

State of Michigan CPRG Implementation Grant Workplan

Section 1: Overall Project Summary and Approach

The State of Michigan recognizes the urgency to address greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution contributing to climate change and proposes an ambitious and strategic plan to site renewable energy projects through its Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). If awarded a Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Implementation Grant through the General Competition, EGLE will accelerate the siting, zoning, and permitting of renewable energy through the establishment of the Renewables Ready Communities Program. The goal of the Renewables Ready Communities Program is to overcome barriers to siting renewable energy to enable the adoption of renewable energy at the scale and pace needed to reach 60 percent renewable energy in Michigan by 2030, aligned with the MI Healthy Climate Plan. Few efforts are as essential to climate mitigation as deploying renewable energy, and few barriers to deploying renewables are as challenging as siting. This grant proposal seeks to overcome some of the barriers to siting renewable energy to decarbonize the electricity sector and unlock the deep decarbonization potential across other sectors of Michigan's economy.

The **Renewables Ready Communities Program** will consist of the following:

- Expanding the **Renewables Ready Communities Awards** that provide financial incentives to local unit(s) of government that approve and host utility-scale renewable energy and energy storage through local processes. The Renewables Ready Communities Awards will include an additional incentive to local unit(s) of government that approve and host utility-scale renewable energy and energy storage whose communities are a majority low-income and disadvantaged. CPRG funding will expand an existing Renewables Ready Communities Awards pilot that launched in 2024 with a one-time state budget allocation of \$30 million.
- Creating the **Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program** to incentivize siting on brownfields. This pilot program will be run through EGLE's Remediation and Redevelopment Division's Brownfield Program to provide grants for renewable energy projects on brownfields.
- Expanding EGLE's **Renewable Energy Academy** to develop technical assistance materials for low-income and disadvantaged communities and for the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program. CPRG funds will staff the Renewable Energy Academy to provide technical assistance and community engagement as a part of the efforts of the Renewables Ready Communities Program.
- Developing a **Renewables Ready Communities Strategic Plan** to assess where and how the state should direct efforts for utility-scale renewable energy projects and brownfield renewable energy projects to meet 2030 goals.
- Supporting **State of Michigan workforce development programs** to ensure Michigan has the workforce needed to build enough renewable energy to meet 2030 goals.

At least \$10 million of RRC Program incentives will be reserved for renewable energy projects in Tribal communities either through Renewables Ready Communities Awards to Tribal governments that approve and host utility-scale renewable energy projects and/or Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program grants.

1.a. Description of GHG Reduction Measures

Background

Siting renewable energy at-scale is one of the most crucial and urgent climate goals for Michigan. The [MI Healthy Climate Plan](#) – Michigan’s plan to reduce GHG emissions and transition toward economy-wide carbon neutrality by 2050 – calls for the generation of 60 percent of the state’s electricity from renewable resources and sets a 2,500 megawatt (MW) energy storage target by 2030. To achieve this penetration of renewable energy, the MI Healthy Climate Plan calls for a 50 percent renewable energy standard by 2030 and an expansion of customer-driven renewable energy options (like rooftop solar and voluntary green pricing programs) to reach 60 percent renewable energy by 2030. The bulk of this additional capacity is likely to be met via voluntary green pricing programs, which will also require the siting of utility-scale renewable energy projects. In 2023, Michigan Public Act 235 (PA 235) codified the renewable energy and storage targets, among other goals and strategies of the MI Healthy Climate Plan.

One of the biggest challenges to meeting these ambitious targets in the electricity sector is the siting and permitting of renewables. In recent years, siting renewables like wind and solar has become increasingly difficult in Michigan communities. Michigan is home to 1,856 local units of government, including over 1,200 townships. For many rural communities, wind and solar offer an opportunity for income, local tax revenue, quality local jobs, and environmental benefits. In recent years, a small but vocal opposition has organized to fight the siting of wind and solar in communities across Michigan. Projects have been blocked by local opposition and in some cases township officials have been recalled for showing support for renewable energy projects. This opposition can make it impossible for local landowners in rural communities who are interested in pursuing solar or wind to do so. Local restrictions in Michigan have led to the blockage of two dozen utility-scale wind and solar projects as of May 2023.¹ Based on the State’s definition of compatible renewable energy zoning, currently only 9.8 percent of solar ordinances and 1.7 percent of wind ordinances in “wind-viable” locations have zoning that fit the basic criteria, according to internal analysis at EGLE. The State of Michigan aims to leverage funding secured via a CPRG Implementation Grant to help overcome these challenges through the creation of the Renewables Ready Communities Program.

