

# Madison Gas and Electric Company

## Community Energy Workshop - Executive Summary - October 2016

### Background

In 2015, Madison Gas and Electric (MGE) undertook an unprecedented customer engagement effort with the help of Justice & Sustainability Associates (JSA), a respected Washington, D.C., firm recognized for its facilitation skills.

The engagement process was designed using multiple methods for listening to and gathering input from customers and community leaders. Through this effort, hundreds of customers and community members shared their thoughts and perspectives about how to build a community energy company for the future.

### Community Energy Conversations

JSA, on MGE's behalf, convened nearly 100 small group discussion sessions called Community Energy Conversations (CECs) during the summer and fall of 2015. In addition, MGE coordinated numerous stakeholder discussions; participated and continues to take part in discussions with the Citizens Utility Board and Clean Wisconsin; and conducted an independent, random sample survey of customers. The Energy 2030 framework was informed by input from MGE's Community Energy Conversations, customer surveys, industry research, other collaborative partnerships and numerous stakeholder discussions as well as the company's own planning and analyses.

### Community Energy Workshop

MGE's Community Energy Workshop (Workshop) was held the evening of April 19, 2016, at the Monona Terrace in downtown Madison as part of a multiphase engagement effort to advance the goals identified in its Energy 2030 framework.

The Workshop, facilitated by JSA with help from Covision, a company recognized for its interactive meetings, provided an opportunity for deliberative dialogue among a comprehensive cross section of individuals representing a wide range of perspectives from throughout the community and the 146,000 electric customers MGE serves.

MGE invited leaders and representatives from a broad and diverse set of organizations and interests, including nonprofits, neighborhoods, businesses, educational institutions, advocacy, environmental and sustainability groups, which also include racial, cultural and linguistic perspectives. About 200 community members attended, representing hundreds of organizations and affiliations.

### Gathering Input

To set the stage and the tone for the Workshop, a brief video provided context for each of the three subject areas and a central question was used to help frame the group's discussions.

- **WARM-UP:** "What are you most interested in sharing and learning about tonight?"
- **ENERGY 2030:** "From your perspective, what advice or observations do you have for MGE as it works to advance its Energy 2030 framework and address the challenges of a changing energy world?"
- **PRODUCTS AND SERVICES:** "From your perspective, what are the needs of customers that you think MGE products and services should address in the future, and why?"
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** "What have you learned in your experiences with community engagement that could be helpful to MGE in planning its future engagement?"

With this backdrop, simultaneous, facilitated discussions took place at each of the tables during the Workshop segments. Cumulatively, the individual table conversations generated 2,064 unique comments that were captured by real-time scribes at each table. In addition, nearly three dozen written comments were submitted at the end of the session.

### Comment Analysis Methodology

While there were numerous positive outcomes from gathering a diverse group of community members to engage in this highly interactive process, one of the most tangible outcomes was the body of data that was generated and captured by the Workshop scribes.

Following each segment, a "theme team" of eight community members quickly reviewed the comments submitted and provided a preliminary overview of the themes that emerged from the discussions. This immediate feedback provided participants with insight and perspective on what others were discussing in the room.

Over the past several months, teams of MGE staff have further reviewed and analyzed the data. Though the table discussions were prompted by a specific set of questions, the richness of the responses and ensuing discussions provided invaluable input for MGE to use over time as a tangible and 'living' resource as we work to fulfill the Energy 2030 framework.

### Summary Report - Overview of Key Themes

The Workshop Report is an overview of the key themes, topics of interest and sample quotes gleaned from a thorough review of the input generated by the interactive table conversations.

Based on a preliminary review and coding of the data, nine key topic areas emerged from the unique comments. Those themes provide valuable insights into customer priorities and perspectives. The key themes that arose from the Workshop include:

- **ENERGY 2030:** Reactions, observations and questions about the Energy 2030 framework.
- **ROLE of MGE:** Advice and input on the leadership role that MGE, as a community energy company for the future, could and should play in the efforts to reach those goals.
- **ECONOMICS OF ENERGY:** Perspectives and considerations about the economic viability and realities of advancing the framework.
- **ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION:** Specific thoughts and ideas about energy efficiency and conservation.
- **NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES:** Thoughts and ideas about the addition of new products and services that may be useful for helping customers play a larger role in meeting community energy goals, largely through the sharing of information.
- **ENERGY RESOURCES:** Perspectives about various energy resources, including an assessment of the pros and cons of those resources, and about how to move – individually and as a community – toward integration of more renewable resources.
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS:** Recommendations about how best to involve and engage all segments of the community to advance Energy 2030.
- **COMMUNICATION:** Ideas for what tools MGE may offer to help customers play a larger role in understanding and using information to help customers reach shared goals.
- **EQUITY AND DIVERSITY:** MGE's customers are broad and diverse. They do not come from or with the same demographic, social, cultural, linguistic, educational or professional backgrounds, nor do they all self-identify in the same way. Participants made it clear that it is important MGE be intentional as they consider a variety of strategies to involve and include customers and the community.

The valuable input from the Community Energy Workshop will be used to help inform strategies and decisions regarding how MGE will work with the community to reach shared energy goals. The data will continue to play a role in future planning discussions and be the basis upon which MGE delves further into understanding customer and community preferences, explores new products and services, and creates other opportunities for engagement. The full Workshop report and all of the comments from the Workshop are available at [www.mge.com/workshop](http://www.mge.com/workshop).