Regional Solar Energy Planning: Collaboration, Innovation and Acceleration
NREL led Workshop held on February 21st 2019

Overview and Potential Next Steps for Implementation

Note: There were extensive raw notes resulting from the workshop. These raw notes have been boiled down to this short summary in the interest of making continual progress and moving toward action.

1.Key elements of regional vision

NREL suggested creating a regional vision statement that can be referred back to over time, and help build regional collaboration on clean energy. Here are the top themes that emerged from the discussion:

- Economic development (local renewable resources to strengthen and support economic development by sustaining/ building workforce, generating revenue for the region and controlling energy expenses for households and businesses, creating opportunities for "just transitions".)
- Energy security and resilience
- Regional interdependence - shared utility boundaries, shared workforce, housing, transportation, economy
- Innovation
- Climate change: mitigate harmful effects of climate change, sense of urgency
- Environment: quality of life, healthy environment

Next steps: These elements will be used to develop several draft vision statement options that will be circulated to the group and network participants for feedback and selection of a vision statement.

2. Aligning under a common goal

Given the multitude of varying targets of communities and organizations in our region, there was discussion of the value of aligning under common goals. The concept presented was to align under the state's goal, with a local flavor:

> **Achieve 100% renewable energy by 2040, in ways that diversify and strengthen the economy, increase resilience, and accelerate innovation.**

There was also discussion of how the targets of the major utilities that serve the region are complementary to the state goal and are also goals the region can join together to help meet:

- Holy Cross Energy Goal: by 2030 - 70% renewable resources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, at no additional increase in cost of power supply.

- Xcel Energy goal: slash emissions 80% by 2030 from 2005 levels and deliver 100% carbon-free electricity by 2050.

Next steps: The 100% renewable energy goal by 2040 will serve as an overarching goal for this emerging regional effort, as it simplifies, unifies, and is in line with the various adopted targets in the region.

For more background on this topic here is a link to all the targets in the region that illustrate how the local goals are either complementary to or in line with the state goal

3. Objectives and Key Results framework to meet clean energy targets

Copies of the book "Measure What Matters", written and donated by John Doerr, were provided to every workshop participant.

Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) were described at the workshop as a system that has been used to empower teams and companies to achieve the seemingly impossible. Key takeaways about OKRs include:

- Structured goal setting can be a means to align and focus efforts, track efforts and reach for challenging outcomes
- OKRs offer ways to track and focus progress
- OKRs provide a framework for continuous improvement
- The process of creating effective OKRs helps groups think clearly about what are the most important things to focus on, and what measurable results will indicate progress
- OKRs offer a way to communicate, measure and achieve goals
- OKRs ensure focus on the most important actions - the real levers of change and progress

The workshop provided an introduction to the OKR framework in hopes that the OKR system can help the regional effort use the framework and tap approaches for achieving joint goals by focusing on strategic goals and measurable outcomes.

Next steps: Draft OKRs for action areas/project list.

4. Main action areas identified and potential draft project list resulting from participant input

The group identified key actions that were clustered into the following areas:

- Regional renewable energy development for maximum economic benefit, with multiple sub-areas identified.
- Data and metrics: "you can't manage what you don't measure"
- Beneficial electrification: Enables grid management, saves customer money and/or reduces environmental impacts
- Continuing to build a regional structure to reach aggressive targets and deliver projects
- Public outreach/education

Please note that this workshop focused on solar, but energy efficiency and management and low-carbon transportation are an essential part of reaching the overall targets.

Main action area:	Project:	DRAFT objectives and key results, including timeframes
Regional Renewable Energy Development	**Public sector solar program:** • Aggregated procurement for public sector roof-top solar • Community solar purchase • Current status - baseline, opportunity report • Sol Smart Designation • Could also include region-wide program for private sector large roof-tops • Joint trainings and technical assistance to share best practices, speed implementation, tap opportunities	**Draft Objectives and Key Results to be developed for each area**
Regional Renewable Energy Development	**Toolbox for regional solar development: (to speed implementation)** • Criteria for sites • Database of potential sites • Utility interconnection rules and regs • Utility tools: capacity maps etc • NREL development tools • Overview of county process	
Regional Renewable Energy Development	**Residential solarize program** • Bulk purchase program for homeowners to cut cost • Partner with existing organizations to implement the model: SEI Solar Forward and United Solar Neighbors • Partnerships with economic development organizations for outreach and promotion • Potential to incorporate job training	
Data and metrics	**Data and benchmarking:** • Establish baseline for solar in region	

	• Establish “simple” ways to report back on annual progress • Address institutional barriers to metrics and tracking (what data utilities gather, etc) • Develop regional expertise to deliver ongoing tracking/ tap economies of scale and capacity for timely reports to show progress	
Electrification of Transportation	**Regional EV Infrastructure and adoption** • Installation of charging stations throughout region - bulk approach • Ride and drive events • Build on existing joint projects • Ebike - bulk buy program and promotion • Ebike - infrastructure	
Electrification of Buildings	**Beneficial Electrification** • Facility manager roundtables - netzero topic • Information and trainings for architects, building developers and construction industry • Outreach to commercial, industrial energy users on region-wide beneficial electrification program	
Public Outreach	**Education and Storytelling** • Deliver energy literacy curriculum in the schools • Build social capital through community service projects • Create a regional “story base” and communicate through social media and radio • Information delivered in varied ways, to effectively communicate with the multiple kinds of people that live in our region	
Regional structure	• Continue with informal corridor network and build toward more formal structure, aligned around achieving state and utility goals that connect the region. • Continue to confirm who is part of informal structure and grow resources to aim for higher capacity. • Avoid letting desire for the perfect structure prevent progress. • Convene follow-up session(s) on structure	