Renewables Ready Communities Program Description

The Renewables Ready Communities Program (RRC Program) includes two primary GHG reduction measures:

- **Measure 1: Renewables Ready Communities Awards** will provide financial incentives to local unit(s) of government that approve and host utility-scale renewable energy and energy storage projects through local permitting processes. These incentive awards will provide additional revenue for local governments to spend in their communities for each megawatt of renewable energy installed.
- **Measure 2: Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program** will create a strategy for encouraging renewable energy on brownfields and will provide dedicated funding through EGLE’s Remediation and Redevelopment Division’s Brownfield Program to provide grants for renewable energy projects on brownfields.

For GHG reduction Measure 1, the Renewables Ready Communities Awards (RRC Awards) will provide financial incentives to communities across Michigan that approve and host renewable energy projects at scale through a local permitting process. These incentive awards will provide additional revenue for local governments to spend in their communities for each MW of renewable energy or energy storage installed. EGLE launched a pilot version of this proposed program in 2024 with a one-time state budget

¹ [Sabin Center for Climate Change Law | Columbia Law School | May 2023](#)

allocation of \$30 million. With funding from a CPRG Implementation Grant, EGLE will have the ability to expand the pilot and administer the necessary financial incentives to meet the MI Healthy Climate Plan goal of 60 percent renewable energy by 2030, and the state's energy storage goal of 2,500 MW by 2030. EGLE estimates that 20,593 MW of solar and wind and 929 MW of energy storage are needed to reach the 2030 goals, accounting for existing renewable energy resources and the renewable energy MW achieved through the 2024 RRC Award pilot.

Renewables Ready Communities Awards (RRC Awards) will provide initial financial incentives of \$5,000 per MW, up to a maximum of \$3 million per award, to the local unit(s) of government that hosts and permits eligible utility-scale renewable energy projects. Qualifying projects are expected to be at least 50 MW for solar and energy storage projects and at least 100 MW for wind projects. The CPRG funds will also provide an additional incentive to local unit(s) of government that approve and host utility-scale renewable energy and energy storage whose communities are a majority low-income and disadvantaged. This additional incentive, and the technical assistance offered through the Renewable Energy Academy, will help ensure that all communities can participate in and benefit from the renewable energy transition.

GHG reduction Measure 1 will complement changes in law made with the passage of Michigan Public Act 233 of 2023 (PA 233), which allows renewable energy projects that meet certain capacity thresholds – solar and energy storage facilities with a nameplate capacity of 50 MW or more and wind facilities with a nameplate capacity of 100 MW or more – to go to the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) to permit projects if an attempt to permit through a local unit of government is unsuccessful. While this will help ensure projects are built, the permitting process at the MPSC does not cover all projects and for those projects it does cover, the process may be longer or more expensive as it requires additional considerations that are not required at the local level. When projects are permitted through the MPSC, local units of government where the projects are located will receive host payments of \$2,000 per MW, which is not a benefit guaranteed through the local permitting process. To encourage the faster deployment of renewable energy with greater community support, the RRC Awards provide a financial incentive to local units of government who approve and host renewable energy projects through local permitting. EGLE anticipates that the RRC Awards – supported by the Renewable Energy Academy – will result in no less than 16,475 MW of additional renewable energy capacity. This total amount takes into consideration the total MW of additional renewable energy needed to meet the goals of the MI Healthy Climate Plan (23,954 MW) and accounts for projects that will be sited as a result of the current RRC Awards pilot (3,351 MW) and projects that EGLE anticipates will be sited without the need of an RRC Award incentive (4,119 MW).

