



NARUC

National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners

NARUC Task Force on Natural Gas Resource Planning

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), with support from the U.S. Department of Energy, has convened representatives of 20 state utility commissions to discuss and develop strategies to align natural gas distribution utility planning with a diverse set of state policy goals.

The Challenge

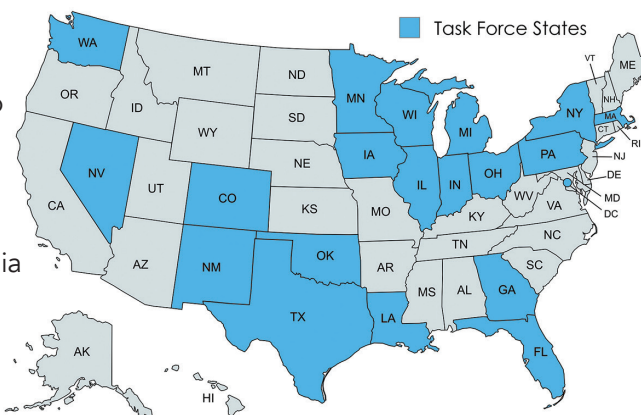
The rapid pace of technological and policy changes in the natural gas sector poses complicated questions for state utility commissions. Presented with proposals that reflect growing costs for routine safety-related infrastructure upgrades, expansions to serve new customers, investments to maintain supply, evolving energy efficiency programs, and more complex, longer-term system changes, utility regulators must make decisions today that will have practical effects on customer bills, infrastructure investments, and the likelihood of achieving state policy goals far into the future. Commissions seek to ensure that they have sufficient information for decision making in this environment.

Following a series of scoping meetings and learning sessions, Gas Task Force members divided themselves into four cohorts based on the challenges facing their states. The cohorts recognize the key role of commissions in implementing state policies through regulatory decisions and are not advocating for the adoption of these or any other specific state goals or policies. The member cohorts focused on:

- Maintaining affordability of natural gas bills in the face of rising costs
- Achieving clean energy goals for gas distribution established by state legislatures
- Supporting economic development through expanded natural gas distribution infrastructure
- Improving reliability of the natural gas pipeline system to meet customer needs

Members from 20 States Participated

Colorado
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Louisiana
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Nevada
New Mexico
New York
Ohio
Oklahoma
Pennsylvania
Texas
Washington
Wisconsin



In Brief

- Commissioners and commission staff from 20 diverse and representative states envisioned ideal planning processes to align natural gas distribution utility investment plans with state policy goals.
- Members created four distinct roadmaps that describe how state policy goals related to affordability, clean energy, economic development, and reliability can be reflected in long-term gas utility planning overseen by Commissions.
- Utility leaders, subject matter experts, and stakeholders shared their perspectives with Gas Task Force members, helping illuminate challenges, opportunities, and decision making options for gas utilities and answering questions from utility regulators.
- The Gas Task Force's materials are now available for all states to use as a starting point for achieving their own goals related to gas utility planning. Visit <https://bit.ly/NARUCGasTaskForce>.

Developing Approaches Relevant to Any State

Gas Task Force members from 20 states requested to join and were appointed by NARUC leadership following an open application process. These states are diverse in geography, political environment, end uses of natural gas, and other factors. Members completed their work during four workshops and numerous virtual meetings over two years, with the objective of identifying idealized roadmaps that could serve as inspiration and starting points for themselves and colleagues throughout the country facing similar challenges.

Roadmaps Outline Idealized Planning Processes

Gas Task Force Cohort Roadmaps describe four distinct concepts for idealized regulated natural gas utility planning process as envisioned by Gas Task Force members. Each roadmap explains a vision for planning aligned with one overarching state policy goal: affordability, clean energy, economic development, and reliability. In practice, elements of the roadmaps could be combined to support two or more goals, reflecting the multifaceted priorities of state utility regulation.

