Toolkit for Local Climate Action

For Mayors by Mayors

Investing in innovation is investing in communities

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"My first job, when I lived in Washington DC, entailed turning national policy ambition into clean energy progress on the ground in one specific community: Hawai'i. Now this translation and implementation must happen nationally on an unprecedented scale. We created Elemental's Policy Lab to shorten the distance between policymakers, communities, and climate entrepreneurs.

Our policy fellows, much like the tech innovators we support, are designers and implementers who see an opening for change and are audacious enough to do something about it.

Over the past year, we have been honored to work with one of our policy fellows, former mayor and climate visionary Heather McTeer Toney, to translate technology and community insights into actionable, equity-centered solutions for mayors. In partnership with the African American Mayors Association and the Environmental Defense Fund, we are energized to work with mayors and their teams to pilot and further develop this toolkit to help cities — our hubs of innovation and engines of economic opportunity — meet this moment."

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— Dawn Lippert, CEO, Elemental Excelerator

DEAR MAYORS,

Any way you say it, mayors are at the core of getting things done in their communities. From putting out fires, managing a budget, and keeping people safe to preparing for the future resiliency and stability of the city, mayors are the frontline gatekeepers tasked with preparation and protection. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the Justice40 Initiative represent **a generational opportunity for mayors to tap millions of dollars in federal funds to transform and protect your community**. That's why we've put together the Local Climate Action Toolkit — to get mayors the information they need about combating climate change and protecting public safety. The Local Climate Action Toolkit is designed to provide local government leaders and staff with a range of potential policy tools and climate actions to strengthen local economies and advance environmental and climate justice initiatives.

I can speak from experience, having served as Mayor of Greenville, Mississippi and working directly with other mayors for many years since. With so much to juggle, climate change can often take a backseat. Often our constituents say things like, "That's a job for federal and state governments, or even bigger cities like New York and LA, especially when we've got so many other problems to manage." But climate change is no longer a far-away concept that sits in a box. It increasingly directly impacts the health and wealth of our communities while providing tremendous opportunities for innovation and economic development. Simply put, equitably addressing climate change is the social justice movement of our time and now more than ever, mayors are positioned to lead the movement.

This toolkit is meant to serve as a starting place for mayors to make their communities safer, more resilient, and more sustainable in the face of our changing climate. Like communities, this toolkit will evolve, grow and become stronger through your engagement and leadership. Mayors know what it takes to build resilient communities, and combined with your expertise to multi-task, we can create climate solutions that address your most pressing problems — whether it be job creation, public safety, or aging infrastructure. The time is now and we are excited to be on the journey to climate equity and community stability alongside you.

Sincerely,

Heather McTeer Toney
Former Mayor, Greenville MS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Now is the time for cities to take bold action for climate justice. Justice40, the Infrastructure Jobs and Investment Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act create an unprecedented opportunity to redress racial, economic, and environmental injustices while ensuring that Black, Indigenious, Latino and other minority communities, low-income communities, and other historically marginalized communities benefit from climate action.

The Local Climate Action Toolkit is designed to provide local government leaders and staff with a range of potential policy tools, federal funding opportunities, and deployment strategies to strengthen environmental and climate justice initiatives. Each community is different and climate solutions must be tailored to the local context. City leaders can use this toolkit to determine the tools and strategies for climate action that are best suited to their resident's needs.

Within this toolkit, we identify three components of climate action to prioritize: energy efficiency, energy supply, and transportation. These are areas that can address multiple community concerns, including safety, access, and energy reliability & affordability.

Tools in this kit include:

- **Policy actions and examples** addressing these priority areas that are already passed and working in cities across the United States.
- **Federal funding opportunities** directly available for cities through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.[1]
- **A deployment playbook to identify technologies, partners, and strategies** that bring innovative and equitable climate solutions to their cities.

Climate action intersects with every social justice issue facing communities today. From voting access and healthcare to public safety and education, climate action must be both bold and comprehensive to advance racial, economic, climate, and environmental justice. While this toolkit provides guidance on three components of climate action — transportation, energy efficiency, and energy supply — we trust that mayors are the best to determine how these components intersect with the priority concerns of the cities they lead. We encourage mayors to review the Equitable and Just National Climate Agenda to learn about the full range of issues they can and should seek to address through their climate strategies.

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[1] The toolkit includes a list of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) opportunities that have been pre-screened against criteria relevant to AAMA member cities and other small to midsize cities. As notices of intent and funding opportunities are announced as part of additional funding from the Inflation Reduction Act and other existing and future legislation, those will be included in the toolkit.

