



# **Suncor Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEP)**

---

City Council Study Session September 2020

# Background - SEP Overview

---

- **On March 6, Suncor reached settlement agreement with CDPHE for past violations**
  - \$2.6 million of settlement to be utilized for environmental projects
- **Local Governments & nonprofit organizations that are considered an “impacted community” as it relates to the settlement will have the opportunity to submit project proposals for any portion of the funding amount**
- **A state Formal Evaluation Committee will determine which project submissions are ultimately funded – Will consist of:**
  - 1 CDPHE staff member
  - 1 Suncor representative
  - An undetermined number of community representatives
- **RFA has not been released by the state as of Tuesday, September 8**



# Background - State Evaluation Criteria

 The project creates measurable environmental or public health impacts

 The project benefits the geographic area impacted by the violation

 The project is not required to address the same **environmental concerns caused by the violations** (i.e. projects do not need to address only air quality, even though the Suncor settlement is for air pollution violations)



# Other Notes - Criteria

---

- **SEP Funds cannot be utilized for items that are already within an adopted city budget or long term Capital Improvement Plan (CIPP)**
- **Example: If the city has already allocated money for the construction of a park or trail, or previously identified it as part of the CIPP, SEP funds are not eligible to be used for that project**



# City Process

---

**Feedback & Ideas  
Received in Online Form**

**Feedback received during  
Community Town Hall,  
explanation of process &  
answering questions**

**Discussion With City Council on September 14**

**City staff drafts and submits proposals to state based  
on feedback received**

**State evaluation committee selects projects for funding**

# Engagement & Outreach

---

- [c3gov.com/sep](https://c3gov.com/sep) webpage
  - 324 total visits from 288 unique users
  - Includes basic information describing SEP process, and a survey link for providing ideas to city
  - Survey link was live from **August 4 to September 3**
- **Town Hall**
  - Was held on Thursday, August 13 & attended by 32 participants
  - Live Spanish translation services provided
  - Answered questions from the general public on the process & listened to potential project ideas from the community
- **Social Media**
  - Four posts with total reach of 15,434
  - 1,158 engagements (comments, likes, shares)
  - Social media posts shared by Cultivando
  - Denver Post article link to [c3gov.com/sep](https://c3gov.com/sep) webpage



# Engagement & Outreach

---

- **Channel 8 Information Slide**
  - Included on TV monitors at city facilities & channel 8 stream
- **Commerce City Connected**
  - Information included in September issue
  - Mailed to every home in the city & posted online
- **Bilingual flyer shared with community organizations**
  - Adams 14 School District
  - Cultivando (also shared one social media post)
  - Anythink Library
  - Our Lady Mother of the Church
  - Impacto de Fe
  - Our Savior Lutheran Church
  - Suncor Boys & Girls Club



# Areas the City should focus on?

---

- **Air Quality**
- **Water Quality**
- **Renewable Energy Development**
- **Environmental Restoration**
- **Public Health**
- **Community Education & Information**
- **Community Visual or Aesthetic Improvements**
- **Odor, Noise, and Other Nuisances**



# Examples of Previous SEP Projects

---

- Home energy and weatherization upgrades for low-income families.
- Solar energy installations.
- Building efficiency or lighting upgrades.
- Electric vehicle charging stations or purchases.
- Electric lawn mower purchases to replace gas powered machines.
- Environmental restoration projects, such as creek cleanups and tree plantings.
- Diesel emissions reduction projects.
- Environmental education projects.

