



## ***BOULDER ENERGY CHALLENGE***

### **Boulder Energy Challenge Grant Program 2017 Application Guidelines**

**Application Deadline: July 7, 2017**

#### **SUMMARY**

The City of Boulder seeks proposals for the second round of the Boulder Energy Challenge (BEC) Grant Program (the “Program”), which is designed to solicit innovative solutions from the community for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Boulder. The program is funded by the Climate Action Plan (CAP) tax and provides funding for pilot projects, new business model testing, new product or service development, efforts to remove key legislative/regulatory/financial barriers, energy behavior change products/programs or community engagement programs that make energy actions accessible to all.

This document details the structure of the program, including the application and evaluation process. In order to apply interested parties must submit a Letter of Intent to Apply through the Program’s website ([www.BoulderEnergyChallenge.com](http://www.BoulderEnergyChallenge.com)) and submit a four-part application that includes a concept video, narrative document, project budget and project work plan. Projects will be evaluated through a four-step process by City of Boulder staff and a panel of community experts that have been involved in the program design. The Program will award grants up to a maximum of \$100,000, with a total pool of funds of \$200,000. Total funding awarded and the distribution of those funds will be dependent on the quality of proposals received.

#### **OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF PROGRAM**

The objective of the 2017 Boulder Energy Challenge is to find innovative new ideas that can accelerate Boulder’s path to reaching its Climate Commitment goals of:

- **80% reduction in community greenhouse gas emissions below 2005 levels by 2050**
- **100% renewable electricity by 2030**

The 2017-2018 program will primarily focus on submissions related to reducing fossil fuel consumption, however other proposals will be considered if received.

## Focus Areas:

Two funding focus areas have been identified for 2017:

### Deep Emissions Reduction Strategies

- Solutions that address one of the Climate Commitment's energy focus areas, including:
  - Electricity source and system change
  - Building energy use
  - Transportation
- Ideas will also be considered that address significant existing barriers (e.g. legislative, regulatory, financial) to reducing emissions outside of these focus areas.

### Community Mobilization

- Projects designed to increase active community participation/adoption of emissions reduction/renewable energy related actions.
- Projects that create effective engagement and benefits for segments of the community frequently underrepresented in renewable energy system change or other climate related efforts (e.g. electric vehicle adoption, energy efficiency adoption, natural gas appliance replacement etc.).

## CU Boulder Partnership for Technology Projects:

The University of Colorado-Boulder is partnering with the 2017 Boulder Energy Challenge to make university assets available for technology demonstration and pilot projects applying under the Deep Emissions Reduction Strategies grant category. This includes CU buildings, fleet and microgrid. If you are interested in a collaboration with the university for your project, please contact Jamie Harkins at [HarkinsJ@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:HarkinsJ@bouldercolorado.gov) to discuss and pursue next steps.

## ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants include businesses, nonprofits, academic institutions and individuals. The applicant does not need to be based in the City of Boulder; however, project implementation must occur in Boulder. There is no cost-share requirement to apply, however additional funding outside of a BEC grant will earn the applicant additional points in the evaluation process.

### Types of Eligible Projects:

1. **Pilot projects** – A limited test or trial of a technology, strategy, application, etc. An analysis or testing of the viability of a new idea.
2. **New business model testing** – A project that tackles barriers to wide scale adoption of solutions.
3. **Efforts to remove key barriers** – Projects or initiatives aimed at removing key legislative, regulatory, financial or other barriers to emissions reduction.
4. **New product/service development** – The funding of continued development of a new product or service that has already demonstrated viability.

5. **Energy behavior change**– Community education efforts (e.g. education, products or services) aimed at significantly altering behavior that results in emissions reductions with demonstrated effectiveness.
6. **Community engagement programs** – A project that results in increased community participation in climate efforts, especially with underrepresented segments of the community.

## TIMELINE

Release of Grant Application Documents	May 9, 2017
Letter of Intent to Apply Due	May 26, 2017
Grant Applications Due	July 7, 2017 by 5pm MDT
Application Interviews	Weeks of July 17 <sup>th</sup> and 24 <sup>th</sup>
Community Pitch Night Event	TBD
Final Awards Notification	Mid-August 2017

## HOW TO APPLY

Interested parties must fill out the Letter of Intent to Apply for Funding, available at the program website ([www.BoulderEnergyFuture.com](http://www.BoulderEnergyFuture.com)) by May 26, 2017.

