**PROGRAM STATEMENT**

**Technical Assistance Opportunity EEPRC2024**

Energy Efficiency Planning for Rural Communities Program

**Issued by:**

Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future

[Community Resilience Partnership](https://www.maine.gov/future/climate/community-resilience-partnership)

111 Sewall Street

Augusta, ME 04330

Issue Date: August 12, 2024

**APPLICATION DUE DATE:**

**FRIDAY, October 4, 2024; 5:00 P.M.**

All communication regarding this Program Statement should be sent to

Casey Zorn, Lead By Example Project Coordinator, [Casey.Zorn@maine.gov](mailto:Casey.Zorn@maine.gov).

**Informational webinar: September 5, 2024; 11:00a.m.**

Zoom Registration Link:

<https://mainestate.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMkcOCgrzsiGdPFhpC6o8Tb5wmtkdQ-05nz#/registration>

A recording will be posted at: <https://www.maine.gov/future/climate/community-resilience-partnership>



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**DEFINITIONS**............................................................................................................................................ 3

**SECTION 1. BACKGROUND** ......................................................................................................................4

1.1 Application Purpose and Background................................................................................................ 4

1.2 Eligibility…………………………………………................................................................................................. 5

1.3 Cohort Size and Program Duration ................................................................................................... 5

1.4 Future Program Rounds..................................................................................................................... 5

1.5 Cancelation Notice............................................................................................................................. 5

1.6 Final Action on Selection…….............................................................................................................. 6

1.7 Contact information ...........................................................................................................................6

**SECTION 2. PROGRAM DETAILS** ..............................................................................................................6

2.1 Description ........................................................................................................................................ 6

2.2 Application Guidelines and Required Format.................................................................................... 7

2.3 Selection Process ............................................................................................................................... 9

2.4 Application Deadline and Submission .............................................................................................. 10

**SECTION 3. TERMS & CONDITIONS OF PROGRAM PARTICIPATION**.......................................................12

3.1 Program Participation Agreement .....................................................................................................12

3.2 Reporting Requirements ....................................................................................................................12

3.3 Public Records ....................................................................................................................................12

**APPLICATION FORM**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………….……13

**APPLICATION TERMS/ACRONYMS with DEFINITIONS**

The following terms and acronyms, as referenced in the document, shall have the meanings indicated below:

| **Term/Acronym** | **Definition** |
| --- | --- |
| **Department, GOPIF** | Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future |
| **CAG** | Community Action Grant |
| **Community** | A municipal government, Tribal Government, plantation, township, or unorganized territory in Maine. |
| **CRP, “Partnership”** | Community Resilience Partnership |
| **DOE** | The United States Department of Energy |
| **EECBG** | The federal Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant program that is source of funds for this program |
| **EEPRC** | The Energy Efficiency Planning for Rural Communities program that is described in this document |
| **Gross Floor Area** | The Gross Floor Area (GFA) is the total “property” square footage, and a “property” can be a:   * Single building * Campus of buildings * Part of a building (such as a single tenant space).   For further information of how to calculate GFA, refer [EnergyStar Portfolio Manager’s Glossary](https://portfoliomanager.energystar.gov/pm/glossary). |
| **State** | State of Maine |
| **SVI** | Social Vulnerability Index |

**Community Resilience Partnership**

**Energy Efficiency Planning for Rural Communities Program**

**SECTION 1. BACKGROUND**

**1.1 Application Purpose and Background**

The Maine Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) is seeking applications from communities in Maine to participate in the Energy Efficiency Planning for Rural Communities program as defined in this document.

The Energy Efficiency Planning for Rural Communities (EEPRC) program is a special, one-time technical assistance program offered through the [Community Resilience Partnership](https://www.maine.gov/future/climate/community-resilience-partnership) (Partnership). The Partnership provides grants and assistance to municipal governments, Tribal Governments, plantations, townships, or unorganized territories in Maine (“Communities”) for projects that reduce energy use and costs, transition to clean energy and make communities more resilient to climate change impacts such as flooding, extreme temperatures, and public health risks.

The purpose of the EEPRC program is to support Maine communities with high climate vulnerabilities with energy efficiency planning for publicly owned buildings through energy audits, energy benchmarking trainings and support, and energy conservation plans.

