

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



STAFF

Alice Conovitz, Water Conservation Specialist, Utilities
Shannon Ash, Affordability Program Manager, Utilities
Brian Tholl, Energy Services Manager, Utilities

SUBJECT

Resolution 2024-002 Authorizing the Mayor to Execute an Intergovernmental Agreement with Larimer County to Continue Support for the Larimer County Conservation Corps Energy and Water Program.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this item is to seek approval of an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between the City and Larimer County for funding of the Larimer County Conservation Corp (LCCC) Water and Energy Program (“Program”). The agreement would allow for four annual renewals for a total potential term of five years, subject to annual appropriations.

The City of Fort Collins Utilities (FCU) has partnered with Larimer County to fund the LCCC since 2010 with tremendous success. LCCC crews have supported local resource conservation by providing home efficiency assessments to customers of FCU and Loveland Water and Power. These free home efficiency assessments include an on-site assessment, customer education, and direct installation of energy and water saving equipment such as LED lightbulbs, showerheads, and high-efficiency toilets. From 2010 to 2023, LCCC crews assessed over 4,000 homes served by FCU and provided resources and services that enabled these customers to save on their utility bills.

Due to its success, the Program is now part of the City’s Utilities Affordability Portfolio which provides a mechanism for low to moderate income customers to control their energy use and costs.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of the Resolution.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

The mission of the Program is to positively impact the local community and the environment by promoting energy and water conservation education and practices. The Program has implemented a workforce development model of training young adults in the efficiency industry while increasing accessibility to conservation measures and education for the community’s low-income population.

This Program is an important component within a portfolio of programs and services that support progress towards City goals set forth in the Energy Policy, Our Climate Future and Water Efficiency Plan.

The City, through FCU, has partnered with the LCCC since 2010. Home efficiency assessments performed by LCCC include an on-site assessment, energy and water saving retrofits and customer education. By the end of the 2023 spring season, LCCC crews assessed over 4,016 homes in Fort Collins. Each year, participation in the LCCC program is estimated to save an average of over 270 customers a combined \$20,000 on electric bills and \$10,000 on water bills, for an average annual utility bill savings of approximately \$110 for each household participating in the program. Annual energy savings average 180,000 kWh and annual water savings average over 2,000,000 gallons; this is equivalent to the average annual electric use and water use for approximately 25 homes.

In 2023, LCCC installed 3,739 LED lightbulbs, 108 furnace air filters, 127 high-efficiency toilets, 172 water-saving showerheads, and additional equipment such as faucet aerators and carbon monoxide detectors. In 2024 the Program has a target to serve between 250 and 300 Fort Collins households, specifically through working with customers enrolled in the Utilities Income Qualified Assistance program. This engagement will build on 2023 successes to further assist in reducing regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and water consumption through electric and water resource savings.

The Program is a proven model serving the interests of the City, the County, and citizens to provide services efficiently and cost-effectively, and to minimize overhead expenditures for administration. The Program is also a successful example of collaboration between FCU, Loveland Water and Power, and Larimer County. Larimer County also brings funding from local, State and Federal sources through the LCCC. FCU funds are only used to serve Fort Collins' electric and water customers. The Program is completely free to customers. While it is available to all FCU electric and water customers, it is most heavily marketed to customers enrolled in the income-qualified assessment program.

CITY FINANCIAL IMPACTS

The IGA commits FCU to \$232,998 from December 2023 through May 2024, based on the LCCC meeting requirements for the minimum number of assessments. FCU has budgeted funds within the Energy Services and Water Conservation divisions for the provision of efficiency audits and directly installed efficiency equipment. No additional funding or appropriation is required to meet the City's contribution. Future agreements for services from LCCC will be dependent upon efficiency funding appropriations separately brought for Council approval.

BOARD / COMMISSION / COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

For informational purposes only, Fort Collins Utilities has presented results of efficiency programs annually to Energy Board, including the LCCC progress. Staff have also presented annual updates for program achievements and Utilities Affordability Portfolio of programs to Energy Board. Staff has not sought board actions or recommendations to Council yet for these programs.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

In conjunction with periodic status updates on the Utilities Affordability Portfolio programs, FCU staff has also published Program achievements in an annual Energy Achievements infographic posted to Utilities webpage. The implementation of this ongoing program aligns with City policies and supports progress toward goals identified in Our Climate Future and the Water Efficiency Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution for Consideration
2. Exhibit A to Resolution