

Key Findings



Despite the concept's mixed reception from organized labor, we center our understanding of decarbonization of the energy system in Los Angeles around the need for a **"just transition."** We use this concept because it originated in the labor movement and because union labor has been one of the greatest opponents of the Los Angeles Green New Deal plan. Simply put, "the principle of just transition is that a healthy economy and a clean environment can and should co-exist. **The process for achieving this vision should be a fair one that should not cost workers or community residents their health, environment, jobs, or economic assets.** Any losses should be fairly compensated. And the practice of just transition means that the people who are most affected by pollution—the frontline workers and the fenceline communities—should be in the leadership of crafting policy solutions" (Just Transitions Alliance, n.d.).

With an awareness of the need to ensure both distributional justice and procedural justice, we put forward four dimensions that are critical for just energy transitions in large cities like Los Angeles: **public participation, social acceptance, job security and planning, and environmental justice and redress.** We discuss each dimension in the depth in the main body of the report.

Drawing from an extensive review of best practices in fossil fuel infrastructure phase-out from around the world, we also provide a summary of considerations that are relevant to the phase-out of natural gas and other fossil fuel infrastructure in Los Angeles.

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First, alternative future uses for the infrastructure and sites should be identified early on, and the public should be involved in early and constant participation surrounding the phase-out. In the case of Haynes, Harbor, and Scattergood, for example, two early options under consideration (battery storage and repowering for green hydrogen) would have very different trajectories and potential risks. Second, it should be acknowledged that retired or decommissioned power plants or other infrastructure can be converted or reused in a variety of ways (many of which require extensive planning and consultation), and that conversion or decommissioning can be more expensive than the construction of the facilities themselves, and may present health and environmental risks to neighboring communities and alter surrounding land values. All of these risks and challenges should be taken into account early on, and key stakeholders should be consulted as decisions are made about which risks are and are not acceptable.

We conclude with twelve recommendations for designing socially and environmentally just municipal decarbonization plans for Los Angeles and beyond:

- 1** The need for early and constant public participation
- 2** The need to address discrepancies in information and key definitions
- 3** The need to create more permanent and diverse stakeholder forums
- 4** The need for more concrete planning around transitioning workers and the need to support existing organizations and coalitions doing this work
- 5** Compensation for historically affected communities
- 6** The need to include communities located outside Los Angeles who are part of its energy systems in environmental justice assessments
- 7** Inclusion of both quantitative and qualitative analyses of household energy practices and experiences to work toward distributive justice
- 8** The need to strike a balance between innovation and reliability
- 9** The need for more attention given to the specific demands and challenges of decommissioning
- 10** Recognition that decommissioning could be a source of green jobs and other value creation
- 11** Recognition that—given the newness of large-scale urban decarbonization agendas—cities will have to draw knowledge from other cases from around the world, rather than just their own experiences
- 12** Acknowledgment that Los Angeles is on the cutting edge, and should work to create knowledge that will be useful for other cities in the future