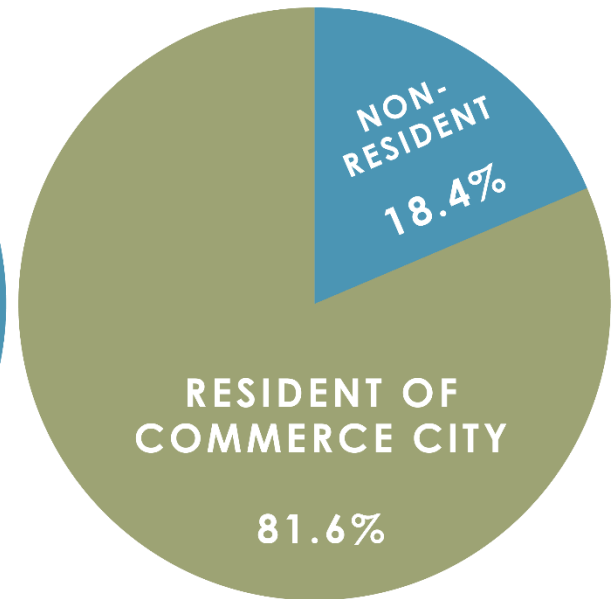
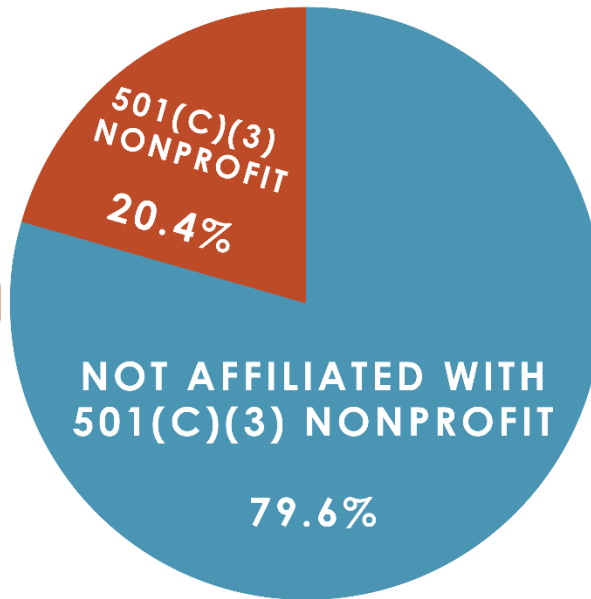
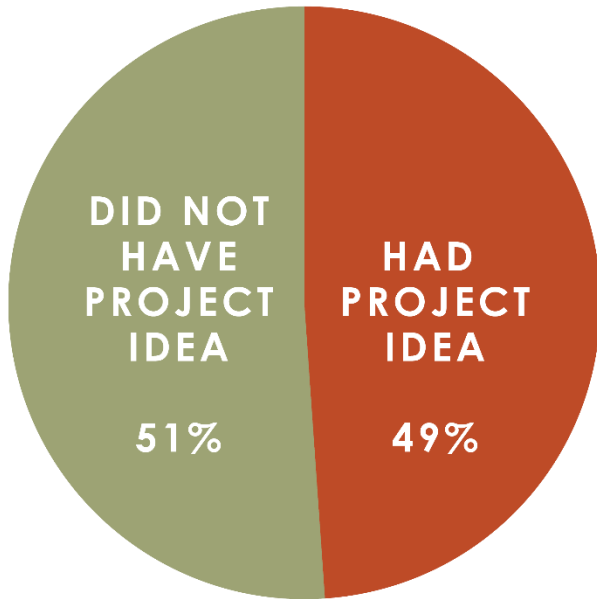




