

HEALTHY BUILDINGS ADVISORY GROUP: MEETING 3

Meeting Summary + Emerging Themes September 25, 2025



INTRODUCTION

On September 25, 2025, the City of Columbus convened stakeholders for the third of five feedback sessions to help inform the Building Performance Standard (BPS) policy in development. Over the course of five advisory group meetings, this group of stakeholders will provide insight into how a BPS would affect the sectors and industries they represent, as well as provide suggestions as the City crafts a BPS that best serves Columbus' building owners, meets the moment of growing energy demand in Central Ohio, and preserves affordability and prosperity for residents and businesses.

The meeting began with an overview of the content covered in the previous Advisory Group meeting, in which members broke into small groups and discussed different components of a BPS policy: Scope, Metric, Targets, and Timeframe.

Key Themes from Meeting 2

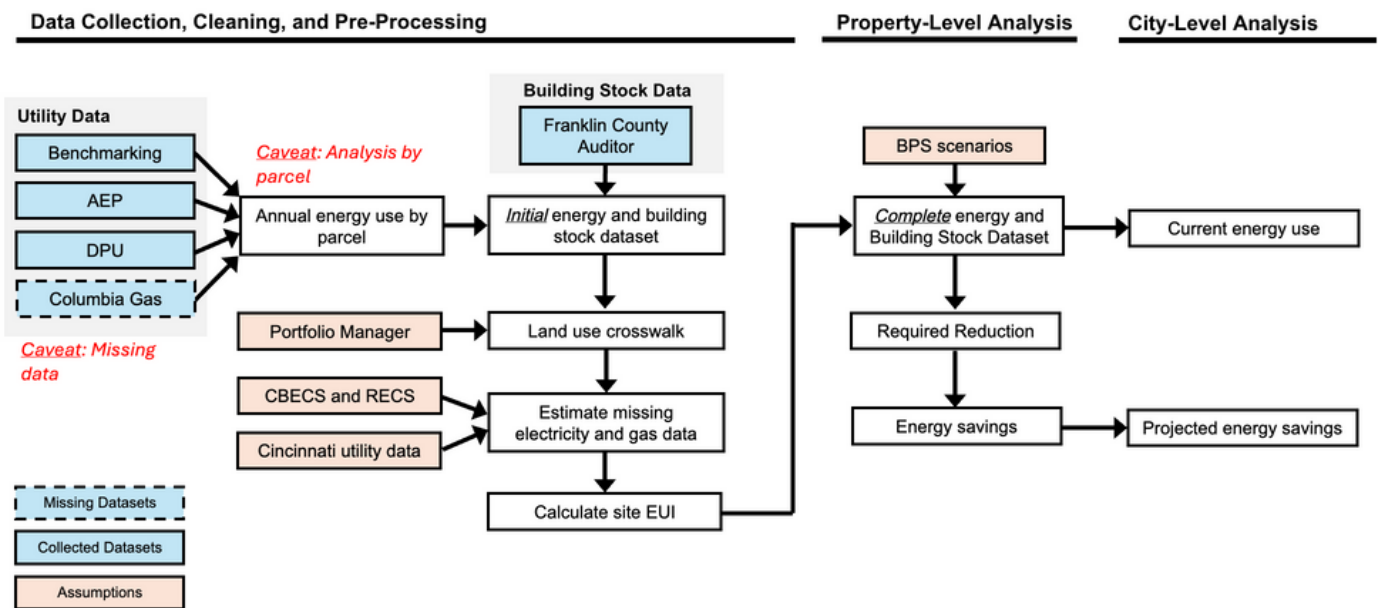
- Policy customization
- Concerns around tenant-occupied buildings
- Housing affordability
- Impacts on new construction
- Possibilities for manufacturing
- Level of technical complexity/expertise needed to comply
- Certainty/ understanding of long-term goals, but flexibility to adjust due to external factors
- Transparency exemptions

In meeting two, group members were able to request specific BPS components that they wanted to see modeled with Columbus's building stock data, in order to see how different policy components would impact Columbus.

DATA DEEP DIVE

First, Dr. Amanda Webb presented an overview of the methodology used to gather the data on Columbus's building stock and energy use.

Data cleaning and processing methodology



14

Columbus's Current Building Stock

Of Columbus's 259,498 buildings, 1,174 of them are over 50 thousand square feet (0.5% of the total building stock). Although these buildings are only 0.5% of the buildings in Columbus, they account for ~30% of total energy use in buildings.

