



# Decarb Dilemma: Navigating Challenges in Large Office Buildings

Stakeholder Challenge

BUILDING OWNERS AND MANAGERS  
ASSOCIATION OF CHICAGO





# BOMA/Chicago

BOMA/Chicago represents 245 large office, institutional, and cultural buildings in Chicago.

- 80% of the Downtown Rentable Office Space
- Support Over 64,500 Jobs
- House Over 18,000 Companies
- Pay over \$1.2 Billion in Property Taxes
- Chicago's Office Buildings Lead the Nation in Green Building Space

# Challenges

## Significant Costs

Decarbonizing large buildings involves significant projects with notable costs. Examples include:

- Building Envelope (walls, insulation, windows, roof)
- HVAC
- Smart Building Technologies
- Renewable Energy

## Understanding Timelines and Impact

Building owners and managers need education and awareness to understand:

- Projects with Greatest Impact
- Optimal Timing for Each Project
- Lifecycle Assessments
- Managing Multiple Timelines



# Overcoming Challenges

## Key Obstacles

- Downtown Office Market
- Financial and Operational Constraints
- Awareness of Opportunities
- Grid Demand
- Renewable Energy on Grid
- Technology Limitations

## Key Stakeholders

- Elected and Regulatory Officials
- Funding Agencies/Groups
- ComEd and Peoples Gas
- Educational Providers
- Environmental Groups
- Buildings Owners & Managers

## Key Opportunities

- Bridging Educational Gaps
- Identifying and Promoting Funding Resources
- Developing Partnerships
- Transparent Utility Communications on Emissions
- Encouraging New Technology

**BOMA/Chicago Role:** Engage with all stakeholders to partner, educate, learn, design policies, and promote opportunities.

# Benefits and Consequences

## Downtown

Burdening buildings with significant costs they cannot afford will increase financial distress, further diminishing Chicago's downtown.

## Corporate Recruitment

While tenants' demand for sustainable buildings has been a catalyst for Chicago's office market to be a national leader in green office space, they also demand lower costs and a resilient, reliable grid.

## Economy

A thriving downtown is beneficial for the entire city, attracting corporate relocations and tourists, supporting jobs, and generating significant tax base, including property taxes.



# Challenges

Regarding Building Decarbonization and Grid Modernization, to achieve Chicagoland's Climate, Health and Equity goals, critical obstacles to collectively overcome in 12 months is:

- Designing policy that accounts for financial and operational constraints facing downtown office buildings; and
- Connecting building owners with funding and educational opportunities.





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THANK YOU!

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