



CITY OF BEND

To: Council Stewardship Subcommittee
From: Cassie Lacy
Date: September 18, 2019
Re: Home Energy Score Program

As part of the Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP), the Climate Action Steering Committee (CASC) is proposing that the City implement a mandatory Home Energy Score (HES) program, as one of the strategies that aim to increase the energy efficiency of homes. The Home Energy Score recommendation is the only strategy in the proposed CCAP that is regulatory in nature.

Home Energy Score programs assess the energy efficiency of residential homes and pair that information with utility data to generate home energy reports that have a numeric score that reflects the energy efficiency of the home. The report also contains estimated future utility costs and identifies potential home improvements for increased energy efficiency. A home energy score provides education to homeowners about the efficiency of their homes, increases transparency of the energy costs of homes to potential homebuyers or renters, and encourages homeowners to make energy efficiency retrofits.

A mandatory Home Energy Score program would require that homes have a home energy report card at the time of listing or at the time of sale. A HES Program does *not require* that homeowners pursue energy efficiency upgrades.

Home Energy Score Program Background and Partnerships

The U.S Department of Energy designed and launched the federal Home Energy Score Program in 2012 as part of the Better Buildings Initiative. US DOE established a standardized methodology and tools for analyzing, scoring and reporting home assets. Communities around the country can establish a partnership with US DOE to create a local Home Energy Score program and leverage the standard tools and process that US DOE has created.

To create a local Home Energy Score program in Oregon there are two pathways a City can take:



1. Enter into an agreement with the US Department of Energy (US DOE) to utilize US DOE system. City is responsible for quality assurance, assessor onboarding and training, and achieving a minimum quota of 500 scores created every year.
2. Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) holds the agreement with the US Department of Energy and is the entity responsible for achieving the minimum requirements. ODOE contracts with Earth Advantage to serve all assessor onboarding, training and quality assurance services, and has responsibility for the minimum score quota, eliminating this requirement for smaller cities.

To reduce workload impact on smaller communities and create consistency among adopting communities in Oregon, ODOE has become a proxy partner with the US DOE, and cities in Oregon can work with ODOE rather than US DOE. ODOE has established a partnership with Earth Advantage to perform assessor training, conduct quality assurance, and house data in their public green building registry database. Earth Advantage receives a small, built-in portion of the total home assessment fee to cover their costs for this service.

Local Home Energy Score Program Development

To implement a local Home Energy Score Program, the City would have to take the following steps:

1. *Policy Development:* determine rules and process for program, such as which homes it applies to, defining exemptions, enforcement and penalties, etc.
2. *Outreach and Education:* At the beginning of the program, a considerable level of outreach and education is required. Outreach for a HES program is an ongoing task, but is typically more resource intensive in the beginning.
3. *Enforcement:* This program will require ongoing enforcement. Other cities have assigned a staff person to conduct daily or weekly audits of home listings for compliance.
4. *Hotline:* ODOE recommends establishing a program hotline to receive questions and provide information to community members, as cities have received many calls with questions about the program. This would require allocating staff for this purpose or contracting this service out on an ongoing basis. ODOE is considering creating a state-wide hotline for HES methodology related questions, which would alleviate the burden on the City.

Subcommittee Question:

- Do you have any questions about a Home Energy Score program or do you need any additional information?