Dr. Webb overlaid the current EUI (Energy Use Intensity) for Columbus's buildings by type (i.e. schools, office buildings, retail stores, multifamily housing, etc) with the national ASHRAE Standard 100 benchmarks for EUI. Currently, the site EUI for Columbus's building stock is slightly worse than these national benchmarks.

For this data modeling exercise, the basecase includes all commercial, municipal, and multifamily buildings greater than 50k ft², with site EUI targets set at the 50th percentile of local buildings by type.

Timeline-Independent Data Modeling

Timeline independent data modeling focuses on data that is not affected by the "timeline" component of a BPS, such as:

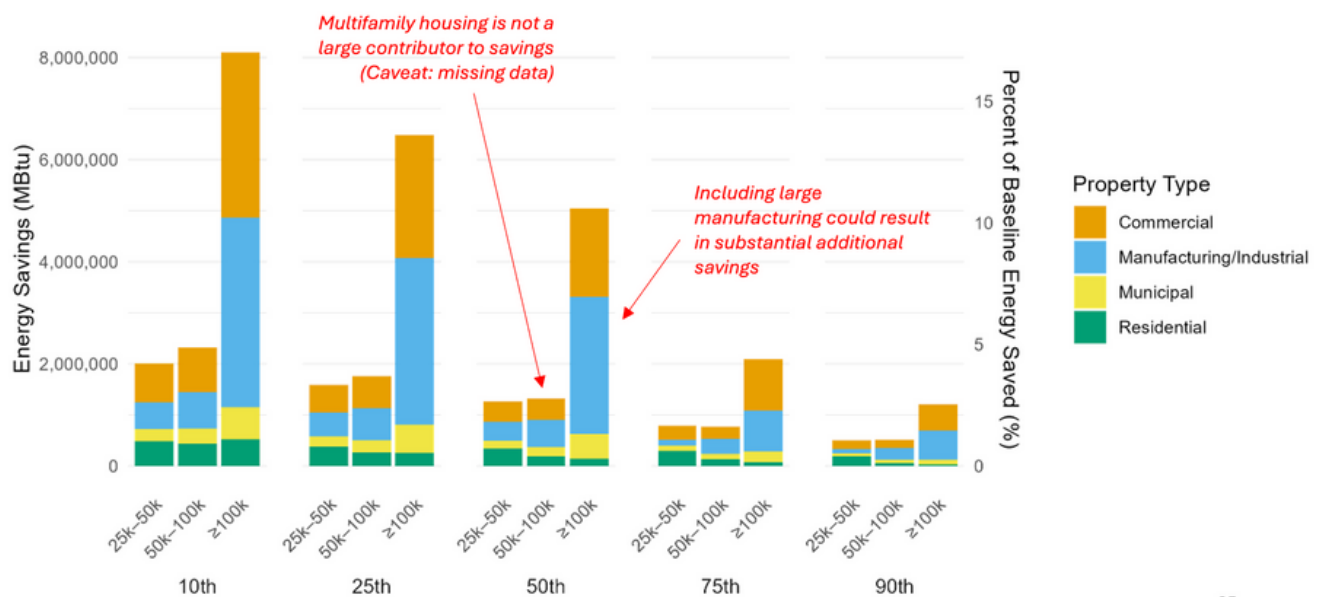
- Energy savings relative to the City's Climate Action Plan goals
- Number and type of buildings impacted by a BPS
- Level of effort required to meet BPS
- Impact analysis of special types: Multifamily, manufacturing, and new construction

Utilizing the basecase, 500 buildings across Columbus's building stock would need to improve to meet a BPS. This would result in 8% energy savings over the entire building stock. Although 8% is below the building energy reduction targets in the CAP, a BPS is only one tool to reduce energy use in buildings.

