



Legislation Text

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Update on Plan for Identifying and Reaching Neighbors who might Benefit from the LEEP^{Plus} Program (NB)

In past years, GRU's LEEP^{Plus} Program has been funded for making energy efficiency upgrades to approximately 100 homes in the community. The addition of American Rescue Plan Act funds this year will allow staff to serve additional homes. In an effort to make the public aware of the availability of additional funding, staff has begun executing a communications plan that includes an email campaign to more than 50,000 customers, messaging within bills, digital media and direct mail.

At their May 5, 2022, regular meeting, the City Commission expressed a desire to actively identify customers who are most likely to be in need of energy efficiency improvements in their homes and/or education on how they can lower their energy bills through behavioral change. The Commission directed staff to return to the May 19th meeting with a plan for identifying these customers and encouraging them to apply for the LEEP^{Plus} program through targeted outreach.

As requested, staff has developed the following plan for identifying the subject population:

- Use data from the Alachua County Appraisal site and GRU Energy kWh data to determine households facing the greatest energy burden in our community.
- Identify customers who have utilized our Project Share program and Partnering Agencies that offer utility payment assistance to customers facing financial hardship.
- Run reports to identify residential customers with outstanding balances and analyze usage based on square footage.
- Identify rental properties located in qualified census tract areas (HUD) that are either single-family homes, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, or mobile homes that may benefit from energy efficiency upgrades.
- Based on census tract data, utilize Energy Delivery Geographic Information System (GIS) to select customers in low-income areas for targeted outreach.
- Utilize data collected via the newly instated energy efficiency inspections (now part of the City's Rental Housing Ordinance) to determine the highest needs for services to market to rental properties.
- Utilize existing communications survey that asks questions including income. From Jan. 1, 2022 to April 30, 2022, 47% of respondents earned less than \$25,000 and another 25% earned less than \$35,000. An additional question has been added to ask if they would like to receive information about the LEEP program.

- Once staff has identified those customers who may benefit from LEEP, GRU will conduct targeted communication through direct mail, direct emails or phone calls.

Addition of one temporary employee to assist with the additional application process.

Hear update from staff and take any action deemed appropriate.