



Local Government Program Design for Home Energy Retrofits – Executive Summary

Build It Green recommends a municipal program design model that integrates utility incentives, Federal Stimulus opportunities and Clean Energy Municipal Finance mechanisms to spur widespread energy retrofits and comprehensive green home improvements. Widespread green home improvements will help governments meet their climate action and economic revitalization goals.

To ensure a lasting local market transformation, we help local governments develop customer-focused programs that contribute to long-term home affordability, health, comfort, safety, durability, and ease of maintenance. The program model builds on nationally recognized home energy efficiency best practices developed through US EPA's Home Performance with Energy Star program and national accreditation standards for contractors developed by the Building Performance Institute. To achieve maximum health, economic, and environmental benefits, home owners will be encouraged to achieve a GreenPoint Rated Existing Home label.

Rationale

A home energy retrofit program will:

- Benefit the local economy
- Address a significant source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in City Climate Action Plans
- Train and reemploy local construction workers
- Provide a tangible and highly visible service to homeowners facilitated by their local government
- Significantly reduce energy use in existing homes
- Save homeowners money
- Improve comfort and indoor air quality
- Improve the quality of the community's housing stock

This program model aligns with Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant criteria. Communities that collaborate on a regional-scale home energy retrofit program can show:

- Goals and objectives that maximize stimulus funding to benefit entire community
- A plan for sustained benefits beyond the EECBG funding period
- A collaborative model, working with adjacent units of local governments also receiving funds



Comprehensive green home improvement programs build on home energy retrofits and then capture additional opportunities to reduce GHG emissions through water efficiency and solid waste diversion.

Recommendations

- Collaborate regionally by pooling Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant funds (min. 10%). Benefits to regional collaboration:
 - More thorough market research and more robust designs
 - Marketing campaigns have higher impact
 - Higher contractor participation
 - Economies of scale in administration and quality assurance
 - Centralized tracking, GHG quantification, reporting provides comparable results
- Reward performance-based home improvements
- Set & enforce clear standards, provide smart incentives & easy financing
- Promote home energy retrofits as first step toward comprehensive green home improvements

Agency's next steps:

- Identify internal champion
- Prioritize a portion of stimulus funds, e.g. 10-20%, towards home energy retrofit program development
- Coordinate at the County or Regional level to pool resources & leverage additional funds
- Review Build It Green's model program proposal for guidance on implementation
- Tap industry expertise and implement Best Practices for
 - Marketing, education, and outreach
 - Green workforce development
 - Incentives and financing
- Utilize existing systems for
 - Contractor & Rater training
 - Verification, QA / QC protocols
 - Project tracking, GHG quantification & reporting

Visit <http://www.builditgreen.org/home-energy-retrofit-programs-local-government>

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