LOCAL CLIMATE ACTION: POLICIES, FUNDING & INNOVATION EXAMPLES

	Energy Efficiency	**Energy Supply**	**Transportation**
Policy Actions *gov = government operations* *com = community wide*	• Set and strengthen energy performance benchmarks for municipal properties. (gov) • Require regular energy efficiency reporting and evaluation for municipal properties to identify energy saving opportunities. (gov) • Offer expedited review/permitting process for green building projects that meet LEED building standards and ENERGY STAR certification standards. (gov) • Require property owners to weatherize buildings. (com) • Require property owners to conduct building energy assessments that provide recommendations and incentives for all commercial and multifamily buildings and residential homes at time of sale. (com)	• Increase the share of renewable energy in municipal energy use. (gov) • Create incentives for renewable energy installation, such as property tax exemptions, tax credits, and net metering programs. (com) • Authorize the implementation of a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program. (com)	• Mandate the transition of municipal vehicles to electric or zero-emission fleets. (gov) • Install charging infrastructure on municipal properties. (gov) • Expand incentives for electric vehicle (EV) charging for multi-family homes, major employers, and parking garages. (com) • Require EV infrastructure in all new commercial and multi-family construction. (com)
Federal Funding Opportunities*	• Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program – US DOE. $550M • Grants for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Improvements at Public School Facilities – US DOE. $500M • State Program: Weatherization Assistance Program – US DOE. $3.15B	• State Program: The State Energy Program (SEP) – US DOE. $500M • Program Upgrading Our Electric Grid and Ensuring Reliability and Resiliency – US DOE. $5B	• Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grants: Community Charging Program and Corridor Charging Program – US DOT. $2.5B • Low or No Emission (Bus) Grants – US DOT. $5.6B • Clean School Bus Program – US EPA. $5B

Examples of Tech Innovation for Your Community	• **BlocPower** decarbonizes residential and small commercial buildings in hard-to-reach communities with turnkey project management services, innovative technology and inclusive financing products.
	• Other example technologies:
	  • Energy-efficient appliances (e.g. heat pumps, boilers, water heaters, kitchen appliances, lighting, etc.)
	  • Electric panel upgrades, smart thermostats, building automation systems
	  • Insulation, weather stripping
		• **Solstice Power Technologies** enables residents, local businesses and city buildings to subscribe to shared "solar gardens" built on unused land such as brownfields
		• Other example technologies:
		  • Multifamily and community solar systems
		  • Electric grid improvements and expansions
		  • Smart meters
			• **ChargerHelp!** provides technology and training solutions to maintain EV charging stations in cities across the nation
			• Other example technologies:
			  • Electric buses
			  • Fast chargers for multifamily and commercial properties
			  • EV maintenance technology and service platforms
			  • Shared EVs and e-bikes
			  • Vehicle-to-grid technologies
			  • Multimodal, privacy protected traffic sensors

*The toolkit includes a list of The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) opportunities that have been pre-screened against criteria relevant to AAMA member cities and other small to mid-size cities. As notices of intent and funding opportunities are announced as part of additional funding from the Inflation Reduction Act and other existing and future legislation, those will be included in the toolkit.

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"At the local level, our job as leaders is to provide a safe and healthy environment for our residents and to be good stewards of our cities. As a father of two young boys, it is important to me that Dallas continues to thrive so that my sons can grow up in a better city than I did. It is imperative that we pursue policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, prepare for the impacts of climate change on residents and businesses, and work to build healthier, more prosperous communities."

— Eric Johnson, Mayor of Dallas, Texas

PRIORITY ACTIONS

"What the mayors care about is, 'How can I get money to invest in the infrastructure in my city? How do we put people back to work, lower the unemployment rate, provide for job training programs? How do we make class sizes smaller and make investments in our children from an education standpoint?'"

— Michael Nutter, former Mayor of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Mayors do not operate in issue silos and neither do their cities. In fact, success is often defined by the ability to address more than one problem with intersecting solutions while prioritizing the needs of the community. Building climate resilient communities can be a strong opportunity to multi-task solutions that intersect fighting climate change with the mayor's plans for community growth.

Although there are many facets to climate action, we've identified three initial categories that simultaneously address climate change and other pressing community concerns. Focusing on energy efficiency, energy supply, and transportation is a good way for local leaders to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and redress historic environmental injustices in their communities.

1. **Energy Efficiency:** Policies under this category aim to improve energy efficiency in residential, commercial, and municipal buildings. Examples include updating building codes, time of sale ordinances, and expedited permitting and review of green buildings.

2. **Energy Supply:** Policies under this category aim to increase the share of renewables in municipal and city-wide energy sources, improve energy stability, and eliminate the use of fossil fuels. Example actions include removing obstacles to renewable energy siting, green power purchasing, and solar panel permitting standards.

3. **Transportation:** Policies under this category aim to improve fuel efficiency, transition to low and zero-emission vehicles such as electric vehicles (EVs), and expand mobility options such as public transit, biking, and walking. These are also mechanisms to address community safety, expand access to jobs, support job growth, and reduce health disparities within communities.

POLICY TOOLS

Local leaders have a number of policy tools at their disposal to fight environmental injustice and accelerate climate action in their communities. These include ordinances, executive orders, and resolutions.

1. **Ordinances:** Ordinances are local laws passed by a municipal government, usually through a city council. These laws typically deal with a permanent rule of government or conduct. An ordinance can be enforced — often by imposing a sanction for violation — and can be funded through municipal budgets. Keep in mind that state laws that regulate municipal government procedures are different. Local leaders must decide on the best policy tool for their jurisdiction based on local context. Because ordinances are considered the most authoritative and enduring form of action available to city governments, we recommend that local leaders leverage ordinances to advance environmental justice and climate action whenever possible.

2. **Executive Orders:** An executive order is an official directive from a mayor concerning the implementation or enforcement of rules, policies, and procedures which have the force of law (Source). **A mayor's scope of power and ability to issue executive orders depends on the executive and administrative powers granted to a mayor under the city charter.** Within a mayor-council form of government, a mayor can typically issue executive orders as long as the mandates therein do not interfere with the city council's legislative powers (Source). Mayors with the proper authority often leverage executive orders to influence municipal operations.

3. **Resolutions:** A resolution is a statement of policy by a city's governing body. Resolutions usually apply only within the municipal government itself and address issues of a special or temporary nature. Resolutions most often express an opinion and are not legislative acts. Because they are temporary in nature, a resolution is the weakest available policy tool for climate action. Municipalities that use resolutions as a policy tool should complement the resolution with additional policy action (Source).

Types of Priority Actions

Within each climate category, we further classify priority actions by the scope of their impact: government operations or community-wide impact.

1. **Government Operations:** Actions city leadership can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to government operations. **Because cities often have relatively strong authority over their municipal property, cities may face fewer legal challenges when implementing these types of policies.**

2. **Community-wide:** Actions city leadership can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from residents and business owners in the community.

Implementing comprehensive climate action will require significant resources. Recent federal policies provide both an influx of funds and encourage a focus on social justice. The Infrastructure Act, and now the Inflation Reduction Act, provide a substantial source of climate action funds while Justice40 helps local governments prioritize those funds for disadvantaged communities and center equity.

To support local governments in taking advantage of the opportunities presented by these federal policies, we include key Infrastructure Law-related funding programs that provide direct funding for local governments under each climate category. Additional criteria for prioritizing these funding programs include flexibility on match requirements, new (vs. legacy) programs that give all cities an equal chance of successful application, and ability to intersect with existing priority needs of the community such as public safety and health.

Summary of Priority Actions

This section provides a high-level list of 12 priority actions across all climate categories for mayors to consider for local climate action. In the sections below, we provide deeper insight into each policy, examples of similar municipal policies, and potential Infrastructure Law funding sources.

Priority Policies for Local Climate Action

Category	Policy Type	Priority Action
ENERGY EFFICIENCY	Government Operation Policies	1. Set and strengthen energy performance benchmarks for municipal properties.
		2. Require regular energy efficiency reporting and evaluation for municipal properties to identify energy saving opportunities.
	Community-wide Policies	3. Offer expedited review/permitting process for green building projects that meet LEED building standards and ENERGY STAR certification standards.
		4. Require property owners to weatherize buildings.
		5. Require property owners to conduct building energy assessments that provide tailored recommendations for energy-saving opportunities and incentives for all commercial and multifamily buildings and residential homes at time of sale.
ENERGY SUPPLY	Government Operation Policies	6. Increase the share of renewable energy in municipal energy use.
	Community-wide Policies	7. Create incentives for renewable energy installation, such as property tax exemptions, tax credits, and net metering programs.
		8. Authorize the implementation of a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program. CCAs are enabled in 10 states and generally allow cities to negotiate lower rates and larger renewable energy portfolios with their utility provider.
TRANSPORTATION	Government Operation Policies	9. Mandate the transition of municipal vehicles to electric or zero-emission fleets. This includes school buses, public transit vehicles, first responder vehicles, and commercial vehicles.
		10. Install charging infrastructure on municipal properties.
	Community-wide Policies	11. Expand incentives for electric vehicle (EV) charging for multi-family homes, major employers, and parking garages.
		12. Require EV infrastructure in all new commercial and multi-family construction.

I. Energy Efficiency Actions

Policies under the energy efficiency category aim to improve energy efficiency in residential, commercial, and municipal buildings. Cities in states with strict state building codes may be limited in their ability to enact some of the below policies. For these cities, local leaders can still encourage equitable green design through expedited permit reviews, financial incentives, and other community-wide policies.

Government Operations Policies

Actions

    A. Set and strengthen energy performance benchmarks for municipal properties.

    B. Require regular energy efficiency reporting and evaluation for municipal properties to identify energy saving opportunities.

Example Policies

    i. [Existing Buildings Energy and Water Efficiency Ordinance](#) – Los Angeles, CA: This ordinance makes public the annual energy and water use of all buildings in the city over 20,000 square feet and all municipal buildings larger than 7,500 square feet. The ordinance also requires buildings to take efficiency actions at least once every 5 years, such as energy audits or retrofits, to reduce energy and water use. Los Angeles is the first city to require water retro-commissioning of existing buildings. There is a $202 fee for failure to comply. When it passed in 2016, this ordinance was the most ambitious and comprehensive ordinance to address efficiency in the United States ([Source](#)).

    ii. [Energy Management of City Facilities Executive Order](#) – Salt Lake City, UT: Requires city departments to develop and implement an energy plan for its buildings, including performing periodic energy audits on facilities to identify energy savings opportunities, engaging in best practices in building operations, and equipment maintenance. Additionally, the executive order requires annual benchmarking of city facilities to track progress against each department's goals and for the city overall.

Community-wide Policies

<u>Actions</u>

    A. Offer expedited review/permitting process for green building projects that meet LEED building standards and ENERGY STAR certification standards.

    B. Require property owners to weatherize buildings.

    C. Require property owners to conduct building energy assessments that provide tailored recommendations for energy-saving opportunities and incentives for all commercial and multifamily buildings and residential homes at time of sale.

<u>Example Policies</u>

    i. [SmartRegs Ordinance](#) – Boulder, CO: In 2010, the city passed a mandate requiring all rental property owners to bring their rentals up to a minimum energy efficiency standard by 2019.

    ii. [Building Energy Saving Ordinance](#) – Berkeley, CA: The Building Energy Savings Ordinance aims to help building owners identify opportunities to reduce energy use. It requires property owners to conduct a building energy assessment that provides tailored recommendations for energy-saving opportunities and incentives for all commercial and multifamily buildings (phased in by size) and residential homes at time of sale.

    iii. [Energy Efficiency and Weatherization Ordinance](#) – Burlington, VT: Property managers are mandated to weatherize buildings through air sealing, upgrading heating systems, replacing draft windows and doors, or insulating walls and attics in their properties. The ordinance was passed to help meet Burlington's "Net Zero Energy by 2030" goal and reduce high utility costs for city renters.

Federal Infrastructure Law Funding Sources

Note that these grants are administered annually, many through at least 2026. Some may be closed for FY22 but will reopen next year.
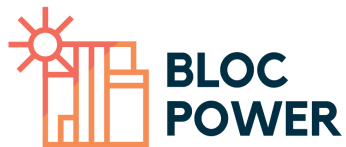
A. Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program – US DOE
   ● Funding Type: Formula and Competitive Grants
   ● Recipients: Local Governments, Tribal Governments, and States
   ● Total Funding Amount: $550 Million
   ● Program Description: Funds the development and implementation of an energy efficiency and conservation strategy, including energy audits, establishing financial incentive programs, building codes and inspection services to promote building energy efficiency, and more. Can fund the technical consultant services to assist in the development of an energy efficiency and conservation strategy. This grant can also be used for renewable energy.

B. Grants for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Improvements at Public School Facilities – US DOE
   ● Funding Type: Competitive Grants
   ● Recipients: Consortia of one local education agency and one or more schools, non-profits, for-profits, and community partners
   ● Total Funding Amount: $500 Million
   ● Program Description: To make energy efficiency, renewable energy, and alternative fueled vehicle upgrades and improvements at public schools. Eligible uses include energy efficiency (envelope, HVAC, lighting, controls, etc.), ventilation, renewable energy, alternative vehicles, and alternative fuel vehicle infrastructure improvements.

C. State Program: Weatherization Assistance Program – US DOE
   ● Funding Type: Formula
   ● Recipients: States, Tribes. Local governments may be eligible to apply for funds through their state governments, depending on the state.
   ● Total Funding Amount: $3.16 Billion
   ● Program Description: To increase energy efficiency and lower energy costs for customers vulnerable to energy price spikes and additional energy assistance funds for low-income households.

Sector: Energy Efficiency

BlocPower

"Your city's partner for a just transition."

Retrofitting and decarbonizing housing, small businesses, and houses of worship can yield significant benefits in the form of reduced utility bills, increased comfort, and improved health for residents and visitors alike. But financing and managing the transition, even with incentives, can be burdensome for many building owners.

BlocPower electrifies residential and small commercial buildings in hard-to-reach communities with turnkey project management services, innovative technology, and inclusive financing products. Since 2014, BlocPower has completed energy projects in 1,200+ buildings in 26 American cities.

BlocPower also builds wealth in the communities they serve through Community WiFi and Workforce Development programs. For example, in NYC the company is partnering with the city to implement workforce training to help create 1,500 good-paying, green jobs for residents at risk of involvement in gun violence.

→ **Other example energy efficiency technologies:**
- Energy-efficient and electric appliances (such as heat pumps, boilers, water heaters, kitchen appliances, lighting, etc.)
- Electric panel upgrades, smart thermostats, building automation systems
- Insulation, weather stripping

Additional support to compete for funding opportunities and build capacity of local community partners

Identifying funding opportunities that meet your city's needs is just the first step in what can often be a time-consuming and challenging process to compete for government funding. For small to mid-sized and traditionally underserved cities and towns it can be particularly difficult to find the staff capacity and resources to develop applications. One resource mayors can look to is the Local Infrastructure Hub, which can help you and your staff navigate the different opportunities and develop competitive funding applications. In the next two years, the Hub will offer over 30 grant bootcamps on high priority funding opportunities, access to technical experts, webinars, and other technical assistance and resources. The Hub is administered by a coalition of organizations including the U.S. Conference of Mayors, National League of Cities, Results for America, and Delivery Associates and supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, Emerson Collective, Kresge Foundation, Ballmer Group, and Ford Foundation. AAMA is a program partner in the Hub.

Mayors and their staffs also rely on strong community partnerships to develop and implement strong policies and programs. The Justice40 Accelerator is a resource for local community partners looking to identify and access federal funding opportunities. The program offers information briefings, capacity-building grants, workshops, technical expertise for application development, and other resources. We encourage you to support local organizations you are seeking to partner with to engage in this program and others that can help build their capacity and capture funding. This will help bring climate and resilience innovation and infrastructure to underserved and frontline communities. The Justice 40 Accelerator is administered by the Solutions Project, Elevate, Groundswell, Partnership for Southern Equity and Hummingbird Firm.

II. Energy Supply Actions

Policies under the energy supply category aim to increase the share of renewables in municipal and city-wide energy sources and eliminate the use of fossil fuels.

Government Operations Policies

<u>Actions</u>

    A. Increase the share of renewable energy in municipal energy use.

<u>Example Policies</u>

    i. [Executive Order on Climate Action](#) – Boston, MA: This comprehensive Executive Order commits the City to a variety of climate actions, one of which is a commitment for municipal departments to use a minimum of 11% renewable energy. Additionally, it sets a city-wide greenhouse gas emission (GHG) reduction target, mandates the procurement of low and zero-emission vehicles, establishes a climate action task force, and requires reporting on city-wide energy consumption and GHG emissions.

    ii. [Executive Order 2021-09: Driving Accelerated Climate Action](#) – Seattle, WA: This comprehensive Executive Order prohibits fossil fuels in City-owned buildings by 2035, among other climate actions.

Community-wide Policies

<u>Actions</u>

    A. Create incentives for renewable energy installation, such as property tax exemptions, tax credits, and net metering programs. The feasibility of this policy action will depend on state law ([Source](#)).

    B. Authorize the implementation of a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program. CCAs are enabled by [10 state legislatures, and are being considered in five more](#). They allow cities to secure lower rates and larger renewable energy portfolios with their utility providers.

i. [Resolution to Achieve Net-100% Renewable Energy by 2032](#) – Salt Lake City, UT: Mayor Biskupski and the City Council adopted a Joint Resolution in 2016 and updated the resolution in 2019 to commit to 100% renewable energy for the community electricity supply by 2030 and an 80% reduction in community greenhouse gas emissions by 2040 compared to a 2009 baseline. The resolution also committed to 50% renewable energy for municipal electricity use by 2020.

ii. [100% Renewable Energy Resolution](#) – Louisville, KY: This ordinance sets goals of 100% renewable electricity for city operations by 2030, 100% clean energy for city operations by 2035, and 100% clean energy community-wide by 2040.

iii. [Model Solar Ordinances](#) by the Great Plains Institute: The Great Plains Institute created five model ordinances for local governments in [Illinois](#), [Indiana](#), [Iowa](#), [Minnesota](#), and [Wisconsin](#) to support utility-scale renewable energy development at the local level. These model ordinances were updated in 2020 to align with the most recent energy policies in each state.

iv. [Enabling Solar Energy Ordinance](#) – San Diego, CA: The County of San Diego amended its zoning code to allow for the installation of solar energy systems. The ordinance stipulates permitting procedures by zoning designation for both ancillary and primary use systems. Ancillary systems (referred to as "onsite uses") are allowed as an accessory use to all Agricultural, Civic, Commercial, Industrial and Residential use types in all zones, in accordance with requirements regarding setbacks, height, permitting information requirements, and additional requirements for systems in Special Area Designations.

v. [Community Choice Aggregation Program Ordinance](#) – El Cerrito, CA: Adopted in 2015, this ordinance authorizes the implementation of a Community Choice Aggregation Program to provide low-carbon electricity at competitive rates for residents and businesses in member cities.

vi. [Community Energy Aggregation Program Ordinance](#) – Red Bank, New Jersey: Establishes a Community Energy Aggregation Program that provides an option for residential and non-residential customers to opt for up to 100% renewable electricity.

Federal Infrastructure Law Funding Sources

Note that these grants are administered annually, many through at least 2026. Some may be closed for FY22 but will reopen next year.

A. State Program: The State Energy Program (SEP) – US DOE
    ● Funding Type: Formula
    ● Recipients: States. Local governments may be eligible to apply for funds through their state governments, depending on the state.
    ● Total Funding Available: $500 Million
    ● Program Description: Provides annual funding to states to provide funding and technical assistance to enhance energy security, advance state-led energy initiatives, and increase energy affordability. Eligible uses include energy conservation measures, renewable energy measures, and programs to increase deployment of clean energy technologies in buildings, industry, and transportation. Local governments can contact their state energy office for information on energy policies, programs, and financial incentives.

B. Building a Better Grid Initiative – US DOE
    ● Funding Type: Cooperative Agreement
    ● Recipients: State, combination of 2 or more States; American Indian Tribes; units of local government, and/or public utility commissions.
    ● Total Funding Available: $5 Billion
    ● Program Description: To provide federal financial assistance to demonstrate innovative approaches to transmission, storage, and distribution infrastructure to harden and enhance resilience and reliability; and to demonstrate new approaches to enhance regional grid resilience.

Sector: Energy Supply

Solstice

"Make clean energy accessible for all."

Supporting home-grown solar energy is a win-win for cities — monthly savings for residents, clean, resilient energy, and local jobs. But 80% of American households cannot install solar on their homes, either because they are renters, have low credit scores, or their roof is not appropriate for solar. Community solar is a solution that enables residents, local businesses, and city buildings to subscribe to shared "solar gardens" built on unused land such as brownfields.

Solstice Power Technologies software has enabled 43 solar gardens across six states, saving subscribers over $1.6M annually. Solstice Initiative, the organization's nonprofit arm, has partnered with community groups in Boston and Buffalo to co-develop community solar projects that center workforce development, jobs, and wealth-creation opportunities for residents.

→ **Other example energy supply technologies:**
- Multifamily and municipal solar systems
- Electric grid improvements and expansions
- Smart meters
- Battery storage

Insights for Project Deployment
As you win funding opportunities and put policies in place, start thinking early about readying for deployment. Here are some considerations as you set up your team, technology and service providers, and community partners.

- **Leverage your convening power:** Bring together relevant departments and community partners to develop shared goals within government and in partnership with communities. This alignment among departments and with local stakeholders will ideally start with developing your funding proposal and continue as your staff put out requests for proposals, plan and execute pilots and larger deployments, and evaluate impacts.

- **Find mission-aligned investors and companies to partner with:** Include equity criteria in your RFP process both in terms of vendor diversity and how project deployment will benefit most underserved residents. Ask bidding companies to articulate community benefits, prioritize building partnerships with local partners, and commit to principles of equitable behavior. Include staff and community reviewers who have equity expertise. If you are seeking match funding, also look for investors and philanthropic funding that have a strong commitment to equity and understand what it takes to build trust with local communities.

- **Pilot, then scale:** You won't scale solutions to your whole municipal building stock or city fleet overnight. As a mayor, you understand that your city may face certain constraints due to existing contracts, capacity and budget constraints, or other factors. Take a phased approach that starts with a pilot in a target community, ideally one that has been striving for social, economic, and climate resilience and stands to significantly benefit from the investment. Starting with a pilot will allow you and your staff to learn quickly, figure out best practices and challenges, identify partnerships, and then scale more rapidly and with greater confidence and impact.

III. Transportation Actions

Policies under the transportation category aim to improve fuel efficiency and transition vehicles to low and zero-emission vehicles such as electric vehicles (EVs).

Government Operations Policies

Actions

A. Mandate the transition of municipal vehicles to electric or zero-emission fleets. This includes school buses, public transit vehicles, first responder vehicles, and commercial vehicles.

B. Install charging infrastructure on municipal properties.

Example Policies

i. Green Fleet Executive Order – Denver, CO: Requires Denver City to purchase the most cost-effective and lowest emission vehicles possible for its fleets. The ordinance identifies responsible authorities, establishes clear greenhouse gas reduction targets, identifies fuel efficiency standards in procurement documents, and mandates annual reporting. Outside of the executive order, the city dedicates line-item funding for Green Fleets program implementation.

ii. Establishment of the Electric Vehicle Procurement Program Executive Order – Indianapolis, IN: Requires the City of Indianapolis to purchase or lease electric or plug-in hybrid vehicles for all its passenger vehicle needs.

Community-wide Policies

Actions

A. Expand incentives for EV charging for multi-family homes, major employers, and parking garages.

B. Require EV infrastructure in all new commercial and multi-family construction.

    i.   [Electric Vehicle Readiness Ordinance](#) – Chicago, IL: Requires all new construction of residential buildings, with five or more units, and onsite parking and commercial properties, with 30 or more parking spaces, to have 20% of any supplied parking spaces Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) ready. Additionally, for all applicable properties, at least one of the EVSE-ready spaces must be accessible to people with disabilities.

    ii.   [Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure Ordinance](#) – Sacramento, CA: Requires new nonresidential, multifamily dwellings, and hotels and motels to provide 20% EV capable charging spaces and at least one installed, operational Level 2 EV charger, effective January 1, 2023 for new construction of three stories or less, and effective January 1, 2026 for new construction of four stories or more. Establishes parking incentives for zero emission carsharing and EV charging infrastructure.

Federal Infrastructure Law Funding Sources

Note that these grants are administered annually, many through at least 2026. Some may be closed for FY22 but will reopen next year.

    A. Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grants: Community Charging Program and Corridor Charging Program – US DOT
- Funding Type: Competitive Grants
- Recipients: Metropolitan Planning Organizations, local governments, special purpose district, or public authority with a transportation function
- Total Funding Available: $2.5 Billion
- Program Description: The Community Charging Program provides grants to install EV charging and alternative fuel in locations on public roads, schools, parks, and in publicly accessible parking facilities. These grants will be prioritized for rural areas, low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, and communities with low ratios of private parking, or high ratios of multi-unit dwellings. The Corridor Charging Program Provides grants to deploy electric vehicle charging and hydrogen/propane/natural gas fueling infrastructure along designated alternative fuel corridors and in communities.

B. Low or No Emission (Bus) Grants – US DOT
   ● Funding Type: Competitive Grant
   ● Recipients: States, Counties, Cities / Townships, Special Districts, Tribal Governments (federally recognized)
   ● Total Funding Available: $5.6 Billion
   ● Program Description: Provides capital funding to replace, rehabilitate, purchase, or lease buses and bus-related equipment and to rehabilitate, purchase, construct, or lease bus-related facilities. Provides capital funding for low or no emissions bus projects.

C. Clean School Bus Program - US EPA
   ● Funding Type: Competitive Grant and Rebate
   ● Recipients: State and local governments, eligible contractors and nonprofit school transportation associations
   ● Total Funding Available: $5 Billion
   ● Program Description: Provides grants for the purchase and replacement of school buses that are clean, zero-emission, alternative fuel vehicles. Funds can also go to charging or fueling infrastructure or fueling and maintenance costs for these buses.

Sector: Transportation

ChargerHelp!

"Getting people and electric vehicle charging stations back to work!"

Beyond electrifying fleet vehicles and building out accessible charging infrastructure for residents, cities face an additional challenge in the transition to electric transportation — making sure local chargers are operational 24/7. Unfortunately, today 25% of public EV chargers are out of commission at any given time.

ChargerHelp! provides technology and training solutions to maintain EV charging stations in cities across the nation. The ChargerHelp! app enables a community's' local workforce to easily validate, troubleshoot, or escalate a software or communication issue of a networked EV charge station within hours instead of weeks. ChargerHelp! partners with local workforce organizations to train and hire technicians from local communities, allowing for equitable access for traditionally underrepresented people in the clean energy sector. Within the next 12 months, ChargerHelp! plans to expand into 5 different US regions.

→ **Other example transportation technologies:**
- Electric buses
- Fast chargers for multifamily and commercial properties
- EV maintenance technology and service platforms
- Shared EVs and e-bikes
- Vehicle-to-grid technologies
- Multimodal, privacy protected traffic sensors

What if We Don't Have a Sustainability Officer?