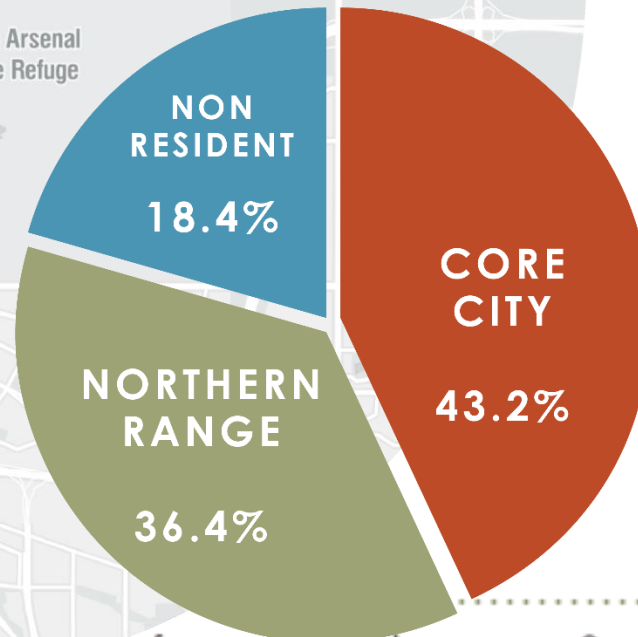
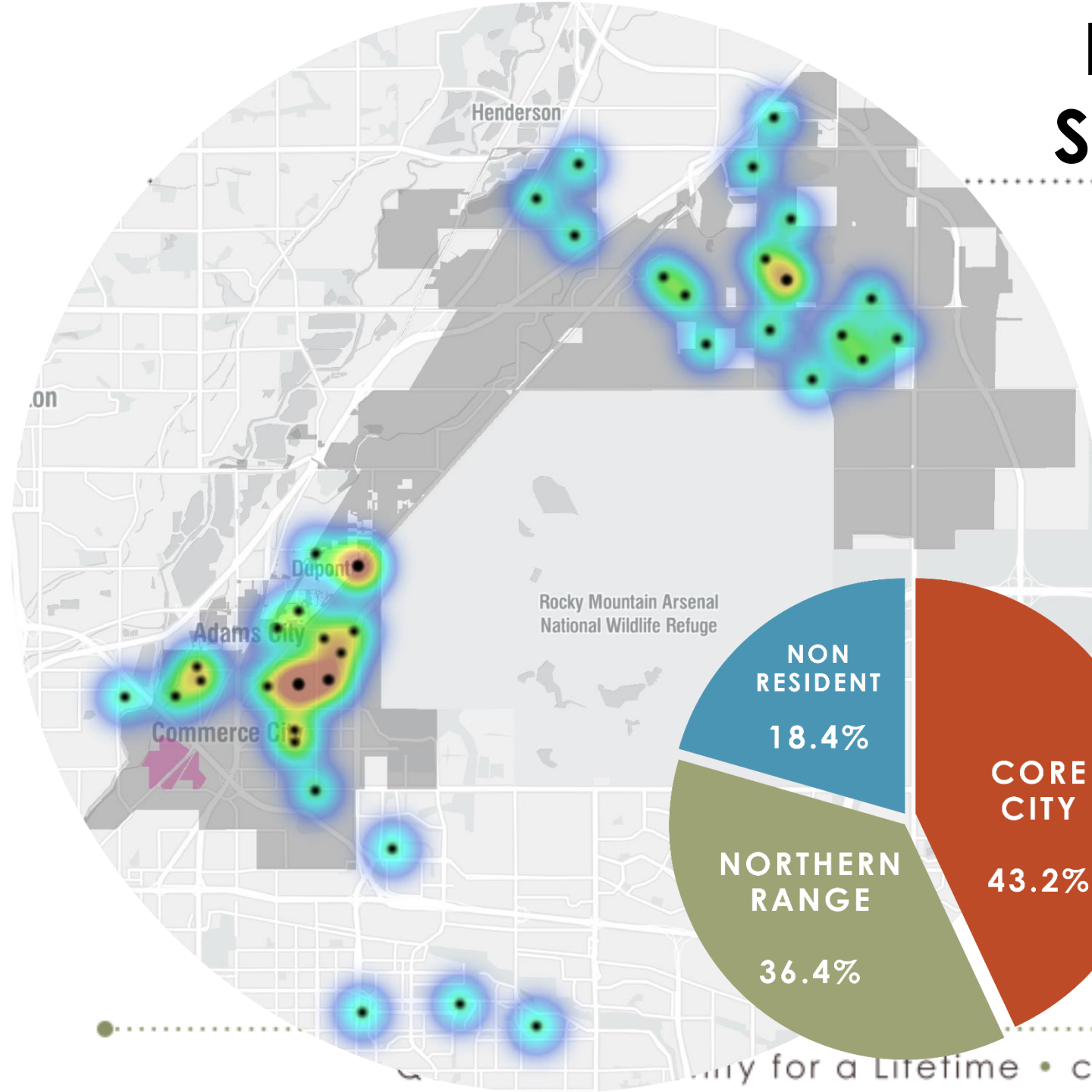
# Community Feedback Results



