

March 29, 2024

Mr. Marc Draisen
Executive Director
Metropolitan Area Planning Council
60 Temple Place
Boston, MA 02111

Dear Mr. Draisen,

We write to offer our support for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Implementation Grant application submitted by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) in partnership with the Boston, Chelsea, and Lowell Housing Authorities. The Greater Boston Affordable Housing Decarbonization Accelerator (AHDA) proposed by this coalition application supports key pathways for accelerating building decarbonization and serving environmental justice communities to meet the Commonwealth's 2050 climate goals.

Decarbonizing existing buildings is critical to achieving Massachusetts's greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets. While using net zero and Passive House standards is more common in new affordable multifamily construction projects, most residential buildings that will exist in 2050 are already constructed. This includes hundreds of thousands of units of affordable housing, which are among the most inefficient and carbon-emitting buildings in the Commonwealth and house populations least able to afford or make retrofits. Numerous studies conducted by the Commonwealth's agencies have identified needs for funding, resources, and technical assistance to help owners of affordable housing, particularly Public Housing Authorities, address these challenges and ensure that low-income and disadvantaged populations are not left behind in the clean energy transformation. Furthermore, decarbonization retrofits, in conjunction with removal of gas cooking equipment and improved ventilation, can improve indoor air quality and provide substantial health benefits to occupants.

Environmental Monitoring Partners (EMP) is a minority and women owned small business that is excited to be a partner in implementing the AHDA. It was founded by Dr. Neelakshi Hudda (with over 15 years of academic experience) with a mission to make scientifically rigorous environmental monitoring accessible to communities and agencies outside of the academic grant-based research realm. The consulting firm employs high-quality research-grade instruments and scientific study design methods in applications that are geared towards multi-stakeholder, community-engaged, complex but practical solutions to reduce GHG emission and environmental exposures. We at EMP are excited for this unique opportunity to utilize aspects of many of our expertise (air quality measurements, study design, data analytics, indoor air quality in low-income and affordable housing in greater Boston, RESNET certification and modeling) in this potential project.

As a Regional Planning Agency (RPA), MAPC is uniquely situated to lead many aspects of this proposal. I have had the pleasure of working with many MAPC in various capacities – scientific grants, workshops, organizing community reports back meetings, etc. Through each interaction, my appreciation for the breadth of expertise at the organization expands exponentially. They are

ideally suited to oversee the technical assistance program and facilitate regional community of practice.

The regionalized approach of the AHDA will support stakeholders in affordable housing across the Greater Boston region in developing and implementing plans for reducing GHG emissions and other harmful air pollutants in the buildings and populations where investment is most critically needed. In closing, we wish to express our support for and commitment to working with MAPC's Greater Boston Affordable Housing Decarbonization Accelerator and ask that the review committee give their application full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,

Neelakshi Hudda

Neelakshi Hudda

Principal and Founder
Environmental Monitoring Partners LLC
17 Webb Street
Lexington, MA 02420