



SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MEETING

AGENDA SECTION	NEW BUSINESS
MEETING DATE	DECEMBER 12, 2023

ITEM:	Xcel Energy Partners in Energy.							
DEPARTMENT:	Community Development	BY/DATE: Andrew Boucher – City Planner						
<p>CORE CITY STRATEGIES: <i>(please indicate areas that apply by adding an “X” in front of the selected text below)</i></p> <table> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Healthy and Safe Community</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Thriving and Vibrant Destination Community</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive, and Friendly</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong Infrastructure and Public Services</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Trusted and Engaged Leadership</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable</td> </tr> </table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Healthy and Safe Community	<input type="checkbox"/> Thriving and Vibrant Destination Community	<input type="checkbox"/> Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive, and Friendly	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong Infrastructure and Public Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Trusted and Engaged Leadership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable
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BACKGROUND

Xcel Energy Partners in Energy provides communities in Colorado, Minnesota, and Wisconsin services to develop an energy plan and assistance with implementing that plan, understanding a community’s unique energy needs and priorities, and tailors its services to complement each community’s vision. By working with citizens, businesses, and even their own government facilities, a community can shave dollars off utility bills, promote renewables, drive resource conservation or contribute toward greenhouse gas reduction goals. Partners in Energy helps address the challenge of identifying local priorities and then structures a path that leverages all resources available.

The Energy Action Planning application describes how Partners in Energy helps gather stakeholders to develop and implement energy action plans to address local energy challenges and priorities with actionable and equitable strategies and resources. If the City is accepted as a community, there will be a scoping meeting to help determine the pathway that best aligns with the community’s interests and capabilities. This program is offered at no cost to participant communities with the expectation that Xcel Energy provides staff and financial resources during the planning and implementation phasis as well as the City/community provides staff time and financial support to implement strategies. The tactics in your energy action plan may be within your current budget, or you may identify needs for a more robust energy management program.

The application has 11 questions as follows:

- 1) Why are you applying to Partners in Energy? Provide any relevant background needed to understand your community and its energy use planning objectives.
- 2) What are the pressing energy-related issues facing your community today?
- 3) If you’re accepted as a participant in Partners in Energy, what additional approvals within your community would you need to obtain prior to start? (examples: City Council, City Manager, Sustainability Commission)

- 4) Does your community currently have any energy, sustainability, environmental justice or climate goals. If so, please share.
- 5) What energy, sustainability, environmental justice or climate change initiatives or programs has your community recently implemented or have underway?
- 6) Who will be the point of contact to manage your Partners in Energy participation?> Please indicate whether the points of contact are paid staff or volunteers. If listing multiple points of contact, please clarify the role of each.
- 7) While Partners in Energy is offered to communities in Colorado and Minnesota at no cost, communities are responsible for expenses associated with implementation. Does your community have staff, volunteers, existing budgets or other funding resources dedicated to the implementation of the energy initiatives that may be identified or supported through the Partners in Energy process?
- 8) Who from your community do you anticipate engaging in the development of your energy plan? This may include city or county staff, homeowners and renters, nonprofit service organizations, local businesses, education institutions, multifamily housing managers or owners, and representatives from under-served communities.
- 9) Partners in Energy is designed to promote communities learning from each other and sharing best practices. Will you allow your final work products to be shared publicly?
- 10) Will you provide Xcel Energy the opportunity to review any marketing materials that incorporate the Xcel Energy logo or reference any of the company's products or services?
- 11) Is there anything else you would like us to consider when evaluating your application?

Once accepted into the Partners in Energy program, Xcel Energy will organize preliminary kickoff meetings to build the framework to launch energy action planning workshops. Anticipate six to eight weeks for preparation, and 20 to 26 weeks for development of the plan. Following the plan development, we will collaborate for 18 months to implement our strategies.

Ideally, a champion from the community will be identified who will help smooth the process of developing an Energy Action Plan and rolling out implementation. Community engagement specialists will help lead workshops and empowering the team with resources and energy expertise. Over the first six months of working together to develop the action plan, it may require up to 100 hours of time from your Partners in Energy champion. A group of local participants will need to be identified and get involved in developing the plan. Throughout the planning and implementation, they will leverage the City's existing communications channels, such as city website, social media, press media, newsletters or cable channels. Xcel Energy resources are there to support and provide tools and help throughout the process—but it is the community that owns the plan.

The program also serves as an Inflation Reduction Act resource for residents, businesses, local governments, nonprofit and faith-based organizations, and tribes to access individual and business tax credits, residential rebates, grants for the creation of new programs and projects, and direct pay tax credits for local governments

to access for clean energy, commercial clean vehicles, alternative fuel infrastructure, etc. Other areas of focus include building efficiency, electrification, renewable energy, and EV fleet and charging infrastructure. The City of St. Louis Park utilized the program to create their Climate Champions program, which offers cost-sharing for different buildings in their community (e.g. business, multifamily, and residential) to support energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDED MOTION(S):
MOTION: Move to recommend that the Council Liaison, Connie Buesgens, introduce the Partners in Energy application at the January 2, 2024 City Council Work Session and provide direction to approve the application either administratively or by City Council action before the next application deadline of January 15, 2024.

ATTACHMENTS: Partners in Energy Application
Coon Rapids Energy Action Plan