

2024 Climate Protection Program

LEAP Program Service Agreement

Climate Action Plan (CAP) Strategies and Actions

- Strategy: Increase energy efficiency and onsite renewable energy use in existing buildings
 - a. Key Action: Education/Encouragement
LEAP ACTION(S):
 - i. *Serve as a navigator to City residents interested in energy efficiency and solar adoption through the Energy Resource Hub (*see Addendum for additional detail)*
 - *Resource Hub: 550 hours*
 - a. *Planning: 50 hours*
 - b. *Implementation: 500 hours (20 hrs/week for 25 weeks)*
 - ii. *Build virtual and physical resources to provide this support*
 - *Resource Hub: 280 hours*
 - a. *Planning: 250 hours (10 hrs/week for 25 weeks)*
 - b. *Implementation: 30 hours*
 - iii. *Host webinars and participate in local in-person events*
 - *General Program Support: 20 hours*
 - *Resource Hub: 175 hours*
 - a. *Implementation: 7 hours/week*
 - iv. *Develop materials and conduct outreach to program-eligible audiences*
 - *General Program Support: 50 hours*
 - *Resource Hub: 150 hours*
 - b. Key Action: Increase participation by low-income households in fully funded programs for energy efficiency improvements and solar energy systems
LEAP ACTION(S):
 - i. *Promote a referral program for current and prior program participants*
 - *General Program Support: 25 hours*
 - ii. *Coordinate targeted outreach from trusted partners (i.e. Loaves and Fishes, Meals on Wheels, and houses of worship)*
 - *General Program Support: 25 hours*
 - iii. *Send strategic mailings to potential participants (i.e. postcards to neighborhoods, utility mailings)*
 - *General Program Support: 50 hours*
 - iv. *Purchase paid advertising to promote LEAP's services and the partnership between LEAP and the City*
 - *General Program Support: 30 hours*
 - *Resource Hub: 90 hours*

- c. Key Action: Develop and identify funding assistance programs designed for mid-income households

LEAP ACTION(S):

- i. *Compile and regularly update all funding assistance programs available to City residents, including federal, state, local, and utility rebates and incentives*
 - *Resource Hub: 50 hours*

The actions described above also address the following additional Climate Action Plan strategies and actions:

- Strategy: Increase energy efficiency and onsite renewable energy use in existing buildings
 - Key Action: Identify options for residents in single-family properties, as well as apartments and town-home style housing, for both owner-occupied and rental units
 - Key Action: Evaluate and increase resource support for commercial buildings
- Strategy: Support transition to carbon-free sources and carbon-neutrality for building energy supply
 - Key Action: Prioritize transition to electric for the Miscellaneous Heating Fuels that contribute to the Buildings and Energy sector emissions
- Strategy: Leverage outside funding sources
 - Key Action: Increase participation in funding programs available from Federal and State governments as well as from utility companies

Metrics

Deliverables

- Energy Resource Hub content, website, logo, and branding
- Resource Hub Office Hours & In-Person Support (location to be determined)
- Marketing materials (postcards, flyers, tabling materials, etc.)

Results

- Energy Efficiency for Market Rate (MR) and Low Income (LI)
 - Number of households audited (MR and LI)
 - Number of households served (LI)
 - Work completed in each household (LI)
 - Estimated kWh reduction (LI)
 - Aggregate natural gas reduction
 - CO2e reductions by improvement type (where available)
- Solar
 - Number of Solarize sign-ups
 - Number of Solarize installations
 - Size and value of Solarize installations

- Number of LI solar installations
- Size and value of LI solar installations
- Projected energy offset from solar installations
- Energy Resource Hub (monthly updates)
 - Number of participants in office hours
 - Number of calls and emails
 - Number of households/businesses who access rebates/credits
 - Aggregate value of rebates/credits
 - Number of community events attended for program promotion
 - Visits to website
- General
 - Conversion rate of outreach, where trackable
 - Referrals from past participants
 - Projected utility bill impacts

LEAP will invoice the City monthly. LEAP will coordinate with City Climate Protection Program staff to make adjustments to the program and budget as needed throughout the duration of the agreement. LEAP will meet with the City monthly and provide updates on our progress; LEAP will also prepare a mid-year report and final report detailing the deliverables completed, as well as the metrics and results noted above.

The Resource Hub will be delivered through a collaboration between LEAP and the Community Climate Collaborative (C3). LEAP brings expertise in energy efficiency and renewable energy programs in the residential space, and C3 brings expertise in the commercial space. C3 will act as a subcontractor to LEAP for the execution of this work.

ADDENDUM

Energy Resource Hub

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) was signed into law in 2022 and will inject 370 billion dollars in actions aimed at decreasing the nation's CO2 emissions 40% by 2030, helping consumers save on energy costs, and propelling the US to become a clean energy industry leader.