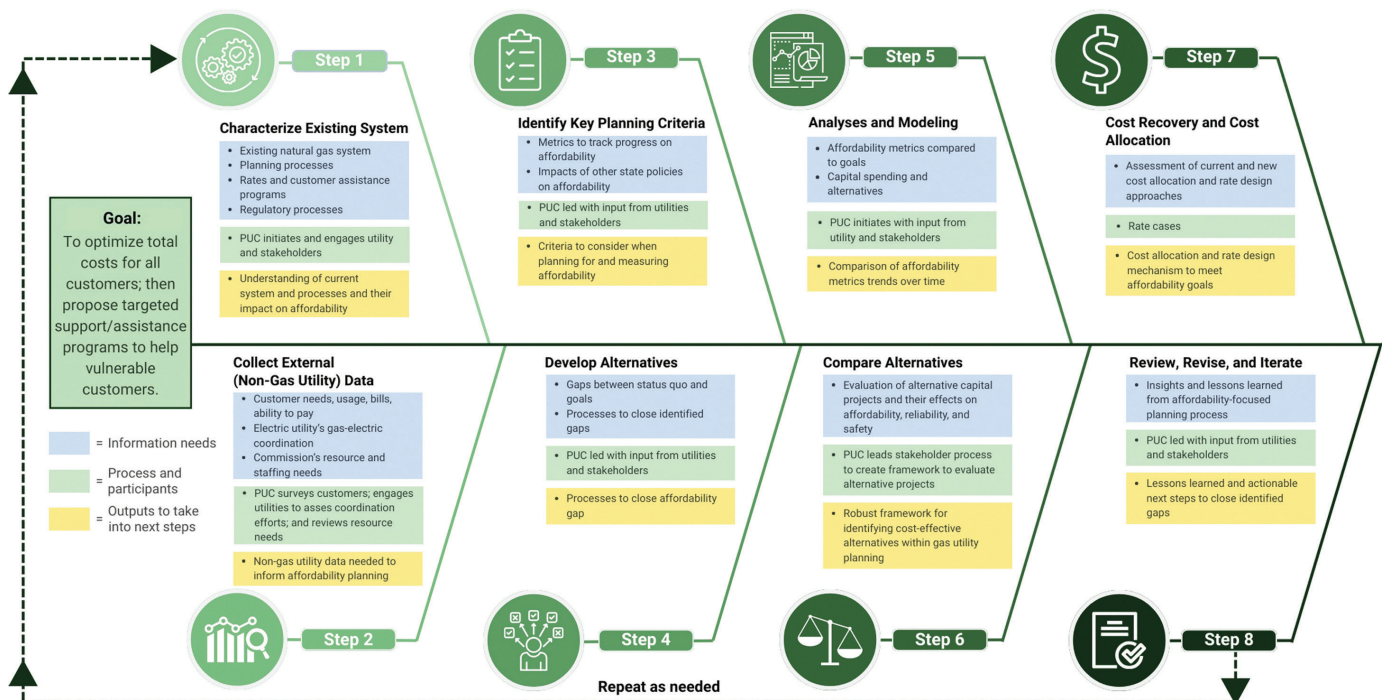
Each of the four cohorts developed a unique vision for idealized planning conducted by regulated natural gas distribution utilities and overseen by commissions. The objectives of these visions are to enhance state utility regulators' ability to ensure reliable, affordable, and safe natural gas service while also pursuing relevant state policy goals.

