District Energy

- Chilled Water Plant
- Chilled Water Supply and Return Network
- Smaller Chilled Water Plant
  Located Close to Cooling Load Centers
- Customers
What could 80% GHG reductions look like?

**Efficient Buildings**
- 30% or more beyond code
- No cooling service
- Waste heat recovery

**Efficient Infrastructure**
- Load diversification = lower peak
- More efficient equipment
- 20% improvement

**Clean, renewable energy**
- Sewer heat recovery = base load
- Solar thermal supplement
- Natural gas peak/back-up; potential to fuel switch

**Utility service model**
- Neighborhood scale focus
- Business planning process
- Positioned to engage new system development options
District Energy Benefits

Social
- Healthier buildings
- Enhanced awareness
- Connection to global warming
- Leadership

Economic
- Better long term investment
- Return on investment
- Stable and predictable energy costs

Environmental
- Reduced emissions
- Platform for future improvements
- Efficiency
District Energy Systems

**System**

- Seattle Steam (Downtown Seattle)
- District Energy St. Paul (Downtown St. Paul)
- Brewery Blocks (Downtown Portland)
- SEFC NEU and Central Heat (Vancouver, BC)
- Lonsdale Energy Corporation (North Vancouver, BC)
- Dockside Green (Victoria)
- Revelstoke, BC
- Sun Rivers (Kamloops, BC)
- Aalborg District Heating (Denmark)
- Olympic Village (Whistler)
- Stockholm (Sweden)
- Nashville District Energy System

**Energy Source(s)**

- Biomass (in 2009) and natural gas - heat only
- Biomass and natural gas - heating, cooling
- Electricity - cooling only
- Central sewer heat and natural gas
- Natural gas mini-plants - heat only
- Central biomass and natural gas - heat only
- Central biomass plant
- Distributed ground source heat pumps
- CHP, municipal solid waste, biomass
- Waste heat - sewage plant w/ gas, ambient loop
- Multiple energy sources
- Natural gas
Technical Introduction

Major system components:

1. Energy Center(s) where energy is extracted, produced and rejected
2. Community Distribution System(s)
3. Energy Transfer Stations (ETS) energy transferred to customers and metered
4. Building HVAC Hydronics within the buildings beyond the ETS
Start Small, Think Big

• The NEU provides a sound infrastructure and business model that can be expanded and replicated

• European cities such as Copenhagen and Stockholm started small, and expanded over time into large scale DE systems that are integrated with liquid and solid waste management programs
Evolution of Scale

District Energy St. Paul
Right Sizing (Vancouver)
Portland, OR
Technology Options

- Heat recovery - waste process heat
- Heat exchange - ground-source, water-source, sewer lines, waste-water plants
- Biomass - waste wood, pellets, ‘hog’ fuel
- Natural gas
- Bio-gas - digester methane, industrial process gas
- Municipal waste combustion

What’s wrong with electric heat?

Inefficient use of electricity for thermal uses (i.e., space heating & hot water)

Even simple heat pumps improve efficiency by 2-3 times that of electric resistance

Virtually impossible to retrofit buildings over time

Prohibits use of innovative systems to use waste heat

Long-term burden of increasing energy prices will be on building occupants

Opportunity cost to Seattle City Light and electricity producers
• Utilize renewable sources to provide “base load.” In first phase, 70% of annual thermal energy supplied with raw sewage heat recovery.

• NEU to be supplemented by solar modules located on rooftops of 3 Olympic Village buildings

• Natural gas boilers used for back-up and peaking heat. This ensures reliability and affordable utility rates.
What is Sewage Heat Recovery?

- Will be integrated with a new municipal sewage pump station
- Heat Pump will capture waste heat from screened raw sewage.
- Similar to geo-exchange, but higher efficiency and lower cost.
- Low Emissions of GHG and other combustion sourced pollutants
The Role of District Energy in Greening Existing Neighborhoods

A PRIMER FOR POLICY MAKERS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Preservation Green Lab, National Trust for Historic Preservation
Center for Sustainable Business Practices, University of Oregon

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | SEPTEMBER 2010

POLICY ROAD MAP FOR DISTRICT ENERGY DEVELOPMENT IN EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

Depending on a neighborhood’s compactness and its mix of uses, a district-scale approach can improve the efficiency of heating and cooling its buildings by up to 20 percent...
District Energy in Existing Neighborhoods

• End user perspective – cash flows, time & expertise
• Context – policies, target areas
• Identify catalysts & be ready
• Consider aggregate energy demand
• Building-by-building ‘business case’
• Evaluate energy sources
• Business analysis - investment decision, phasing plans, risk management, rates & governance
• Include property owners & community stakeholders
Making district energy happen

- Identify major developments & infrastructure projects
- Assess long-term, stable energy demand
- Identify core distribution system
- Evaluate energy sources - local, renewable, waste
- Business analysis - investment decision, phasing plans, risk management, rates & governance
- Include property owners & community stakeholders throughout the process
Strategic Issues

• Long-term GHG reduction strategies
  – 80% by 2050 (2030, if honest)
  – Emerging strategies for existing buildings & infrastructure

• Policy framework
  – District scale orientation for energy & emissions

• Aggregating demand from energy customers
  – Mechanisms for capturing energy loads – new & existing
  – Definition of energy utility service areas

• Energy pricing & new building construction
  – Culture of cheap energy, lowest first-cost options

• Integrated infrastructure development
  – Major projects – street/rail, water/sewer, grid

• Institutional model & business planning
  – Less risk, greater certainty
  – Business case development
Pathways – Strategic Directions

• Engage in a short, focused process to create a policy framework to support district energy system development
• Develop mechanisms & processes to capture energy demand from new construction (and existing buildings, where appropriate)
• Determine institutional approach & establish robust business planning process
• Pursue integrated infrastructure planning in key areas
Montpelier, VT received grant money to expand their district energy system which currently includes 17 buildings, after expansion over 100 existing and historic buildings will be connected.
Photo Credit: Vermont Perspectives, Linda Baird-White

Aerial view of Dubuque Millworks District which plans to lay piping for district energy when it rebuilds its streets.
Photo Credit: City of Dubuque

The original Seattle steam plant is still in use today providing district heating to many downtown buildings.
Photo Credit: Seattle Steam Co.
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