Columbus's building energy targets from the City's Climate Action Plan are:

- 15% commercial energy use reduction by 2030
- 20% residential energy use reduction by 2030
- 25% municipal energy use reduction by 2030
- 50% residential, commercial and municipal energy use reduction by 2050

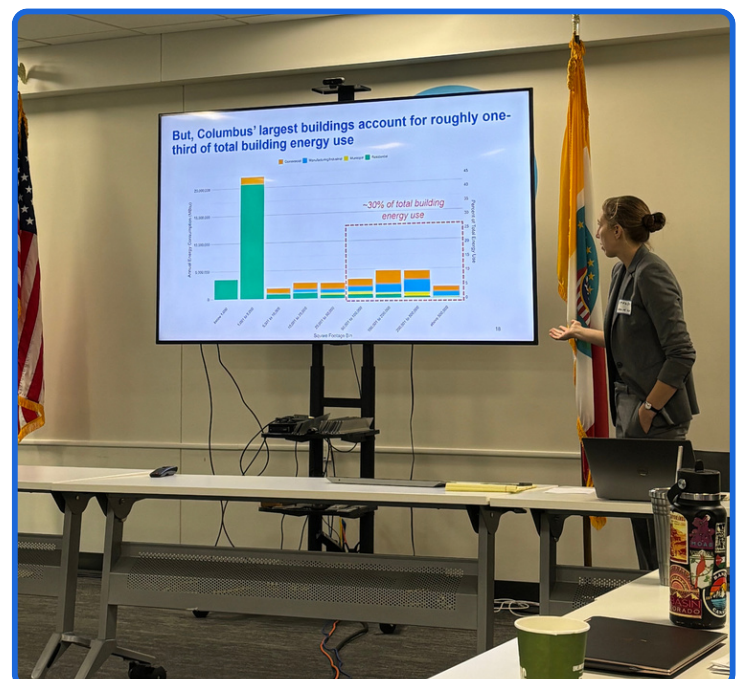
Each sector contributes differently to the total potential savings from a BPS



25

Currently, industrial and manufacturing buildings are not included in required energy benchmarking. These buildings utilize process energy that directly impacts their ability to function and create their products. Intricacies around trade secrets and process energy make industrial buildings difficult to regulate.

Advisory group members expressed interest in how industrial buildings could potentially be subject to a BPS, especially given the rise of data centers and advanced manufacturing, and the vast amounts of energy these buildings use. Including manufacturing would potentially push the energy savings across the building stock from 8% to 14%.



Scenario Type	Scenario Label	Number of buildings not meeting target (Count)	Total energy savings (%)	Median site EUI reduction needed (%)
Basecase	Nominal	488	8%	31%
Floor area	≥ 25k ft ²	833	11%	33%
	≥ 100k ft ²	254	6%	31%
Targets	25 th percentile	666	11%	42%
	75 th percentile	311	6%	28%
Building type	Exc. Multifamily	425	8%	32%
	Incl. Manufacturing	652	14%	35%
	Exc. new construction	403	7%	32%

Another data point Dr. Webb was able to present to the group showed the amount of building retrofits needed to comply with a BPS. She broke these into buckets based on the percent reduction of EUI needed to comply with the basecase BPS.

- 0-20% EUI reduction: Retro-commissioning, savings may be found with operational changes
- 20-30% EUI reduction: Component retrofit, individual appliances
- 30-40% EUI reduction: Whole system retrofit, larger overhaul of HVAC systems may be needed
- >40% EUI reduction: Whole building retrofit, many updates are needed

For the basecase, an average of about a 30% EUI reduction will need to be taken by the buildings out of compliance (again, around 500 buildings across Columbus's building stock, if using the basecase of 50kft² and a 50th percentile target).

Timeline-Dependent Data Modeling

The timeline of a BPS is mainly dependent on one policy component: Whether the timeframe of the policy is fixed or recalculated. A fixed target establishes a single EUI reduction target in the future – say, 2050 – and building owners know that they must meet that EUI reduction target by that date. This allows building owners to have more certainty regarding what is expected of their buildings, but is also less flexible and could result in a significant percentage of buildings never needing to improve their efficiency, thus losing potential energy savings. A recalculated target will be revisited and tweaked on a regular cadence – say, 5 years. This tweaking allows for the policy to be more flexible and responsive to larger market factors, but also provides less long-term planning clarity for building owners.

Advisory group members shared the importance of simplicity for building owners, and the need to be able to plan for long-term building improvement and capital cycles.

LOOKING AHEAD

In the future Advisory Group meetings, we will be discussing incentives, compliance, and alternative compliance pathways.

ATTENDING ORGANIZATIONS

AEP Ohio
Columbus Water and Power
Columbus Apartment Association
IMPACT Community Advocates
IMPACT Community Action
Columbus Chamber of Commerce
Ohio Environmental Council
Smart Columbus
Ohio State University Sustainability Institute
American Institute of Architects Columbus Chapter
NAIOP
Columbus City Council
University of Cincinnati
Power a Clean Future Ohio



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COLUMBUS**

ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR