



Broadway Merchants Association
530 Broadway
Denver, CO 80203

Councilwoman Flor Alvidrez
1437 Bannock St.
Rm 405
Denver Co. 80202

Councilwoman:

We write to you today on behalf of the Broadway Merchants Association and the Lincoln Broadway Community RNO (LBCRNO). Businesses and neighbors are concerned about the renewal of the Xcel franchise agreement. Over the last 10+ years the businesses and residents on Broadway and Lincoln have experienced an enormous amount of prolonged power outages. This has caused hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost revenue, food spoilage and ruined events for more than 50 small businesses. It has jeopardized the health of residents (particularly the elderly and those with special needs) when their HVAC units don't have power in the blistering heat and the freezing winters. Oxygen machines and CPAP machines do not typically have battery backup and we are particularly concerned about the vulnerability of people who need their medical equipment to be powered on at all times.

In the first 6 months of 2025 we have already had 7 significant outages not related to weather. After countless complaints, calls and emails to Xcel, LBCRNO requested the Public Utilities Commission to investigate. The investigation confirms the outages and calls them "shocking" and alluded to the number of outages nearly rising to a level of emergency. Often times residents and business owners would call to report outages or file a complaint only to be disconnected, transferred to an extension that doesn't exist or given a phone number for a disconnected line. The customer care at Xcel is objectively atrocious.

Xcel may tell you that the outages did not rise to a level that triggered warnings or flags for repair. If true, then the City of Denver should be reducing the duration and number of outages needed to flag an area for infrastructure repair. This is a critical piece of a franchise renewal agreement that you can ask for as representatives.

Additionally, Xcel has not been able to provide service and infrastructure updates to new businesses in a timely manner. A "rush work order" for something as simple as capping a gas line can take more than 4 months. This not only bankrupts small businesses but it adds significant cost to housing projects, including affordable housing. Debt service (mortgages), rent payments, insurance and even employees still need to get paid while citizens wait months for short tasks to be completed. We urge you to require work orders to be completed within 8 weeks, instead of what appears to be 16-20 weeks currently. While 8 weeks is still a significant delay, it's a compromise from the unacceptable timelines currently being given.

Xcel may tell you that they simply don't have the resources to address work orders any quicker. I will remind you that Xcel Energy managed \$13.4 billion in gross revenue in 2024 with **\$1.94 billion in net income**, up roughly 9.3% from 2023. According to various investment publications, Xcel ranks among the top 10 most profitable energy companies in the U.S. The Colorado Sun reports that Colorado customers have seen energy bills from Xcel increase 38% in the last 5 years.

Lastly, we urge you to consider a shorter-term Franchise agreement of 5 or 10 years. This would allow the City of Denver to negotiate with Xcel on a more regular basis about critical service issues like the ones we have brought forth.

Please reach out to Luke Johnson or Caitlin Braun anytime with questions or comments.

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Best,



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