



BetterBuildings Project Overview

The NH BetterBuildings project will empower the communities of Plymouth, Berlin and Nashua to achieve transformative reductions in energy use by creating more efficient buildings throughout the communities. The project will work to achieve 30% energy use reductions in residential, commercial and municipal buildings, and put the systems and supports in place that will then enable other communities to make the same improvements. NH received \$10 Million through the BetterBuildings program at Department of Energy, to be used over a 3 year period.

Project Structure

Office of Energy and Planning is the grant recipient and has contracted with the Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) to implement the project. CDFA has established a field office in each community to be staffed by a community manager and technical advisor. Field offices will work with the local municipalities, property owners, financial institutions and building contractors. A project manager at CDFA headquarters in Concord oversees the field offices and overall program development.

Finance

BetterBuildings funds will leverage private investment. BetterBuildings has been working with banks and credit unions in Plymouth, Berlin and Nashua. BetterBuildings funds will be used to address existing barriers in the private market such as building owner concerns about upfront costs and bank concerns about loan defaults.

- BetterBuildings is working with financial institutions, buying down interest rates to create an attractive 1% interest rate loan product for the residential market. BetterBuildings is also working with the financial institutions to provide a loan loss reserve account to help mitigate risk.
- Commercial and industrial projects will be assessed on a case by case basis but the same interest rate buy down and loan loss reserve tools may be employed based on project need.
- Bank agreements are currently being finalized and financial products should be available soon.
- BetterBuildings plans to provide some assistance with audit costs and additional incentives for projects that move forward to construction.

Workforce Development

The project will create a qualified list of contractors and auditors. Residents and businesses who participate in the project will make their own choices of who to work with off of the qualified list. BetterBuildings is working with the Community College system to develop training and mentoring options for local workers and companies who may need additional knowledge or experience. A monitoring and verification component will ensure that quality work is being done and energy savings are achieved.

Marketing and Outreach

The project will use some traditional media outreach, but will focus most heavily on community driven marketing strategies, including; the downtown office where citizens can go for information, relationships with community organizations, relationships with local banks who can promote the program to their existing customers, relationships with local contractors who will also be able to market the program, grassroots outreach and educational partnerships with existing programs such as ButtonUp NH.