**The EEPRC program is not a grant program. A successful application will not result in a funding award. Participating communities will receive technical assistance services as outlined in this Program Statement at NO COST to the communities.**

Participating communities will receive direct support from a qualified consultant in various formats including energy efficiency audits, development of energy efficiency plans, and trainings to meet the energy planning needs and circumstances of the community. These energy efficiency planning services will prepare communities to implement projects that enable significant cost savings, energy savings, and greenhouse gas emissions reductions for the communities’ public buildings. The consultant will provide each community with a detailed Energy Conservation Implementation Plan that will enable communities to readily apply for funding for energy efficiency improvement projects through upcoming rounds of the Community Resilience Partnership’s Community Action Grant (CAG) or other funding opportunities.

Funding for the services advertised in this Program Statement is provided by a formula allocation to the State of Maine via the federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program. EECBG is managed by the Department of Energy (DOE) and disseminates Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding to develop and implement clean energy and energy efficiency programs and projects for states, communities, and tribal organizations.

**1.2 Eligibility to Submit Applications**

To be eligible for the Energy Efficiency Planning in Rural Communities program, a community must BOTH:

* Be enrolled in the Community Resilience Partnership,

AND

* Be either a community with a population of less than 10,000 OR have a Medium or High vulnerability according to the [Maine Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)](https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/SVI%20Communities%20Map%20and%20List_2021-12-01_1.pdf).

NOTE: Services provided through this program are funded through the DOE’s EECBG program. Therefore, municipalities and federally recognized tribal governments that were eligible for a direct allocation of federal EECBG funds are not eligible for this program.

School districts, water and sewer districts, libraries, and similar public or quasi-public entities are not eligible to be primary applicants but are encouraged to partner with an eligible municipality or other eligible entity described above.

**1.3 Cohort Size and Program Duration**

GOPIF anticipates selecting up to twenty (20) communities to receive the services laid out in this document, dependent on available funding. Each selected community will receive energy planning services for a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of six (6) publicly owned buildings, dependent on available funding. GOPIF will select communities and buildings according to the criteria in described Section 2.2.

Program participants are anticipated to be selected by late September 2024, with an expected program start date on or after October 15, 2024. The program will span 2 years.

**1.4 Future Program Rounds**

This is a one-time program application for the purpose of providing services to eligible communities in Maine.

**1.5 Cancellation Notice**

The Community Resilience Partnership reserves the right to cancel this Program Statement at any time.

**1.6 Final Action on Selection**

Communities and buildings selected through this competitive process are considered final and are not subject to internal agency appeal. Any person aggrieved by a decision may pursue judicial review according to the provisions of 5 MRS§§ 11001 – 11008 within 30 days of the selection announcement.

**1.7 Contact information**

Questions about this Program Statement should be sent via email to [Casey.Zorn@maine.gov](mailto:Casey.Zorn@maine.gov).

**SECTION 2. PROGRAM DETAILS**

**2.1 Description**

GOPIF is seeking Maine communities to participate in the Energy Efficiency Planning for Rural Communities program, which will provide to the selected communities direct energy efficiency planning services via a qualified consultant to communities. These services will be provided at NO COST to the communities. (Note: Community participation by staff or volunteers is expected and is not reimbursable.) Through this technical assistance program, the consultant will provide each selected community with the following services:

1. Energy audits for up to six (6) publicly owned buildings within each community. Energy audits may include HVAC analysis, lighting analysis, buildings envelope analysis, and analysis on other energy sources and uses;
2. Trainings on how to use [EnergyStar Portfolio Manager](https://portfoliomanager.energystar.gov/pm/login?testEnv=false) (a public EPA energy and water use benchmarking tool) for relevant staff, set up EnergyStar Portfolio Manager accounts for relevant staff, and input 2-3 years of energy and water use data for the selected public buildings into EnergyStar Portfolio Manager on behalf of the community;
3. A community- and buildings-specific Energy Conservation Implementation Plan that provides a prioritized list of specific energy efficiency improvement projects, cost estimates for each project, funding opportunities for each project, payback times for each project, and potential greenhouse gas emissions reductions for each project to prepare these projects for funding opportunities and grant applications, such as the Partnership’s Community Action Grant.

To support the consultant’s work, the community will complete the following:

* The community will select a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of six (6) publicly owned buildings that need energy efficiency improvement. Priority buildings may include buildings that have poor energy efficiency, have high energy costs, are older in age, and/or are highly used by the community. School buildings, libraries, and other similar buildings may be considered.
* The community will select a staff liaison to communicate with and support the consultant. The staff liaison will support the consultant by providing 2-3 years of energy and water data for each building and by setting up site visits for the consultant to perform in-person energy audits for each building.

NOTE: The community is strongly encouraged to have energy and water data on hand, but if not, the consultant may be able to support staff in gathering this data.

* The community will conduct public engagement activities related to the project, such as:
  + Public displays that communicate the project’s benefits;
  + Public events that educate residents on the benefits of energy efficiency, electrification, and clean energy; and/or
  + Outreach activities that encourage community participation and engagement with the project.

GOPIF staff will help coordinate between the consultant and participating communities to ensure both parties uphold their respective responsibilities and the communities receive high quality service in a timely manner.

**2.2 Application Guidelines and Required Format**

A complete and scoreable application for services will include the following components. Applicants should use the application form on page 13 to address each component.

1. **Criteria 1: General Information and Eligibility**

Applicants must complete the following documents as part of their application:

* Application Cover Page & General Assurances
* Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification
* Eligibility and Applicant Information (see Section B above)

1. **Criteria 2: Community Characteristics**

Additional application scoring points are available for communities with small populations and communities with high social vulnerability. Applicants should refer to the following sources to complete the Community Characteristics section of the application form:

* Community Resilience Partnership regions:

Region 1: York, Cumberland, Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Knox, and southern Oxford Counties (including Brownfield, Denmark, Fryeburg, Hiram, Lovell, Porter, Stoneham, Stow, Sweden).

Region 2: Waldo, Hancock, and Washington Counties.

Region 3: Androscoggin, Oxford, Kennebec, Franklin, and Somerset Counties.

Region 4: Piscataquis, Aroostook, and Penobscot Counties.

* Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) [categorization information](https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/SVI%20Communities%20Map%20and%20List_2021-12-01_1.pdf)

1. **Criteria 3: Building Identification**

* Building Identification - List the public buildings the community would like to receive energy efficiency planning services. List the buildings in order of priority, listing the building of highest priority at the top. List a minimum of (2) and a maximum of six (6) publicly owned buildings. For each building, provide the name of the building, building address, and the Gross Floor Area in square feet.

The Gross Floor Area (GFA) is the total “property” square footage, and a “property” can be a single building, campus of buildings, or part of a building (such as a single tenant space). For further information of how to calculate GFA, refer [EnergyStar Portfolio Manager’s Glossary](https://portfoliomanager.energystar.gov/pm/glossary).

* Energy Efficiency Profile - For each of the buildings listed, fill out an Energy Efficiency Profile table with the building name, building use (who uses the building and for what purposes), heating type, type of water heating, and type of lighting. At the bottom of each table, provide a narrative describing any energy efficiency improvements that have been made to the building (e.g. electrification, weatherization, insulation, lighting upgrades, clean energy). Additionally list any other major energy uses that should be accounted for (e.g. exhaust fans, backup generators). If any information is not readily available or is not known, write “Not Available” If there are fewer than six listed buildings, delete the extra tables.
* Selection Process – Describe how these buildings were identified and prioritized for this assistance. Why is each of the selected buildings a community priority?

1. **Criteria 4: Current Status**

* Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy Progress - Describe steps that have already been taken by the community to improve the energy efficiency of public buildings. Steps might include municipal climate action plans, energy audits in other public buildings, physical improvements to other public buildings beyond those listed in this application, or funding plans to fund energy efficiency projects. Please additionally note any clean energy projects (such as solar or battery storage) that have been initiated or planned for.
* Community Need – Describe the need for this project. Why are these Energy Efficiency Planning services needed in your community? How will these services benefit your community?