Included in the IRA are funds to help homeowners, renters, and businesses to lower their energy usage and reduce their carbon footprint. The legislation includes ten years of tax credits and rebates to install clean residential, business, and vehicle technologies – from rooftop solar to heat pumps to high-efficiency appliances and electric vehicles, all of which will help consumers save money while reducing their environmental impact. Once implemented, these electrification and energy efficiency upgrades, solar installations, and EV adoptions could save thousands of dollars for households and businesses throughout the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County and support critical progress on our community climate goals. We have an opportunity to ensure that residents and businesses understand their maximum benefits and reach their full potential to reduce community-wide carbon emissions and energy use.

Navigating energy savings rebates, tax credits, and other programs can be complicated and confusing. Some programs are age- or income-qualifying. Some are tax credits, and some will be available at point-of-sale. Some people own their homes and others rent. Everyone's homes are of different ages and have different systems in various conditions. All these variables and more impact what is available to any given community member, which can be an insurmountable barrier for many people. The goal of the Resource Hub is to help the Charlottesville community take as much advantage of these energy programs as possible, saving money and lowering emissions in the process.

In partnership, LEAP and C3 propose planning, building, and operating an Energy Resource Hub to ensure City and County residents and businesses have the tools and information they need to access and accelerate cost savings and emission reductions. The Resource Hub will have an online component and will also provide personalized assistance through both in-person office hours and telephone consultations.

Through the Energy Resource Hub, LEAP and C3 seek to:

- Leverage existing resources (US Department of Energy, VA Department of Energy, Rewiring America, etc.) to build a comprehensive and user-friendly online resource where City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County residents and businesses can easily navigate and understand federal, state, and local incentives.
- Help residents and businesses take action to decrease their emissions and thereby reduce community-wide carbon emissions.
- Provide personalized attention and work one-on-one with residents and businesses to navigate and apply for federal, state, and local incentives and rebates.

- Leverage and expand LEAP's and C3's positions as known and trusted resources for residents and businesses interested in managing their energy use and reducing their environmental impact.
- Represent the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County at community events with regards to the resource hub.

Project Implementation

PHASE 1 - Planning and Development

The first six months of the program (July to December) will be the planning and development phase. LEAP and C3 will meet on a bi-weekly basis and will convene with City and County staff monthly. During the planning phase, we will:

- Compile and organize existing resources available from Federal, State, Local, and Utility programs
- Train and orient staff (50 hours)
- Create a marketing plan
- Build the website and dashboard (250 hours)

The planning phase will be used to answer key implementation questions, including:

- Locations and times for office hours
- Division of labor and staffing
- Process for managing customer support
- Allocation of the marketing budget (potential items include radio, TV, outdoor, online, and search ads, printed mailers, stadium signage, flyers, and banners)
- Strategy and cadence for attending community events
- Resources required for expansion

PHASE 2 - Launch and Deployment

The second half of the program term (January to June) will be the deployment phase, dedicated to piloting and executing the Resource Hub. We plan to launch to the public in January 2025. This phase will include the following, but specifics may be adjusted following our planning phase:

- Community Support (500 hours, 20 hours/week for 25 weeks)
 - Client intake and call center
 - Office hours
 - 1:1 guidance to residents and businesses
- Marketing and Outreach
 - Advertising
 - Printed materials
 - Community events

Deliverables

- Energy Resource Hub content, website, logo, and brand guidelines
- Resource Hub Office Hours & In-Person Support (location to be determined)
- Marketing materials (postcards, flyers, tabling materials, etc.)

Metrics of Success

We will use the following metrics to evaluate the success of our campaign:

- Number of participants in office hours
- Number of calls and emails
- Number of households/businesses who access rebates/credits
- Aggregate value of rebates/credits
- Number of community events attended for program promotion
- Visits to website

By creating this Hub as a partnership with the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County, LEAP and C3 will amplify our message to residents and businesses, strengthen our credibility, and support the cost of maintaining the Hub. The funding for this pilot will be split equally between Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville. The energy resource hub can serve as a vital resource to our local community, driving action and energy solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

About LEAP

Founded in 2009, the Local Energy Alliance Program (LEAP) delivers energy efficiency solutions in Virginia to make homes safer, healthier, and more affordable while reducing energy usage and mitigating climate change.

LEAP's primary goal is to empower individuals and organizations to make smart energy choices that benefit the environment and their wallets. We offer a wide range of services, from home energy assessments to solar installations, helping our community reduce energy consumption and lower greenhouse gas emissions via electrification.

About C3

The Community Climate Collaborative (C3) was launched in 2017 with a mission of elevating climate action at the local level. We believe the power to confront climate change and embrace climate leadership resides within our communities. Residents, businesses, and local governments have the power to take action, implement policy, and reduce emissions right at home in Charlottesville and Albemarle County, Virginia.

C3 has spent years building and testing business outreach and engagement models and will bring its expertise in building relationships with businesses both large and small. C3 has partnered with small, minority- and/or woman-owned (SWaM) businesses through its Energy Efficiency Grant Program and mid-sized to large employers with its Green Business Alliance.