

**What We
Heard:**
Clean Energy
Improvement
Program Public
Engagement

March 2019

DEFINE

SHARE YOUR VOICE
SHAPE OUR CITY

Edmonton

Summary

The Clean Energy Improvement Program (CEIP) is a means of financing energy efficiency upgrades and/or renewable energy installations for residential and commercial property owners. The City of Edmonton's CEIP will incorporate new provincial legislation and regulations to introduce an Edmonton-specific financing tool to accelerate the investment in GHG reduction through energy efficiency, and on site renewable energy generation.

Public engagement sessions were held to provide stakeholders and the public with an opportunity to help refine the proposed elements of a Clean Energy Improvement program for Edmonton.

Who We Engaged

We aimed to engage the general public through our drop-in engagement event. We also invited stakeholders in the residential and commercial building sector to participate in our workshops. These stakeholders included contractors in the residential and commercial building and renewable energy sectors, real estate professionals, non-profits related to energy efficiency and homeowners and commercial property owners.

What We Did

Sessions Hosted:

- Public drop-in engagement session on March 6th at City Hall. 35 people attended the session.
- Two stakeholder workshops (residential and commercial-focused) on March 5th & 6th at the Sutton Place Hotel. 47 people attended the sessions.

Session Process:

- At the drop-in public engagement session, attendees were presented with information on the Clean Energy Improvement program administrative process, contractor process, example loan payment schedule and proposed investment options. We asked attendees to provide their input on adjustments that could be made to the program elements via display boards and a feedback survey.
- For the stakeholder workshops, the program leads for the City of Edmonton and Energy Efficiency Alberta presented the program elements and allowed for opportunities for questions throughout. Through facilitated discussions, we looked for suggestions to additional investment options, adjustments to the contractor process and any other comments or concerns stakeholders wanted to provide.

Engagement Results and Findings

During the sessions, we collected insights on areas such as the proposed investment options for both residential and commercial building owners, the contractor process, and other barriers to energy efficiency retrofits and renewable energy installations. Summary of the received feedback is grouped into common themes below.

Investment List Additions

Commercial

- Energy storage
- Passive wind

- Energy storage (batteries)
- Electric vehicle infrastructure (charging stations, parking stalls)
- Smart buildings

Residential

- Automation
- Occupancy sensors
- Smart home elements
- Energy management
- Co-generation
- High efficiency hot water heater
- Well insulated sauna
- Gas clothes dryer
- Battery storage
- Combined heat/power, co-generation
- Air source heat pump hot water tank
- Air conditioning should not be considered for more energy efficiency
- Furnace heat (even “energy efficient”) should be disregarded for this program. People need to know there are better options

Contractor Concerns

Concerns were expressed around possible delays in contractor payments, length of approval time, contractor training requirements and liability/burden of responsibility. It was emphasized that the risk to the homeowner/property owner should be minimized.

For commercial property owners, additional points included ensuring the qualification/training process is not onerous and allows for a team representative to train on behalf of a company/sub-contractors and the importance of recognizing that the commercial process is much different (owners will tend to want to use companies that have done work in the past).

Property selling, buying & ownership considerations

Comments included considerations around the impact on resale, concern this may leave out first time homebuyers and education needed for underwriters and realtors. It was noted that condominium buildings may need additional support/guidance on how to navigate a project.

Education and awareness

Comments on this theme included homeowners’ uncertainty about who to hire, helping contractors understand the house as a whole system, and the need to have an easy to understand process and application form.

Process Considerations

There were concerns voiced around the idea of a “soft launch” and the inability to properly measure program interest and the uncertainty around the limitations of the program or possible industry stall.

Monitoring and verification

It was suggested that monitoring and verification of energy performance should not be onerous for commercial property owners.

Financing Cap & Funding

There were concerns expressed that a \$1 million commercial project cap may not be sufficient. It was also suggested that the program should allow for private funding to be used.

Tax Considerations

It was noted that clarity should be provided around the tax implications - for example, who notifies the bank of the change in tax payments or what repayment vehicles exist for non-property tax paying entities.

Interest in investments

Top selections from residential investment list:

- Window
- Solar inverter
- Attic insulation
- Exterior wall insulation
- Air sealing
- Furnace
- Solar installation

Next Steps

City of Edmonton Administration has been engaging PACE stakeholders for several years and has a fair understanding of what would work well in the Edmonton setting. With the program being owned by the provincial agency, Energy Efficiency Alberta, it was an opportunity to test the final version with local residential and commercial stakeholders. The program has proven to be robust and workable for the vast majority. Where new suggestions arose, or items left out of this first version were raised again, these were noted by EEA as worth investigating for the updated program a year from now. We anticipate that the Clean Energy Improvement program will proceed with a soft launch in late fall 2019.

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