

Project Title: Advancing Comprehensive Multifamily Housing Retrofits with Equitable Electrification in the Midwest

Applicant: Elevate Energy

Project Director/Principal Investigator: Jackie Montesdeoca, Elevate Energy

Project Team: Elevate Energy, CEDA, Project Home

Project Objectives

This project aims to build a WAP roadmap for building electrification. Our approach pairs building weatherization as administered through the WAP providers with electrification measures, leading to an approach for equitable multifamily building decarbonization. Leveraging philanthropic and utility funding, in addition to WAP assistance, the project team will deliver retrofits to 900 low-income multifamily units in Cook County (IL) and Dane County (WI), while creating job opportunities for BIPOC workers and contractors.

Project Description

This project offers a comprehensive approach for program delivery to address health and safety barriers, weatherization, electrification, and renewable energy in a “one stop shop” program for eligible households. In partnership with CEDA and Project Home, Elevate will establish the methodology for a program that incorporates comprehensive weatherization and electrification services. The project team will conduct building assessments in underserved communities to identify the energy efficiency, electrification, and clean energy opportunities; develop scopes of work and oversee improvements; and leverage funding to complete the retrofits. The team will braid funds from philanthropic funding sources, utility energy efficiency programs, and weatherization programs to deliver retrofits in underserved communities with high energy burdens and low rates of adoption of electrification technology.

Project Impact

This project is an opportunity to develop a scalable model for affordable housing retrofits through WAP in support of the Justice40 initiative, delivering the benefits of climate and clean energy investments to underserved communities. Specific project outcomes include:

- Reduce energy burdens and create a healthier living environment for households with lower incomes, while generating measurable utility cost savings and carbon reductions.
- Overcome the barriers of fragmented program delivery with a turnkey approach that includes comprehensive guidance and relationship management with owners of affordable housing, from building assessments to completed rehabilitation. This includes leveraging and braiding multiple funding sources to successfully implement and replicate the project.
- Complete deep energy retrofits in multifamily housing that meets state and federal income eligibility requirements, utilizing the WAP networks in Cook County and Dane County.
- Manage the research and evaluation process to determine program impacts, including utilization rates, WAP measures installed, SIR, and energy and carbon reduction from integrated energy efficiency and electrification building technologies in cold climates.
- Create opportunities for BIPOC contractors to enter the home performance, energy efficiency, and renewable energy sectors.