1. **Criteria 5: Community Outcomes**

* Project Outcomes and Implementation - Describe how the project deliverables (i.e., building energy audits, Energy Conservation Implementation Plan, and energy and water use benchmarking services) will be incorporated into community planning and budgeting. How do you envision doing the work identified by these services?
* Project Management - Describe the roles and responsibilities that key staff will have in coordinating with the project consultant. Identify the lead point of contact who will coordinate providing utility data and setting up site visits for the consultant. Describe how staff will obtain and provide the consultant with 2-3 years of energy and water use data from the utilities.
* Community Engagement - Describe specific actions that will be taken to engage the community on this project. Engagement activities may include an open house, presentations on energy efficiency, websites updates, newsletters, public meetings, etc.

1. **Appendix**

The appendix may include:

* Letters of support from municipal and county officials, local civic leaders, state legislators, or participating department heads and building managers
* Pertinent maps, imagery or other essential (brief) supporting documents

**2.3 Selection Process**

An evaluation team will judge the merits of the proposals received in accordance with the criteria below:

**Application Evaluation and Selection**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scoring Criteria** | **Points Available** |
| **Criteria 1: General Information and Eligibility**   * Enrolled in the Community Resilience Partnership (CRP) * Population less than 10,000 OR Medium/High vulnerability on the Maine SVI * Has not received direct allocation of Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) funding * Provides a minimum of two (2) publicly owned buildings | Pass/Fail |
| **Criteria 2: Community Characteristics**   * 10 points for a small (population less than 4,000) community or high social vulnerability. * 5 points for a medium (population between 4,000 and 10,000) community or medium social vulnerability. | Up to 10 points |
| **Criteria 3: Building Identification** | 35 points |
| **Criteria 4: Current Status** | 30 points |
| **Criteria 5: Community Outcomes** | 25 points total:   * Project Outcomes and Implementation and Project Management (10 points) * Community Engagement (15 points) |
| **Total Points** | **100 points** |

For applications that demonstrate meeting the eligibility requirements in Criteria 1, the evaluation team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score the remaining Criteria sections shown above.

**2.4 Application Deadline and Submission**

1. **Application Submission:**

Proposals are due by 5 p.m. local time on Friday, October 4, 2024. Email submittals are required. Please plan ahead; CRP assumes no responsibility for delays caused by internet outages or attachment sizes.

Email submittals should be sent to [Casey.Zorn@maine.gov](mailto:Casey.Zorn@maine.gov) with “**EEPRC2024 [Community/Organization Name]**’ in the subject line. Applications must be submitted in a single PDF file, including all appendices. The maximum attachment size is 20MB.

Emails containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted, nor will encrypted emails which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system. Please check with your organization’s Information Technology team to ensure that your security settings will not encrypt your proposal submission.

1. **Submitting Question about the Program Statement**

Questions about this program statement and the application process may be directed to [Casey.Zorn@maine.gov](mailto:Casey.Zorn@maine.gov). Include the subject line “**EEPRC2024 – Questions**”

Responses provided by program staff should be considered advisory and are not a guarantee of a successful application.

Any responses deemed substantive and binding will be summarized and posted on the [Community Resilience Partnership website](https://www.maine.gov/future/climate/community-resilience-partnership) on a rolling basis until September 20, 2024. It is the applicant’s responsibility to consult this summary.

1. **Informational Meeting**

GOPIF will host a virtual Informational Meeting concerning the Program Statement. See the Program Statement cover page for the date, time, and web link for the meeting.

The purpose of the Informational Meeting is to answer and/or field questions, clarify aspects of the Program Statement requirements, and provide supplemental information to assist potential Applicants in applying. Although attendance at the Informational Meeting is not mandatory, it is strongly encouraged that interested Applicants attend.

The meeting will be recorded and posted to the [Community Resilience Partnership website](https://www.maine.gov/future/climate/community-resilience-partnership).

**SECTION 3. TERMS & CONDITIONS OF PROGRAM PARTICIPATION**

**3.1 Program Participation Agreement**

Communities participating in this program must enter into a written Program Participation Agreement with the Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future.

**3.2 Reporting Requirements**

Participating communities will be asked to complete a final report upon completion of the program. A final report will be due 30 days after the end of the program.

**3.3 Public Records**

Following announcement of a selection decision, scoring and review notes for all submissions will be public records, available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) (1 M.R.S. § 401 et seq.).

**Community Resilience Partnership**

**Energy Efficiency Planning for Rural Communities**

**Application Form**

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Applicants must use the embedded application document to complete their application. The application document can be accessed by double clicking on the icon above.