# Respondent Summary

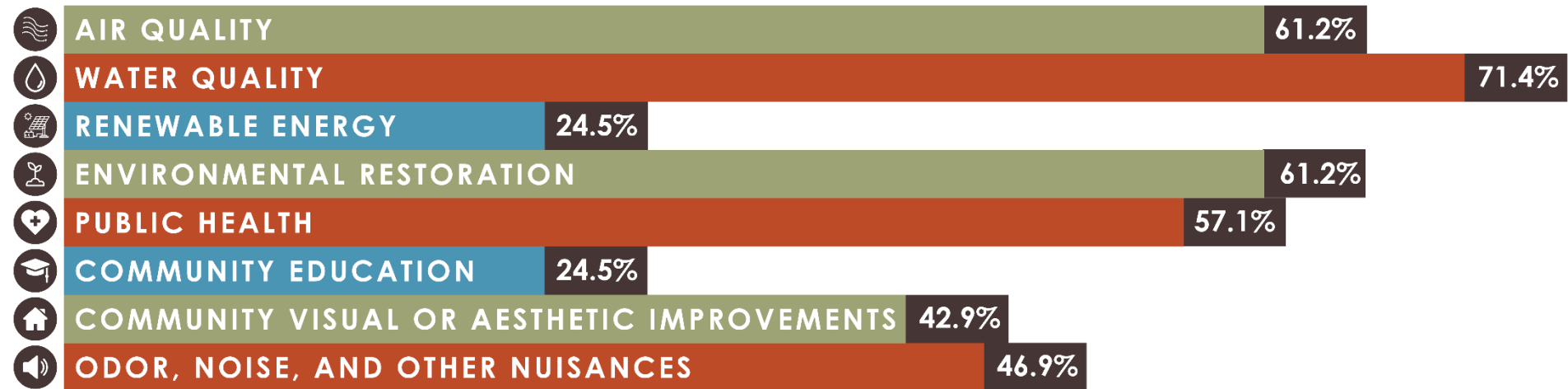


# Location Summary

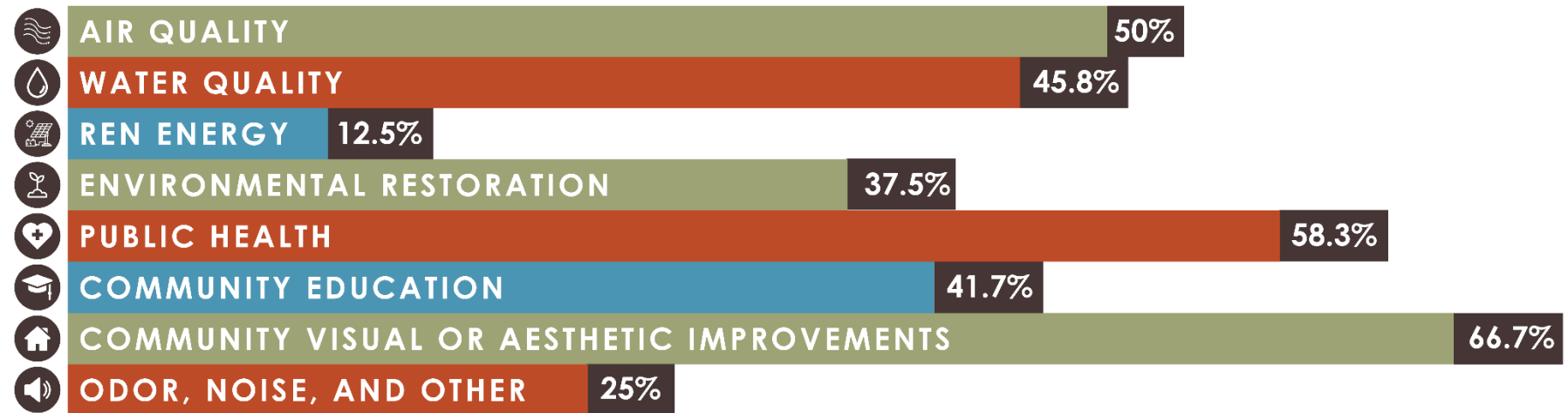


Commerce  
CITY

# Which area(s) should the City focus on in its submittal?



# Public Idea Submissions by Category



# Takeaways

- **Majority of respondents said city should focus on Air Quality, Water Quality, Environmental Restorations, and Public Health**
  - 71% of all respondents suggested the city should focus on Water Quality, with Air Quality a close second at 61%
  - Categories have some overlap – potential projects could be successful in addressing multiple outcomes
  - Example: Creek restoration projects could address both water quality and environmental restoration
  - Example: Air quality projects could *improve* public health outcomes
- **When analyzing data responses within 3 miles of the refinery boundary...**
  - Data demonstrates a higher interest in air quality & public health outcomes compared to the baseline



# Takeaways

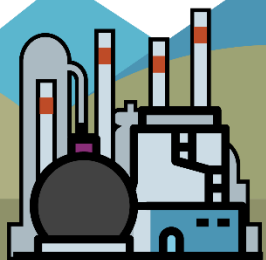
- **When asked “what expected benefits your project would have”**
  - People stated their proposed project would most benefit Visual and Aesthetic Improvements, Public Health, Air Quality, and Water Quality outcomes
- **Project Submissions**
  - Many of the verbal project ideas submitted to the city had an overlap between water quality, environmental restoration, and wildlife restoration of Sand Creek
    - Whether that is through community gardens, additional tree plantings, green space, or specific projects to address environmental quality
  - Focus on community health as it relates to indoor air quality improvements
  - Majority of project submissions ended up being more idea generation, rather than tangible project ideas that can be implemented as is



# Project Submissions

---

- **Development of a community solar farm**
  - Residents & businesses subscribe to the project, and receive a credit on their monthly energy bill based on their subscription amount
- **Replace sheet metal grade control structures on Sand Creek**
  - Natural restoration of floodway, positive benefits to water quality and wildlife