The reality for many smaller cities is that no one position or person is focused on climate solutions and policies. With the huge opportunity for federal funding over the next 4-6 years, it might be time for you to address this with city leadership. Here's what other cities and mayors are doing:

1) Work with your Council and/or fiscal agency to make the leap and bring on a Sustainability and Equity Officer. Oftentimes, one dedicated person can help your agencies find funding opportunities that can more than pay for the position and coordinate action.

2) At your next cabinet meeting, ask if any of your administration leaders are interested and passionate about climate and environmental justice issues. It might surprise you. Perhaps your Public Works or Budget Office head has been paying attention to the impacts of climate, and would agree to add some sustainability responsibilities and assign a staff member to help pursue federal funds and policy change until you're able to build a dedicated position and/or office.

3) Find a partner. Think about your community leaders — is there a community foundation or a non-profit in your city that might be open to teaming up? Several cities have hired sustainability officers on a 50/50 match basis (or even fully paid for the first year) to kick-start city actions around climate resilience. As the impacts of climate begin to have serious health implications, housing security impacts, and workforce opportunities — even non-environmental foundations and community orgs might see an opportunity to pull in federal funds to achieve their goals. See if they'll give you a grant or even "embed" a dedicated climate and equity officer in the mayor's office to build capacity for the community.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Funding Opportunities and Assistance

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Technical Assistance Guide
Resource guide to technical assistance opportunities that can help communities build capacity and fully take advantage of the funding opportunities provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Local Infrastructure Hub
Developed by a group of philanthropic partners, this hub guides mayors through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and includes resources on funding opportunities, bootcamps on how to develop successful grant applications, and educational events.

"Infrastructure School" Webinars
Webinars provided by the Biden Administration that provide walkthroughs of the major investment areas included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. From Winter 2022, so many funding opportunities may now have more specific details and timelines posted.

DOT (Department of Transportation) Navigator
US DOT guide to help communities apply for grants and access federal funding. Includes how to maximize award success, resources for technical assistance, and a guide to funding opportunities provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Smart Growth National Funding Opportunities
EPA has put together a collection of federal funding opportunities for communities focused on "smart growth" — developing communities that are diverse, compact, and walkable. They also collect funding opportunities at the regional, state, and local levels.

Clean Cities Coalition Network: Funding Opportunities
Funding opportunities focused on reducing emissions from vehicles and transportation.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Rural Playbook
Guide to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law through the lens of opportunities that will most benefit rural communities.

[Adopt a Policy: Climate and Energy Resources for State, Local and Tribal Governments](#)
Additional guidance for local leaders on adopting and developing climate action policies from the US Environmental Protection Agency.

First-Person Perspectives
[Building Alliances for Climate Action](#): Resource guide created by the [Resilient Nation Partnership Network](#). Provides first-person perspectives on climate lessons learned, key considerations, and additional resources.

[Leveraging New Technologies to Modernize Infrastructure and Improve Energy Efficiency in America's Cities](#)
Survey cataloging how mayors are using new technologies and strategies to increase energy efficiency and reduce emissions across their cities.

[Taking Local Action: Mayors and Climate Protection Best Practices](#)
Best practices from recipients of the 2022 Mayors' Climate Protection Awards, organized by the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

[Cities and Social Entrepreneurs: A Playbook for Catalytic Collaboration](#)
Report on how cities can work with social entrepreneurs to enact systems change via multiple case studies.

Direct Action to Combat Climate Change and Protect Cities
[Equitable and Just National Climate Agenda](#)
Platform for a climate policy agenda created by environmental justice advocates and national environmental groups. Highlights core issues to work towards, including safe and healthy communities, and equitable access to water, electricity, and transportation.

[Using Government Procurement to Advance Racial Equity](#)
Strategy guide to using government spending and contracts to advance racial equity, through targeting vendor diversity and delivering services equitably. Provided by the [Government Performance Lab](#) at Harvard Kennedy School.

[Reducing Urban Heat Islands: A Compendium of Strategies](#)
Guide to urban heat islands: how they form, why they are so hazardous, and reduction strategies.

[Charging Forward: A Toolkit for Planning and Funding Rural Electric Mobility Infrastructure](#)
Resource guide to planning and developing EV charging infrastructure in rural communities. Includes technical considerations, funding opportunities, and potential partners.

[HEAT.gov](#)
Government website dedicated to providing real-time information on extreme heat across the country and ways for communities to prepare and assist vulnerable populations.

[Smart Surfaces, Smart Cities: Reducing Heat and Promoting Equity in Urban Areas](#)
White paper from the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law reviewing policy tools that cities can use to deploy smart surfaces to reduce heat, the legal barriers cities may face, and ways to overcome them.

This toolkit is made for mayors by mayors. Please help us improve by taking a moment to **share your feedback here**.

October 2022