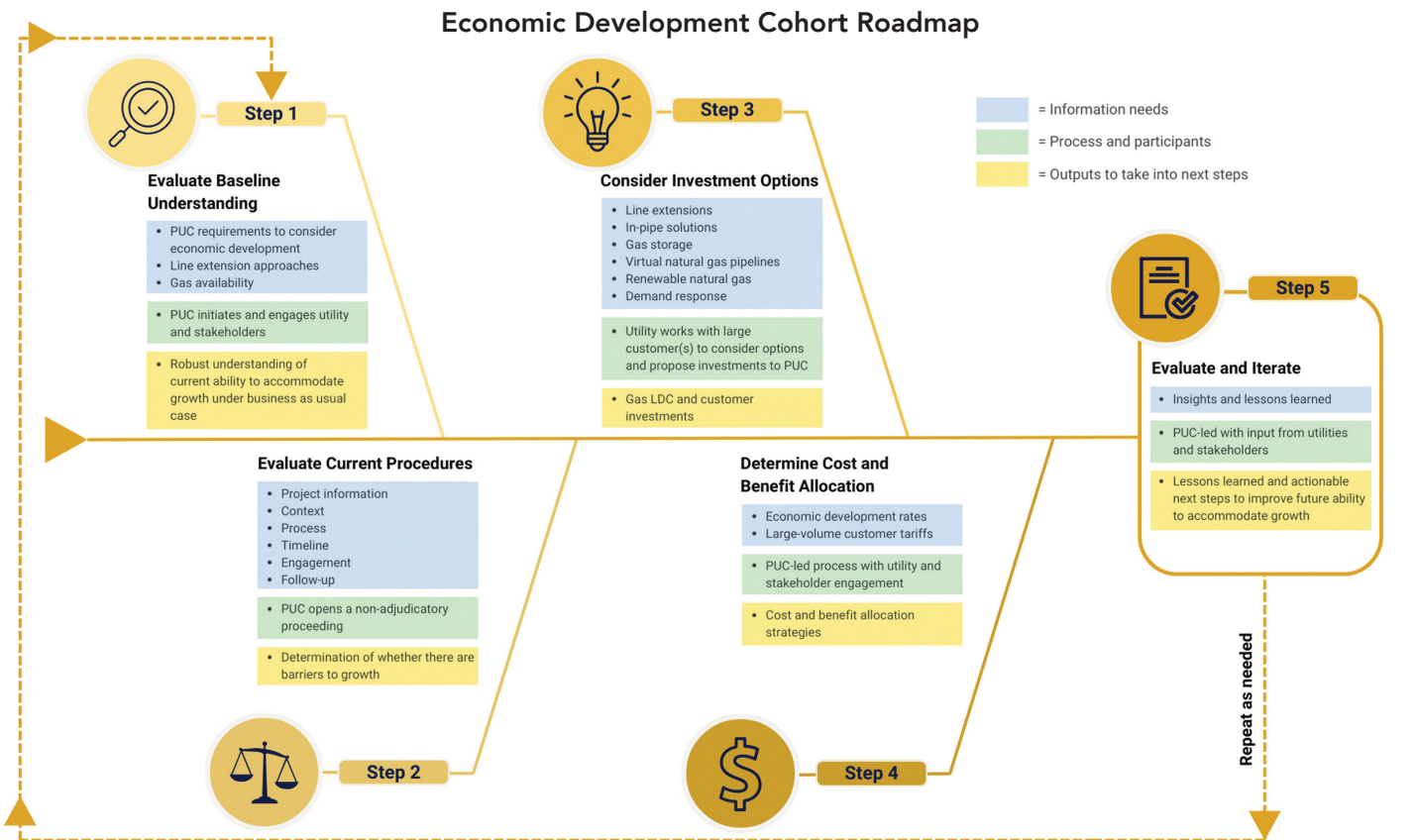
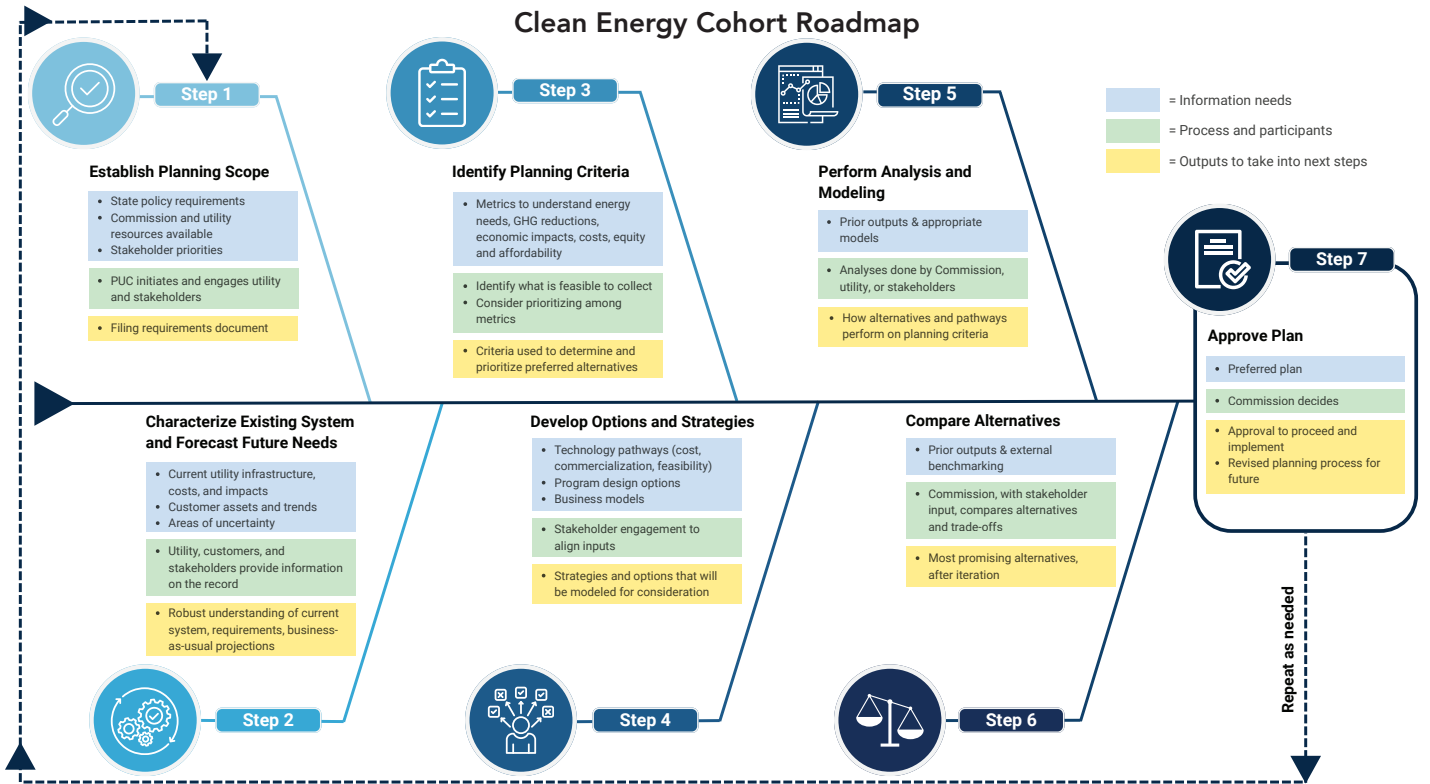
Each roadmap conceptualizes high-level steps in a hypothetical planning process. For each step, the following items are discussed:

