

Paragraph 31 Workshop

Summary of the event

Staff held a workshop on April 1, 2021 to discuss strategies to expand low-cost and no-cost energy efficiency savings opportunities. Staff provided some background on cost-effectiveness calculations and introduced three strategies to reduce the participants' contribution to access energy saving measures: co-funding, measure exceptions, and non-energy benefits. The audience was divided into three breakout sessions to discuss these specific mechanisms with Energy Trust experts. The group came back together to discuss these mechanisms, and to hear other ideas that go beyond these specific opportunities. Ideas were captured live in a document. The document will be available on the website.

Key takeaways

Staff is grateful to our stakeholders for the engagement in the workshop and the quality of thought they brought to the discussion. This is a selection of takeaways from Staff's perspective:

- While there are opportunities at the measure level, there is strong interest to have the Commission look beyond the measure level and consider solutions that are broader in scope. These ideas include but are not limited to:
 - Considering low income as a separate sector or customer class
 - Portfolio-level opportunities
 - Reducing administrative burdens for partnering organizations
- Some considerations suggested by stakeholders on how to prioritize measures:
 - Ask impacted communities directly what would be most beneficial
 - Identifying measures that could be used by the most people
 - Identify measures that could help reduce poverty
 - Measures that can benefit renters, such as portable measures
- Of Energy Trust's current activities in the low income space, stakeholders considered weatherization a priority.
- When considering potential new/expanded activities, replacing failed heating systems was the most popular, followed by direct install ductless heat pumps, window retrofits, and expanding the manufactured home replacement pilot.
 - Stakeholders had questions about opportunities for "fuel switching" and Energy Trust's fuel-neutral policy.
- Stakeholders are interested in further exploring the multifamily sector in specific.

Please see the document of notes captured in the workshop for a full list of suggestions.

Follow-up activities

Staff believes that many of these ideas are actionable and also take significant time to develop. Staff's next course of action is to meet with Energy Trust and identify specific courses of action to take with the feedback provided at the workshop, while understanding that feedback from this workshop does not replace hearing from communities and individuals directly.

In the next several weeks, Staff will provide updates on the approaches undertaken to: 1) develop/expand low cost measures, 2) address co-funding barriers, 3) pursue non-energy benefit research, and 4) pursue multifamily options. Expect updates during Q2 2021.