



CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

Date: July 29, 2009

To: John Szerlag, City Manager

From: Brian P. Murphy, Assistant City Manager/Economic Development Services
Mark F. Miller, Planning Director

Subject: Michigan Municipal League, Michigan Green Communities Challenge, An Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy, Resolution to Participate

All Michigan communities are eligible to complete the Basic Challenge, a program designed to reflect each community's commitment to adopt policies and programs of energy efficiency and conservation. If the City of Troy decides to accept the Basic Challenge, City Council must pass a resolution indicating its desire to participate, and complete Steps 1 through 6. These steps may seem burdensome; however, the City is the recipient of the \$921,100 through the federal Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant (EECBG). The City is collaborating with Carlisle/Wortman Associates to prepare a Rapid Energy Assessment Program (REAP) to meet the requirements of the EECBG. This REAP will produce the bulk of the information needed for the Michigan Municipal League (MML) Green Communities Challenge.

Step 1: Obtain Organizational Support (Resolution)

Passage of the support resolution by the City Council is the first essential step toward achieving the Basic Challenge. This resolution acts as a commitment or pledge to work toward the objectives as identified in the Michigan Green Communities Challenge.

Step 2: Assign Responsibility

Establish an energy manager position/responsibility or management team within the unit of local government. Clearly define roles for the management team which may include a sustainability manager, energy manager, or similar title. Also the City should consider establishing an advisory commission (or "Green Team") composed of local residents and business representatives to advise and assist the City Council on policies and practices dealing with the environment, energy efficiency and conservation.

Step 3: Collect Energy Data for Governmental Operations

Collection of critical data is an important aspect of preparing an accurate and significant strategy. It allows for establishing a baseline for future analysis of energy reduction efforts and also allows municipalities to benchmark themselves against similar-sized municipal entities.

Step 4: Assess Situation and Identify Gaps

Following data collection, a clearer picture of the community's status becomes available. This presents an opportunity to begin setting priorities, identifying low-hanging fruit (projects easily completed at little or no cost), and also shows a community where gaps may exist. When the community can readily identify gaps in its operations, it can begin to address them through planning and implementation.

Step 5: Develop Goals and Activities: Planning for the Future

Goals and activities should be evaluated and selected. Measurable outcomes should be stated so that progress and achievement can be monitored.

Step 6: Measure Performance and Quantify Results

Evaluate the progress made by including formal review processes that compare the outcomes with the projected goals. The evaluation results and information gathered will assist in creating new goals, identifying best practices, and setting new performance goals. If applicable, the community should review energy use and cost data to measure accomplishments. Energy performance should be compared to baseline information. Measure your results and reward individuals and teams for accomplishments. The City will then document savings opportunities as well as non-quantifiable benefits that can be leveraged for future initiatives.

All members of the Michigan Municipal League who enroll in the Basic Challenge prior to August 15, 2009, will receive recognition at the League's Annual Convention, September 22-25, 2009, in Kalamazoo. Upon enrollment, a community will receive additional materials designed to assist the community in the completion of the Challenge. At the League's Annual Convention, communities will also have the opportunity to attend sessions designed to specifically "walk through" the Basic Challenge.

Attachment

Prepared by MFM

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CARLISLE/WORTMAN ASSOCIATES, INC.

Community Planners /Landscape Architects

605 S. Main, Suite 1
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734-662-2200
fax 734-662-1935

6401 Citation Drive, Suite E
Clarkston, MI 48346
248-625-8480
fax 248-625-8455

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mark Miller, AICP, PCP
FROM: Richard Carlisle, AICP, PCP
DATE: July 29, 2009
RE: Rapid Energy Assessment Process

Initially designed to help Michigan communities obtain their funding and meet the Federal submittal EECBG requirements, CWA created the Rapid Energy Assessment Process© (REAP). The REAP allows communities to identify the most immediate energy-related areas in which they can improve, and obtain the best benefit from their energy dollars. For the EECBG program specifically, this process is an eligible administrative expense that can be paid for with a portion of a community's grant award.

Elements of REAP

The REAP identifies energy conservation and renewable energy opportunities, cites case studies, identifies costs and impacts, and helps communities prioritize their energy projects. It includes assessments in the following four areas:

- Renewable energy
- Policy
- Building conservation
- Transportation

These four assessment areas will be reviewed for at least the following:

- Feasibility and data needs: How close is your community to being able to complete this project? Is the necessary information available?
- Funding availability: What activities are eligible in the EECBG/ Economic Recovery Act or other funding sources? Are the funds going to be leveraged?
- Required personnel: Can the project start and be completed with available personnel? Will it create or retain jobs?

- Potential benefit: What is the benefit of this project, and does it justify the expense or effort when reviewed against other similar projects? Does the project meet the objectives of the EECBG program or other programs or goals of the City?

EECBG and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy

EECBG block grants were intended to provide money for projects such as developing energy conservation strategies and programs to conserve energy used in transportation, revising zoning requirements to promote energy efficiency, and developing non-motorized infrastructure and plans. The receipt of this money obligates the community to prepare an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (EECS) within 120 days from the time of the award, a short time frame. The Rapid Energy Assessment Process (REAP) allows communities to quickly assess energy efficiency potential and largely meet the submittal requirements for the EECS.

The Importance of the Energy and Land Use Connection

Local units of government have largely relied on state and federal programs to tackle the energy issues of today. However, as the EECBG demonstrates, it is the local units of government that the federal and state governments are relying on to actually execute energy efficiency and conservation programs. Local governments are not trained or equipped to quickly adapt to this new way of thinking and this new responsibility.

However, it is clear that long-term energy efficiency and conservation must be clearly and directly tied to land use planning and community development. Compact, smart-growth, walkable communities are intrinsically energy efficient. The use of transit and non-motorized transportation are tremendous energy savers. Green building, low-impact development, transit-oriented development, and mixed-use projects all contribute to community-wide energy savings, and all are currently visible topics in community planning.

This clear connection reveals that energy planning and community planning should go hand-in-hand, and that with an affordable, easily implemented tool like the Rapid Energy Assessment Process, we have an opportunity to firmly implant energy planning into the everyday role of local government.