- **Multiple requests for Community Tree Plantings**
- **Trail Corridor improvements around Sand Creek**
  - Uncertainty surrounding such project due to I-270 improvements
- **Indoor Air Quality Improvements for affected residents**
  - Emphasis on community members with pre-existing health conditions
- **Public Education Campaign on protection during air pollution exposure**
  - What specific steps can residents take to protect themselves during poor air quality days? – partner with local health agencies / nonprofits





# Possible Project Submissions



# Restoration Activities in Sand Creek

---

- Replacement of the existing drop structures on Sand Creek, and restore to natural environmental conditions



# Restoration Activities in Sand Creek

---

- Project proposed by Sand Creek Regional Greenway (nonprofit)
- Potential joint submission could involve City, Greenway, and Mile High Flood District / SACWSD
- Natural structures provide improved water quality and pH levels for aquatic life
- Additional landscape planting / natural water filtration systems / park amenities could be incorporated into the design
- Strong support for a project of this type based on public feedback
- Estimated project budget: \$1-1.5 Million



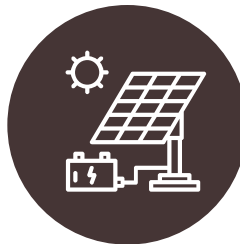
# Additional Air Monitoring

- **Existing EPA Air Toxins Grant could potentially be converted to a SEP Submission**
  - Was submitted to the EPA on May 1, but not selected for funding
  - Was a joint submission between Denver, Adams County, Commerce City, TCHD, and CDPHE
- **CDPHE is in the process of working with city on CAMML mobile lab and SPOD monitor deployment in South Commerce City**
  - Because of this, may not be as strong of a potential SEP submission – State government funds already being spent on monitoring
  - May be less likely to be approved, since it is not a direct capital investment in the community
- **City Council voted on August 31 to establish a city Air Quality and Water Quality monitoring network**
- **Estimated Project Budget: \$1-1.5 Million**
  - 6 proposed monitoring locations, plus cost sharing services estimated at \$977K for 6 potential locations (not identified)