The BEC grant application consists of five parts.

1. **Concept Video** (3-4 min) – Applicants must submit a self-narrating presentation in any style. Examples include but are not limited to a narrated PowerPoint, Prezi, pitch video or other creative style. The video must include the following elements:
  - a. Identification of the energy challenge to be addressed and its importance. Highlight how this project addresses the city’s Climate Commitment goals.
  - b. Description of the project and how it is both innovative and viable.
  - c. Potential of the proposed project, including:
    - i. a description of alternative solutions and an explanation of what distinguishes this solution from them,
    - ii. identification of the barriers to success and project risks and how those will be addressed, and
    - iii. a description of how the project can be commercialized (if appropriate).
  - d. Why the proposing project team is qualified to address this energy challenge.
2. **Narrative Document** (limited to 6 pages) – must include the following elements:
  - a. A more in-depth description of project and grant amount being requested.
  - b. Project benefits, including:

- i. a detailed quantification of the energy and greenhouse gas reduction benefits expected from the project (**REQUIRED**)<sup>1</sup>,
  - ii. a quantification of how much clean, renewable energy will be added to the Boulder energy system (if applicable);
  - iii. an explanation of what co-benefits<sup>2</sup> to the community (if any) the project has that are not directly quantified in the proposal, and
  - iv. an explanation of how many people will be impacted or able to participate in the project and if there are any limitations on who can participate.
- c. An installation plan (if appropriate), including what local codes, permits, regulations must be complied with.
  - d. Applicant team qualifications, including the relevant skills and experience of the application team members demonstrating their ability to execute the project.
  - e. An explanation of any legal, financial or regulatory barriers to implementing the project.
  - f. A description of other funding (past or present) supporting the project (if applicable).
  - g. Project outcomes anticipated and methods applicant will use to measure success.
  - h. Name of the Project Liaison – All applicants are required to identify a project liaison, whose responsibilities include project oversight and quarterly reporting to city staff, including budget status and progress on project milestones.

**Applicants must also include the following attachments (please see templates available on the Program website):**

1. Project work plan describing specific milestones that will be achieved with funding
2. Project budget
3. Application cover sheet

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application is complete and properly submitted. The City of Boulder may request supplemental materials from the applicant and such materials must be submitted within ten (10) days of the request or the application may be rejected without further review.

Completed applications, including all required documentation, should be submitted to Jamie Harkins at [harkinsj@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:harkinsj@bouldercolorado.gov). “Boulder Energy Challenge Application” must appear in the email subject line. To submit the concept video applicants may upload the video file to youtube.com and include the link in the application email submission (preferred method) or attach a video file (MP4, MOV, WMV, or AVI formats) to the email submission. All applications will receive an electronic confirmation of receipt from City of Boulder staff.

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<sup>1</sup> The quantification of expected benefits is required for a complete application and all mathematical calculations and assumptions must be shown. If you are unable to perform this quantification, please contact city staff for guidance.

<sup>2</sup> Co-benefits include additional environmental, social or financial benefits the project will generate.

Completed Applications must be received no later than **Friday, July 7, 2017 at 5:00pm MDT.**

## SELECTION CRITERIA

Projects will be evaluated through a four-step process. Staff will conduct an initial eligibility screening on a pass/fail basis to ensure that the proposal meets the program eligibility requirements and that the application is complete. Accepted proposals will then receive a merit evaluation score from staff and a panel of community experts based on the evaluation criteria below. Proposals that meet a minimum threshold in the merit evaluation will be interviewed by the group and finalists will be chosen. The final part of the evaluation process will be a Community Pitch Night event for the finalists with an element of public participation. Selection criteria for the two types of projects being invited in this cycle are described below.

### **Deep Emissions Reduction Strategy Projects**

#### *Eligibility Screening Criteria (Pass/Fail)*

- (1) The proposal addresses the objectives of the program.
- (2) The proposal fits within the 2017 scope of the program.
- (3) The proposal quantifies the projected energy use and emissions reductions.
- (4) The proposed project is not already present in the competitive marketplace.

