



nerej

City of Cambridge becomes the first city in New England to work with BlocPower on building decarbonization

May 05, 2023 - Owners Developers & Managers

Cambridge, MA The city of Cambridge and BlocPower have formed a new pilot partnership to help multifamily buildings upgrade with energy efficiency, rooftop solar, and more comfortable, all-electric heating, cooling, and hot water systems. Supporting buildings in completing such upgrades is an important step in achieving the goals of Cambridge's Net Zero Action Plan, including the city's commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050.

The one-year pilot will focus on multifamily buildings of five or more units and will provide building retrofits with project management and innovative project financing. Retrofit options can include weatherization, electric panel upgrades, rooftop solar, and cold climate heat pump technology for heating, cooling, and hot water. Participants can access financing without upfront payments or liens, and can take advantage of state and federal incentive programs and expert project oversight to complete upgrades that would otherwise require significant initial investment and contractor management.

These projects will deliver more comfortable, efficient, and lower-maintenance heating, cooling and hot water systems to building owners and occupants, while reducing fossil-fuel use and carbon pollution. A whole-building retrofit project, combined with green electricity from Cambridge Community Electricity, will completely eliminate a building's carbon pollution. Nearly two-thirds of city households live in multifamily buildings, so finding ways to help these buildings complete upgrades and decarbonize their energy use is an important part of achieving Cambridge's climate goals and expanding access to clean energy.

As part of the pilot, the city is working with BlocPower, a company providing green building upgrades across the country, and is utilizing two types of the company's software – BlocMaps and the Instant Building Report – to identify buildings with an ideal profile for energy upgrades and provide building owners a preliminary estimate and scope of work. Cambridge's pilot follows other large-scale electrification and citywide decarbonization projects recently launched by BlocPower in partnership with Oakland, San José, Denver, Ithaca, NY and Menlo Park, CA.

"Cambridge is working hard to address climate change and support our residents in accessing clean energy and energy efficiency," said city manager Yi-An Huang.

"Our pilot partnership with BlocPower can enable apartment and condo buildings to complete energy and comfort upgrades that would otherwise require significant upfront costs, while testing a new way

to decarbonize energy use in Cambridge's buildings.”

“Cambridge is a sustainability trailblazer, and this pilot can serve as a model to turn climate plans into climate action,” said Donnel Baird, CEO and founder of BlocPower. “By reducing complexity and increasing affordability, BlocPower is helping cities nationwide unlock the historically hard to upgrade multifamily segment, and we’re excited to bring this smarter, greener, healthier technology to Cambridge and its residents.”

Interested residents, owners, and managers of multifamily buildings should visit CambridgeEnergyAlliance.org/blocpowerpilot/ to learn more and access a no-cost Instant Building Report to explore their options.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540