# Community Solar

- **Convert an underutilized parcel in core area of Commerce City into a community Solar Farm**
  - Ideally a low-land value parcel with access issues or brownfield property
  - May or may not be owned by city
  - Could be designed to include a community garden / additional city amenity
  - Could be inclusive for low income residents through specific program / no significant up front capital cost.
- **City residents and businesses could sign up to offset a percentage of their total energy use through the community solar array**
  - Would then receive a credit from XCEL on their monthly utility bill proportional to their contract & energy use
- **Estimated project budget: varies significantly depending on parcel size, brownfield status, and bid contract details with XCEL, but could be anywhere from \$1-2.5 million**
- **Renewable Energy not the highest rated project idea based on public feedback, but carbon offset potential is high**



# Indoor Air Quality Improvements

---

- **Many respondents emphasized public health improvements & specifically air quality**
- **Potential opportunity to fund installation of new HVAC systems, ventilation improvements, HEPA air filters / purifiers, and other residential improvements to improve indoor air quality for homes in proximity to the refinery**
  - Dual benefit of health impacts and increased energy efficiencies
- **CDBG already has existing household energy efficiency & safety programs – Funds may be used to extend current programs to avoid duplication of benefits**
  - CDBG limit of \$7,500 per individual request
  - Framework of project administration management already exists in Community Development
  - Some existing programs include:
    - Minor Home Repair Program (MHRP)
    - Weatherization
    - Rooftop Solar Installations
    - Paint-a-Thon Program (PAT)
- **Estimated Project Budget: Varies, depending on size of program**







Commerce  
CITY

# Possible Project Comparison

Project	Rank	Cost	Staff Resources
Sand Creek Restoration	1	\$1 – 1.5 Million	High
Indoor Air Quality Improvements	2	Varies	Medium
Community Solar	3	\$1 – 2.5 Million, depending on scale	High
Additional Air Monitoring	4	\$1 – 1.5 Million	High



# Possible Project Comparison

Project	Comp Plan Goals	Public Benefits	Quantifiable Outcomes
<b>Sand Creek Restoration</b>	<p><b>Goal EC4</b> – increase water conservation and protection of water resources</p> <p><b>Goal EC6</b> – Reduce generation of air pollutants (tree planting)</p> <p><b>Goal P4</b> –Protect and restore natural resources</p>	 <p>Water quality, community visual or aesthetic improvements, environmental restoration, public health</p>	Medium
<b>Indoor Air Quality Improvements</b>	<p><b>Goal EC6</b> – Reduce generation of air pollutants (air quality)</p> <p><b>Goal HN1</b> – Reinvest and rehabilitate aging housing stock</p>	 <p>Public health</p>	Medium
<b>Community Solar</b>	<p><b>Goal EC2</b> – Improve community wide energy efficiency and increase renewable energy use</p> <p><b>Goal EC3</b> – Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions</p> <p><b>Goal EC8.3</b> – Pursue a program to identify brownfield locations that may be opportunities for development</p>	 <p>Renewable energy, air quality</p>	Very high
<b>Additional Air Monitoring</b>	<p><b>Goal EC6</b> – Reduce generation of air pollutants (industry air emissions)</p>	 <p>Air quality, public health, community education</p>	High



# Discussion

.....●  
●.....  
City Council Study Session September 2020

# Questions for Council

---

1. Out of the four possible project submissions, which are Council most interested in seeing the city pursue?
2. Are there any other project idea submissions provided during the comment period that council would like to explore further?
3. Are there additional project ideas members of council may have?
4. Would council prefer to see multiple submissions provided to the state, or focus resources on just one?

