points in these cycles are incorporated, there may be different times of the year when specific elements may change; and, there should be at least one time every year for the major stakeholders to review progress, weigh in, and suggest changes to direction.

### Beyond the Plan Horizon

Looking forward beyond the plan horizon, it is recommended that Pueblo County reassess the goals and successes achieved over the implementation period. Future updates to this plan may be necessary as goals are achieved and new energy opportunities and ideas emerge. Communities with a successful track record of implementing their goals are welcome and encouraged to apply to future Partners in Energy offerings if new community goals or opportunities arise.

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## Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

Use whichever appendices are appropriate. The following is a preliminary glossary.

**Demand Side Management (DSM):** Modification of consumer demand for energy through various methods, including education and financial incentives. DSM aims to encourage consumers to decrease energy consumption, especially during peak hours or to shift time of energy use to off-peak periods, such as nighttime and weekends.

**Greenhouse gas (GHG):** Gas in the atmosphere that absorbs and emits radiant energy within the thermal infrared range (primary GHGs include water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone); GHGs are associated with affecting climate change.

**Goals:** The results toward which efforts and actions are directed. There can be a number of objectives and goals outlined in order to successfully implement a plan.

**kW:** kilowatt (1,000 watts); a unit of electric power.

**kWh (kilowatt-hour):** A unit of electric consumption

**MMBtu:** One million British Thermal Units; a measure of energy content in fuels.

**MTCO<sub>2</sub>e:** Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO<sub>2</sub> Eq.); measure used to compare the emissions from different greenhouse gases based on their global warming potential (GWP). The carbon dioxide equivalent for a gas is derived by multiplying the tons of the gas by its associated GWP.

**MW:** Megawatt (1 million watts); a unit of electric power.

**Premise:** A unique identifier for the location of electricity or natural gas service. In most cases, it is a facility location. There can be multiple premises per building and multiple premises per individual debtor.

**RFP:** Request for proposals (solicitation of services).

**Solar Garden:** Shared solar array with grid-connected subscribers who receive bill credits for their subscriptions.

**Solar PV:** Solar cells/panels that convert sunlight into electricity (convert light, or photons, into electricity, or voltage).

**Subscription:** An agreement to purchase a certain amount of something in regular intervals.

**Therm:** A unit of heat energy (natural gas).

**Weatherization:** Insulation, air sealing, weather stripping, etc., that improve the building envelope.

## Appendix 2: Implementation Memorandum of Understanding

To be added.

## Appendix 3: Xcel Energy Natural Gas Rebates and Programs

To be added.