

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	February 3, 2014
Action Required:	Resolution Approval
Presenter:	Susan Elliott, Climate Protection Program Coordinator
Staff Contacts:	Kristel Riddervold, Environmental Sustainability Manager
Title:	Resolution to Support the City Entering the Georgetown University Energy Prize Competition

Background:

The Georgetown University Energy Prize Competition (GUEP) is a nationwide competition for small and medium-sized localities designed to spur action on energy efficiency and renewable energy at a local level through cooperative efforts between communities, local governments, and utilities. The competition is divided into four (4) stages over a 36 month period. Communities are challenged to propose a long term community energy plan with strategies aimed to produce incremental reductions in energy consumption and to demonstrate measurable reductions within the municipal and residential sectors during two years of the competition, which starts in August 2014.

Approximately 50-100 applicant localities will be invited to compete. Applicants receive support in the form of resources, private sector consultant hours, and assistance from graduate and undergraduates at Georgetown University. The grand prize is \$5 million dollars to be used to reward the winning community as a whole and support continued efforts regarding the community energy plan.

The GUEP's focus on municipal and residential sectors aligns with the City's existing programs and experience:

- Within its municipal operations, the City has an effective energy management program and has identified achievable goals and strategies in energy efficiency and renewable energy production to continue to build on its successes. Between 2000-2011, energy consumption in City facilities was reduced by 29.5% – equivalent to over \$840,000 in reduced utility costs in 2011 alone. Since 2009, the City has begun to install solar photovoltaic (PV) facilities where appropriate to generate electricity and lower its peak demand on conventional energy supplies.
- Community-wide, the City's Climate Protection Program has tracked the community's energy use and associated greenhouse gas emissions, supported the formation of and subsequent partnership with the Local Energy Alliance Program (LEAP), and

participated in the Local Climate Action Planning Process (LCAPP). Through its ongoing partnership with LEAP, the City offers financial and professional resources and services to our residents and businesses in energy efficiency and renewable energy. The LCAPP Report provided recommendations, a five-part framework, and energy strategies for our community that can be used to inform and prioritize appropriate actions for a community energy plan.

Discussion:

Charlottesville has a strong foundation and an experienced background as a leader in environmental stewardship that position it well to be competitive in and meet the required steps of the GUEP. Initial commitments of support and partnership with the City for its GUEP application have been obtained from Dominion Virginia Power (required as the electric utility provider), Charlottesville Gas (required as the gas utility provider), and the Local Energy Alliance Program (LEAP).

To be invited to compete in the two (2) year competition, communities must submit an application via a standardized template from the GUEP between February-April 2014. If a community's application is accepted, it will be invited to submit a community energy plan by July 2014 that "should be [long-term], with commitments by residential associations, governments, institutions, or businesses in the community to policies and projects that will yield continual improvement." The GUEP will evaluate the plans and invite qualifying communities to compete over the subsequent two (2) year period.

Community Engagement:

To create a community energy plan, staff will invite members of the community and city officials to form a leadership team that will guide the process and assist in prioritizing actions. Community meetings and local organizations will invite the public to participate in identifying actions and topic areas to be included in the plan. An initial framework of a plan can be created based on past community engagement and the findings of the LCAPP steering committee, the City's emissions reports, and goals and supporting documents from the Comprehensive Plan.

Alignment with City Council's Vision and Priority Areas:

Creation of a community energy plan and engagement with the community to implement it aligns with City Council's *A Green City* vision and is an implementation document aligned with the 2013 Comprehensive Plan Chapter 7 Goal 5 and Goal 6.

Budgetary Impact:

None. Existing staff and program budgets will be utilized to support this effort.

Recommendation:

Council should approve the resolution for the City to apply to compete in the GUEP.

Alternatives:

City Council may choose to not adopt or to make modifications to this Resolution.

Attachments:

Resolution

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE CITY ENTERING THE GEORGETOWN
UNIVERSITY ENERGY PRIZE COMPETITION**

WHEREAS, a significant portion of household expenses are spent on energy annually, the residential sector saw the largest increase in energy use from 2000-2011 within our community profile, the cost of energy is expected to increase, and Dominion Virginia Power predicts a growing and substantial power gap that must be met by increasing supply or flattening demand increases; and

WHEREAS, addressing energy efficiency and climate change will promote a cleaner environment, a more prosperous economy, increased comfort and health in homes, and a higher quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the City of Charlottesville has committed to promoting energy efficiency, renewable energy, and climate change programs community-wide and within its own organization; and

WHEREAS, the City of Charlottesville supported the Local Climate Action Planning Process (LCAPP) and accepted the LCAPP Report's recommendations, Five-Part Framework, and Action Strategies; and

WHEREAS, goals in Chapter 7 of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan support effective and innovative energy management, increased energy performance of buildings and sites, and pursuit of cleaner sources of electrical energy in both the community and City buildings and operations; and

WHEREAS, a community energy plan serves as an implementation document of those Comprehensive Plan goals;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Charlottesville supports the City's entry to compete in the Georgetown University Energy Prize competition to produce a community energy plan and demonstrate measurable reductions in residential and municipal energy use; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council will appoint a member of the City Council to be a City representative in such discussions and working groups.