#### *Merit Evaluation Criteria*

Proposals that pass the initial eligibility screening will receive a merit evaluation score based on two main criteria: (1) ability of the project to meet the program objectives, and (2) project feasibility.

- (1) Ability of meet program objectives – in assessing each project’s ability to meet the objectives, evaluators will consider:
  - a. Projected energy use reductions (electricity, natural gas or petroleum) and emissions reductions
  - b. Degree of innovation—Does the project feature a novel approach to reducing emissions that has not yet achieved success locally?
  - c. Scalability/replicability—The potential for expanding or replicating this project’s impact both within Boulder and beyond.
  - d. Impact – The social, economic or environmental benefits received from this effort and the longevity of impact.
- (2) Project feasibility – in assessing each project’s feasibility, evaluators will consider:
  - a. Project readiness and ability to be completed in grant period
  - b. Team qualifications
  - c. Proposal work plan
  - d. Budget/cost-effectiveness
  - e. Understanding of applicable local codes, permits and regulations applicable to project.

In additional, bonus merit evaluation points will be earned in three instances:

- (1) Boulder location – the proposing entity is based in the City of Boulder
- (2) Collaboration – the proposal is a result of a collaboration of partners
- (3) Cost-share – the project has funding from sources other than the Boulder Energy Challenge

### **Community Mobilization Projects**

#### *Eligibility Screening Criteria (Pass/Fail)*

- (1) The proposal addresses the objectives of the program.
- (2) The proposal fits within the 2017 scope of the program.
- (3) The proposal quantifies the projected energy use and emissions reductions.
- (4) The proposed project is not already present in the competitive marketplace.

#### *Merit Evaluation Criteria*

Proposals that pass the initial eligibility screening will receive a merit evaluation score based on two main criteria: (1) ability of the project to meet the program objectives, and (2) project feasibility.

- (1) Ability of meet program objectives – in assessing each project’s ability to meet the objectives, evaluators will consider:
  - a. Participation--The number of people within the community that would be directly contacted or engaged through this project
  - b. Diversity of participation--The degree of participation by a diverse range of community residents—ethnic, race, economic, gender, age.
  - c. Degree of innovation—Does the project feature a novel approach to reducing emissions that has not yet achieved success locally?
  - d. Scalability/replicability—The potential for expanding or replicating this project both within Boulder and beyond.
  - e. Impact – The social, economic or environmental benefits received by participants and the larger community and the longevity of impact
- (2) Project feasibility – in assessing each project’s feasibility, evaluators will consider:
  - a. Project readiness and ability to be completed in grant period
  - b. Team qualifications
  - c. Proposal work plan
  - d. Budget/cost-effectiveness

In additional, bonus merit evaluation points will be earned in four instances:

- (1) Boulder location – the proposing entity is based in the City of Boulder
- (2) Collaboration – the proposal is a result of a collaboration of partners
- (3) Cost-share – the project has funding from sources other than the Boulder Energy Challenge
- (4) The team implementing the project is representative of the populations being engaged in the project.

### **Community Pitch Night**

The Community Pitch Night will give finalists an opportunity to pitch their project to attendees and give the community an opportunity to provide input to the evaluation process. This event will provide a great opportunity to promote the program and the finalists and for the public to get engaged and excited about participating.

### **Final Selection**

Following the Community Pitch Night, the evaluators will make funding recommendations to city staff. The City Manager will make a final decision on funded projects, which will be announced to the community.

## **BUDGET & PROPRIETARY INFORMATION**

This grant will be paid to grantees in installments, based on the completion of milestones to be laid out in the project work plan. Up to 40% of the total grant may be distributed upon review of the project work plan and development of Outcome Measurement Framework, subject to City of Boulder staff discretion. An installment plan for the remaining grant funds will be determined at that time.

Expenses incurred prior to grant award and execution of a grant agreement with the City of Boulder will not qualify as part of the project budget. All applicants should reserve an appropriate portion of their budget for the collection of data and monitoring the performance of their project as outlined in the Outcome Measurement Framework that is developed.

Grantees shall maintain reasonable insurance to cover projects if appropriate. The city may request proof of such insurance at the city's discretion.

Please note that project applications are not confidential and should not include proprietary information that cannot be disclosed to the public. Submitted concept videos may be used to promote the program and the community showcase event.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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