



Climate Action Plan

2023-2028



TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT BELLINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Introductions

Who are you?

Where are you from?

Where is your district at with:

- **Resource conservation,**
- **Benchmarking and/or**
- **Climate Action Planning?**



Bellingham Public Schools

11,000 STUDENTS
PREK-12

1,800
STAFF

9,100
FAMILIES

4,000
VOLUNTEERS

22
SCHOOL
BUILDINGS

ADDITIONAL
BUILDINGS

6

280 ACRES OF LAND

1.7MM SQUARE FEET OF BUILDING SPACE

B E L L I N G H A M , W A S H I N G T O N

Student Voices



“ Learning about the natural environment gives people hope and direction to take action. ”

Linnea

Whatcom Middle School student

“ Environmental justice is just as important as math and science. ”

Grace

Whatcom Middle School student

“ Climate education is empowering. We need to take action now. ”

Amelia

Bellingham High School student

“ I heart the earth because the trees and grass feel like home, air and flowers feel like happiness, sun and rain feel like a rainbow. ”

Emma

Geneva Elementary School student

“ It is hugely important for kids to learn about the reality and state of the environment to properly understand their future and opportunities as a young person. ”

Chloe

Squalicum High School student



Why create a Climate Action Plan?

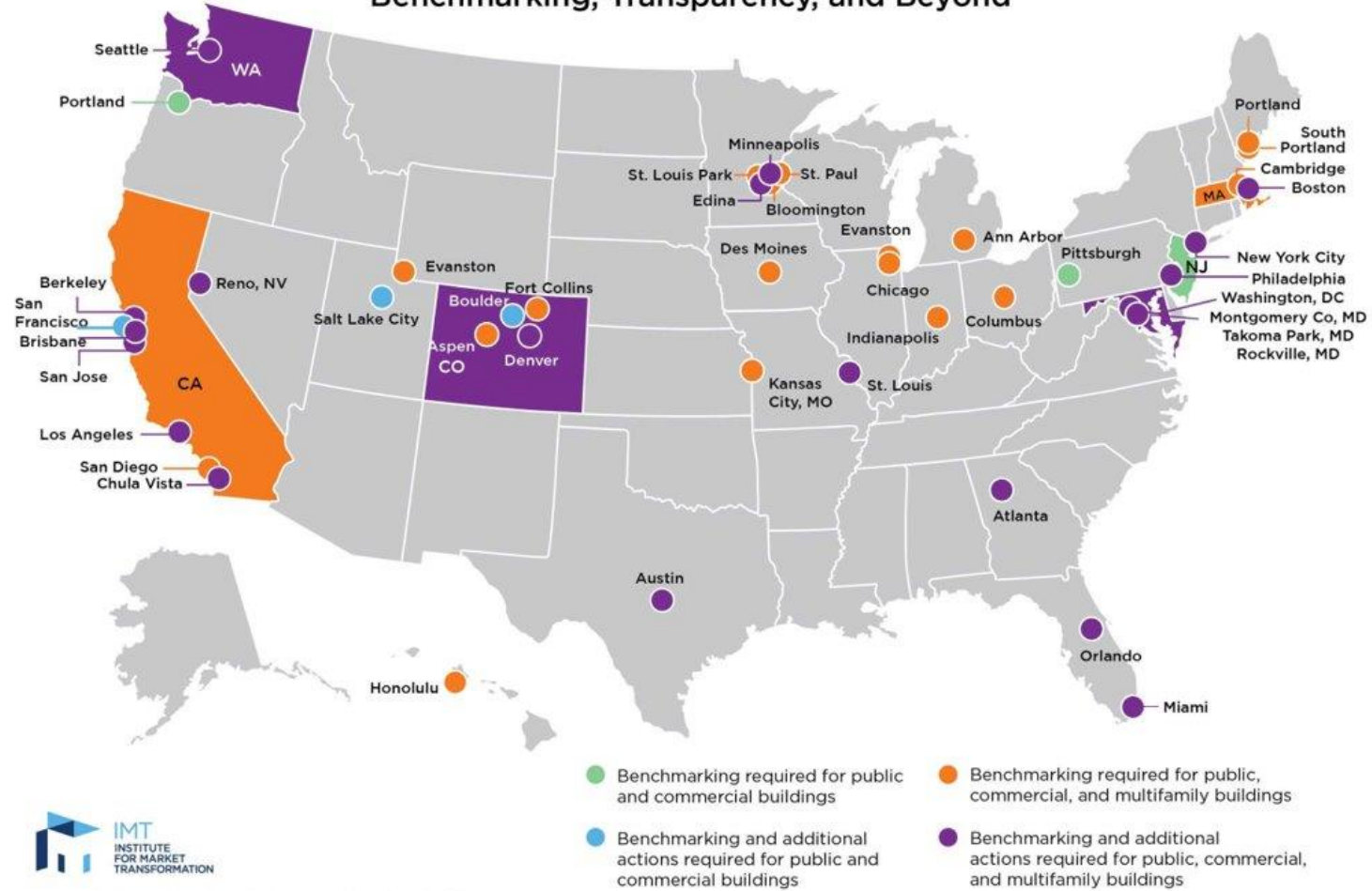
A response to:

- Clean Buildings Law HB1257
- Integrated Environmental and Sustainability Learning Standards
- Local and global climate events – severe flooding, heat waves, wildfire smoke, etc.
- Community, staff & student voices

A living document that will:

- Prioritize sustainability
- Guide decision-making
- Systematize district-wide processes
- Invites students, staff and community to join the process and take action

U.S. City, County, and State Policies for Existing Buildings: Benchmarking, Transparency, and Beyond





What is HB1257?

- Commonly referred to as the **Clean Buildings** law.
- Objective of this legislation is to lower costs and pollution from fossil fuel consumption in the state's existing building stock, including schools.
- Law requires that DOC develop and implement an energy performance standard for these buildings and provide incentives to encourage efficiency improvements.
- Mandatory requirements start in 2026 for buildings over 50,000 sqft.

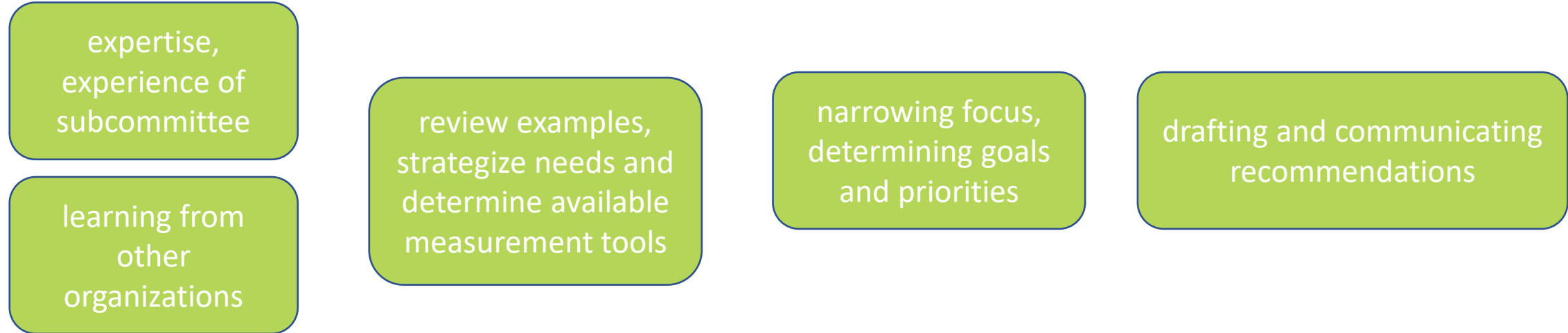
What is EUI?

- Energy Use Intensity
- An indicator of the energy efficiency of a building's design and/or operations.
- In Portfolio Manager, EUI is expressed as energy per square foot per year.

$$\frac{\text{total energy consumed (kBtu)}}{\text{total gross floor area (sqft)}}$$



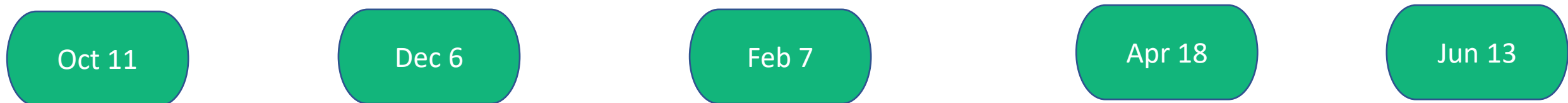
Process & Road Map



Subcommittee Meetings



Sustainability Advisory Committee Meetings



DRAFT
4/14/23



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Challenges throughout the process

- **Benchmarking: consistent data entry methodology, BIG lift**
 - Manual entry vs. automatic upload
 - Truncated data system uploads (i.e., PSE to Portfolio Manager)
- **Balance of the desire to move quickly and act while working within a large institution**
 - Staff, students and community members highlighting **urgency to meet the moment**
 - Idea that “forward progress = visible action”
- **Need for dedicated staff with capacity**
 - Historically had zero humans dedicated to sustainability
 - Now have a Director Facilities & Sustainability (added to an existing position, not stand alone)
 - “you don’t know what you don’t know”

