



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 4, 2024

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: JAMES F. PARAJON, CITY MANAGER /s/

FROM: RYAN FREED, CLIMATE ACTION OFFICER

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of a Grant Application to the U.S. Department of Energy for the Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant.

ISSUE: Should the City seek grant funding from the U.S. Department of Energy to support energy efficiency, community engagement, and electrification education in Alexandria.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Authorize the submission of a grant application for up to \$197,700 in federal funding to the Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to apply for the Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) and enter into any necessary agreements with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to accept this funding.

BACKGROUND: The U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) provides direct funding for energy efficiency projects to State and local jurisdictions across the country. These awards are determined by formula, largely impacted by the jurisdiction's population. The formula awards Alexandria \$197,700, and requires no matching funds.

DISCUSSION: The Alexandria City Council unanimously adopted the updated Environmental Action Plan 2040 (EAP2040) in July 2019. The EAP2040 established a target of reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by Fiscal Year 2030 and 80 to 100 percent by Fiscal Year 2050, relative to 2005. In

May 2023, the City updated the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan (ECCAP), which provides further guidance on how to achieve the goals laid out in the EAP2040. This includes retrofitting housing with efficiency and electrification upgrades and building new housing to have high energy performance. The Office of Climate Action intends this funding to be used for two significant projects. The first, the re-launch of the Eco-City Academy, which will bring community members together to learn more about the City's Eco-City initiatives. In line with the City's All Alexandria resolution and the Council's priority for Climate Justice, this program will include an effort toward direct community engagement, and helping ensure existing programs from the federal, state, and City are known by the entire community, particularly those aimed at low-income populations. The funding will also include training for City staff and community partners on direct community engagement techniques to center Race & Social Equity principles, in partnership between the Office of Climate Action and the Race & Social Equity Office.

The second portion of this funding will be used to promote building electrification efforts across the City. Funds will be used to educate and engage the public on topics ranging from indoor air quality benefits of energy efficiency and electrification, to energy savings and more. The Office of Climate Action will work with local partners to have displays that demonstrate new technologies, and showcase the steps necessary to electrify homes and buildings.

FISCAL IMPACT: The Grant requires no matching funds from the City, so this grant would be additive to our existing efforts. The programs the City will apply for are already within the scope of the EAP2040 and the ECCAP, with appropriate staffing. No additional fiscal impact is expected.

ATTACHMENT: None.

STAFF:

Ryan Freed, Climate Action Officer

Yulia Fernandez Marco, Community Engagement & Climate Justice Manager

Samantha Heitsch, Sustainability Coordinator, Office of Climate Action

Julian Gonsalves, Assistant City Manager