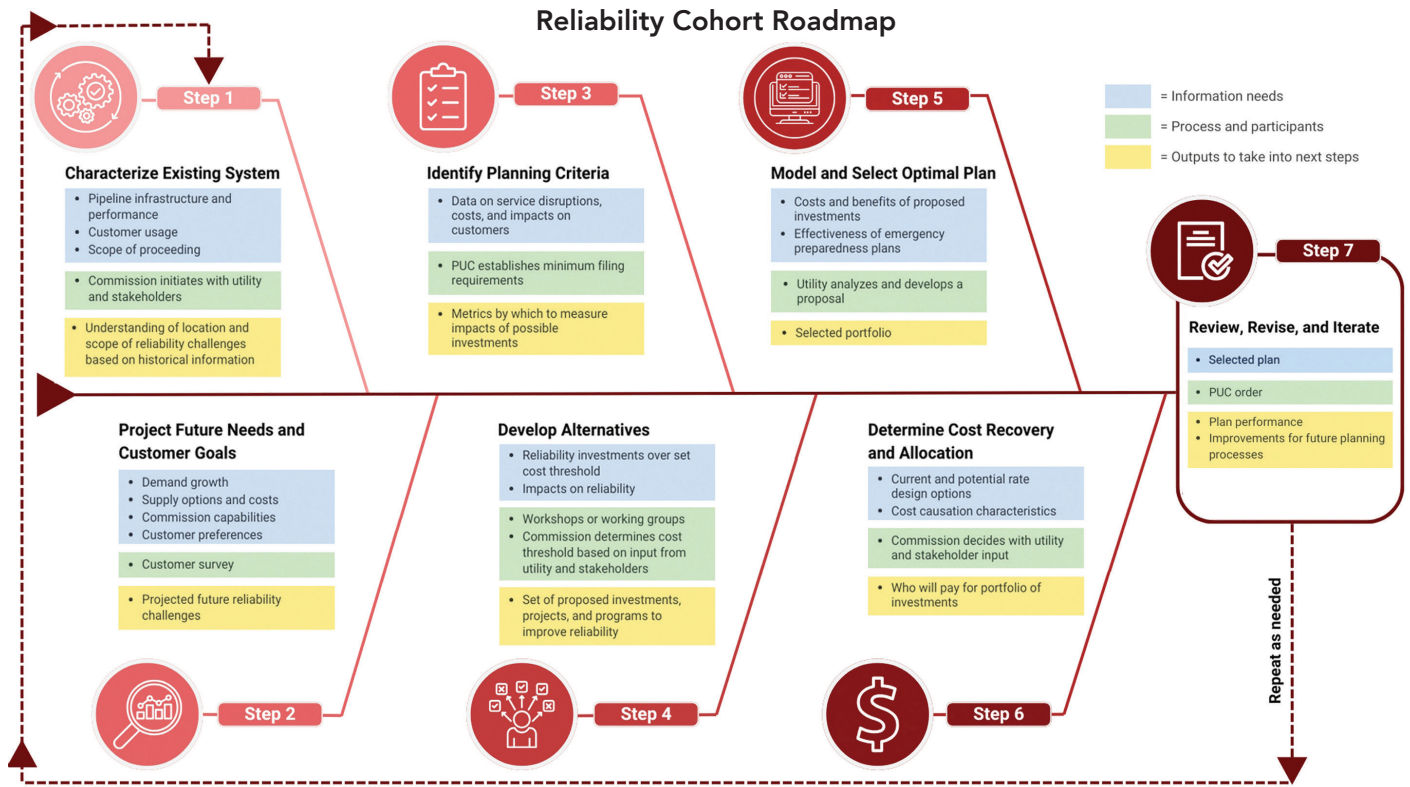
- **Information Needs:** What information the commission needs from regulated utilities and / or stakeholders to arrive at a decision grounded in evidence.
- **Process and Participants:** How the commission will engage regulated utilities and / or stakeholders in each phase of planning and in what forum(s) planning discussions will take place.
- **Outputs to Take into Next Steps:** The final product of each step that is necessary to inform and enable subsequent parts of the process.