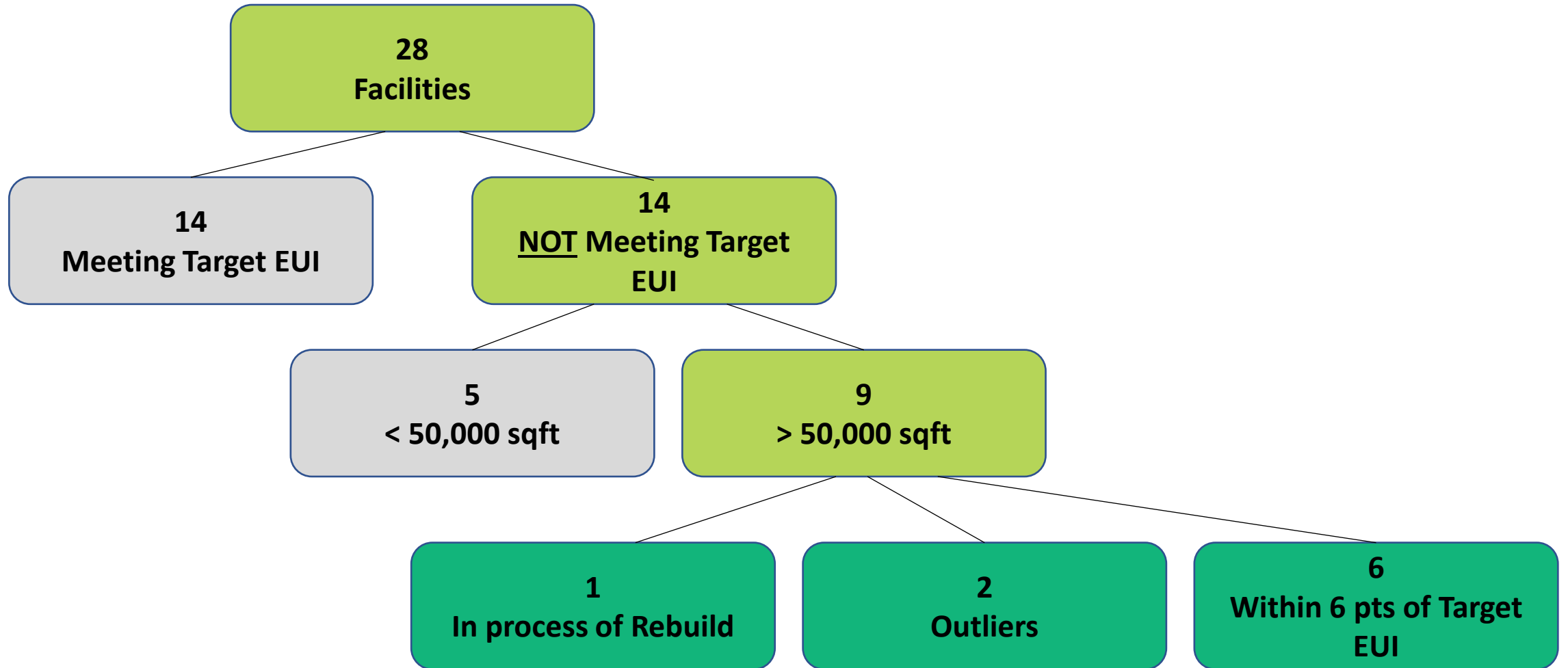
Example: Benchmarking Challenges



Oh, data, data, data

- No one person dedicated to data management
- Systems connectivity challenges
- Hired a consultant
- Provider challenges (Puget Sound Energy & Cascade Natural Gas)

EUI Results



Next steps

Learn,
Explore &
Plan

Set Goals &
Measures

Conduct
Financial
Analysis





Activity: 1 – 2 – 4 – ALL

Brainstorm individually

- How many schools are in your district?
- What is the square footage of each building?
- Where does your energy come from?
- Who would oversee this body of work within your district?

Discuss challenges

- What do you think your top two challenges would be?
- How to address schools that are not on target?
- Trade-off conversation (gas vs electric systems, cost-effective retrofits)
- How do districts fund this work?



Take Aways

Don't delay!

- Benchmarking is time consuming and complicated

Decide who will lead the work

- Who is the internal district contact?
- Who are your energy provider contacts?
- Will you hire a consultant, find free resources, or figure it out in-house?

Determine how to fund the work

- How can your current levies/bonds support this work?
- Are there grants to apply for?
- How can you partner with energy providers?