

## Section 4: Public Engagement Strategies

### Overview

Engaging the public and producing behavior change is an important part of the public process regarding sustainability. Social marketing is a term used to describe non-traditional strategies that focus on changing behaviors. Widespread research confirms the effectiveness of social marketing tools to engage individuals and groups in improving their own lives and their communities.

### Target Audiences

Three broad target groups within the community present themselves as candidates, based on their impact as public opinion leaders, a social network base, and grassroots impact. They are:

- **Businesses:** represent market drivers and public/civic leadership potential.
- **Neighborhoods:** represent the integrity, social fabric, and economic development opportunities within communities. This includes non-profit organizations operating within specific neighborhoods or throughout the community.
- **Youth:** represent the future. Young people of today typically care deeply for their environment and have a personal stake in fighting global warming.

Within these broad groups, specific target audiences may be identified for unique or specialized behavior change strategies. For example, within the business group, taxi cab drivers would constitute a subgroup to be targeted with incentives and opportunities to advance the use of hybrid-electric vehicles.

### Short-Term Engagement Strategy Recommendations

1. Solicit a highly effective social marketing subject matter expert to create effective communications and social marketing strategies to advance the goals of the Mayor's Greenprint Denver initiative.
2. Identify and engage diverse stakeholders.
3. Identify funding sources and establish meaningful incentives that produce and support the desired outcomes.
4. Communicate to the public and target audiences about levels of success to sustain continued support and action.

### A MODEL FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND NEIGHBORHOOD OUTREACH — THE HOME WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM

A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN MILE HIGH YOUTH CORPS (MHYC) AND DENVER WATER HAS GROWN OUT OF MHYC'S HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION PROJECT WITH THE GOVERNOR'S ENERGY OFFICE (GEO). MHYC IS WORKING WITH GEO TO INSTALL LOW-COST ENERGY SAVING MEASURES IN THE HOMES OF 2,000+ CLIENTS OF THE LOW-INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LEAP).

WHILE IN THE HOMES, CORPS MEMBERS ALSO ASSIST DENVER WATER BY INSTALLING LOW-FLOW AERATORS ON FAUCETS, INSTALLING LOW-FLOW SHOWERHEADS, ASSESSING WATER LEAKS AND DETERMINING IF TOILETS USE MORE THAN 3.5 GALLONS OF WATER PER FLUSH.

MHYC CREWS FROM THE HOME WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM REPLACE HIGH WATER-USE TOILETS WITH FREE HIGH-EFFICIENCY TOILETS PROVIDED BY DENVER WATER. CLIENTS RECEIVE INFORMATION ABOUT HOW THEY CAN CONSERVE ENERGY AND WATER TO SAVE MONEY ON THEIR UTILITY BILLS.

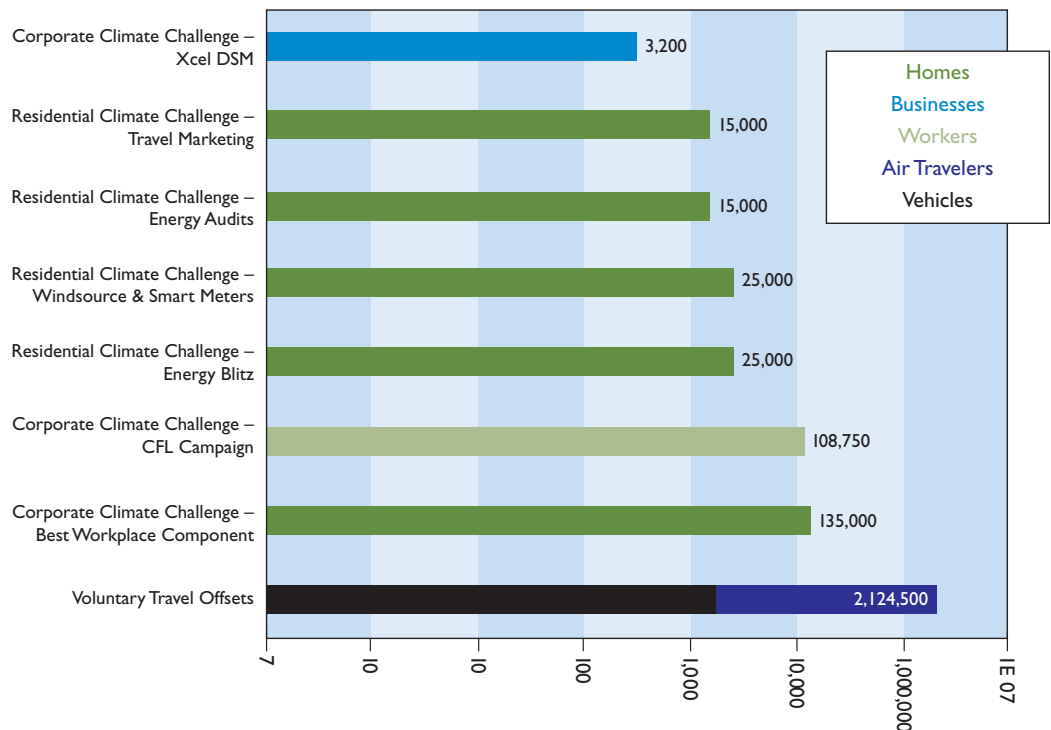
TO DATE, 1,519 HOMES HAVE RECEIVED ENERGY SAVINGS MEASURES AND THE INITIAL WATER CONSERVATION "AUDIT" AND 500 HOMES HAVE HAD HIGH-EFFICIENCY TOILETS INSTALLED, RESULTING IN A PROJECTED WATER SAVINGS OF OVER 14 MILLION GALLONS PER YEAR. PROGRAMS LIKE THIS ONE WOULD BE THE BASIS FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD ENERGY "BLITZ" ENVISIONED IN THE RESIDENTIAL ENERGY CHALLENGE.

### Long-Term Recommendations (Beyond 2012)

1. The Greenprint Denver Council should work with strategic communications and social marketing experts and Greenprint Denver staff to guide and advance implementation strategies for continued behavior change actions, recommend possible funding streams, partnership opportunities, and other program capacity development over a long-term horizon (2030 or 2050) to allow sufficient time to mainstream building upgrades, retrofits, green market development, and other long-term infrastructure improvements.
2. A long-term commitment, with sustained encouragement and messaging, is required to support the desired behavior change(s). The focus must be both on the near term, but also futuristic, looking 20+ years ahead.
3. Broad partnerships with educators as well as business, cultural, and community leaders are needed to leverage resources and build civic and leadership capacity to effect change.

The Greenprint Council's ten Primary Denver Strategies will require significant public engagement, illustrated in the following bar graph. Targeted engagement and participation rates are largely based on doubling Denver's current participation in conservation programs, along with one or two special outreach programs (for example, Compact Fluorescent Lamps distribution and Individualized Travel Marketing) shown to be successful in other cities, that are expected to reach at least 50 percent of the target populations in Denver.

**Figure 4-1**  
Engagement numbers for outreach initiatives



No matter which priorities are established by the Mayor, engaging the public to produce behavioral changes will be an important and necessary step to guarantee success. The level of public engagement and the target audiences for each desired behavioral change will likely vary. The strategies and recommendations discussed above should not be considered the entire engagement program; they will continue to evolve and expand. It is premature to develop complete public engagement strategy recommendations until we know which of the Greenprint Denver Council's recommendations will be advanced. Once a list of priorities is established, we anticipate the development of a full plan to engage appropriate target audiences via a social marketing campaign to achieve the desired results.