The visual representations below offer a synopsis of the roadmaps, which explain each step in more detail.

Affordability Cohort Roadmap







Gas Task Force Resources

All materials are publicly available: <https://bit.ly/NARUCGasTaskForce>.

- **Roadmaps** describe concepts for idealized regulated natural gas utility planning processes with visual and narrative elements. The processes are viewed from the state commission perspective on how to align natural gas utility investments with state policy goals.
- **The Natural Gas Resource Planning Library** houses resources from virtual learning sessions with subject matter experts representing gas utilities, trade associations, non-governmental and research institutions. A new webpage in the library outlines potential modeling and analytical tools that can support implementing elements of the envisioned gas planning processes.
- **The State Policies Map** summarize state policies in all 50 states across nine categories relevant to the Task Force on Natural Gas Resource Planning.
- **Background Information** offers the Gas Task Force’s initial charter, fact sheet, and approach to achieving its objectives.

Gas Task Force Leadership:

- Chair: Hon. Fitz Johnson, Georgia
- Co-Vice Chair: Hon. Tammy Cordova, Nevada
- Co-Vice Chair: Hon. Kathryn Zeffuss, Pennsylvania

NARUC Support Staff:

- Danielle Sass Byrnett, Senior Director, Center for Partnerships and Innovation
- Kiera Zitelman, Technical Director, Center for Partnerships and Innovation

Consultant Staff, The Brattle Group:

- Josh Figueroa, Senior Associate
- Long Lam, Senior Associate
- Dean Murphy, Principal
- Ragini Sreenath, Managing Energy Associate