For GHG reduction Measure 2, EGLE will create a Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program to incentivize siting renewable energy projects on brownfields through a \$10 million grant program. Brownfields are generally defined by EGLE as current and formerly contaminated lands, capped landfills, and former mine sites. The grant program will be run through EGLE's Remediation and Redevelopment Division's Brownfield Program, which provides grants and loans to local governments for projects that reuse contaminated properties and provide economic benefit to the community while protecting human health and the environment. The size and number of grants awarded under the \$10 million grant program will be modeled from the EGLE Brownfield Program's current grant policies and will be designed to overcome current deployment barriers while maximizing greenhouse gas emissions reductions and community benefits. The CPRG funding will allow EGLE to hire a program manager to run the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program and provide technical assistance. This initiative is of particular interest to low-income and disadvantaged communities (LIDACs) and urban centers where renewable energy on brownfields can create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and revitalize land.

To support these two measures, EGLE will hire the necessary staff to support the expansion of the RRC Awards, develop and launch the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program, and provide technical assistance through the Renewable Energy Academy. The RRC Program will be in EGLE’s Energy Services Section, and the program manager hired to run the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program will be in EGLE’s Remediation and Redevelopment Division’s Brownfield Program. EGLE is currently developing the Renewable Energy Academy to provide modest technical assistance and educational materials to complement the RRC Awards pilot. The CPRG funds will expand programming beyond what is possible with existing funding by providing staff to support the Renewable Energy Academy, create materials and community engagement tools on planning and zoning for renewables with a focus on LIDACs, and create technical assistance materials for the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program. Staff will develop marketing strategies for both the RRC Awards and the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program grants and will pay particular attention to promoting and supporting these programs in LIDACs. Finally, at least one staff person will focus on providing technical assistance to Tribes in Michigan.

To support the ambitious efforts of the RRC Program, EGLE will also provide subaward support to workforce development programs in EGLE or through the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO). These may include [apprenticeship programs](#) related to the renewable energy sector and partnerships with the MI Energy Workforce Development Consortium, Center for Energy Workforce Development, Michigan Works!, and the Workforce Development Institute through the Michigan branch of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). EGLE will also subaward the University of Michigan’s [Center for EmPowering Communities](#), in the Graham Sustainability Institute, to develop technical assistance materials. The Center integrates leading-edge social science research with technology design, community engagement, and policymaking to foster decarbonization solutions that advance community goals. The Center is run by Dr. Sarah Mills, a nationally recognized expert in energy policy and land use planning. The Center has experience working with communities across Michigan as they consider energy in their land use planning, zoning, and other policymaking. A letter of commitment from the Center for EmPowering Communities is included in this application.

In the first year of the RRC Program, EGLE will contract support to develop the Renewables Ready Communities Strategic Plan, to assess where and how the state should direct efforts for utility-scale renewable energy projects and brownfield renewable energy projects to meet 2030 goals. This strategic plan will provide technical analysis and aid in RRC Program development.

Tables 1 and 2 detail the major tasks, milestones, and underlying assumptions of this proposal. Table 1 is for GHG reduction Measure 1 (the RRC Awards), and Table 2 is for GHG reduction Measure 2 (the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program). Table 3 lists potential risks that could occur throughout the grant period and relevant risk mitigation strategies. EGLE does not anticipate that these risks will lead to delays or interruptions in the implementation of these reduction measures or impact their overall effectiveness, given the risk mitigation strategies identified in Table 3.

Table 1: Tasks and Milestones for Measure 1, Renewables Ready Communities Awards

Task #	Task Description	Anticipated Milestones	Assumptions
EPA	<i>Notification of Funding Selection</i>	<i>July 2024</i>	

1	RRC Program Pre-Planning Phase: -Develop position descriptions -Develop criteria for the RRC Awards additional incentive for LIDACs -Evaluate 2024 RRC Awards (ongoing pilot project) for lessons learned, develop second round of the RRC Awards Request for Proposals based on evaluation	October 2024	Relevant EGLE offices work together to plan for the RRC Awards based on the ongoing 2024 RRC Awards pilot.
EPA	<i>Anticipated Award</i>	<i>Oct. 2024</i>	
2	Establish the RRC Program -Hire RRC Program staff -Develop marketing and outreach for RRC Awards -Train staff to run the Renewable Energy Academy -Subaward the University of Michigan's Center for Empowering Communities to develop technical assistance materials -Subaward to State of Michigan workforce development program -Contract support to develop Renewables Ready Communities Strategic Plan in Year 1 -Contract support for regional outreach, engagement, and technical assistance for RRC Awards	November/ December 2024	Funds received from EPA and distributed to EGLE.
3	RRC Awards – Round 1 -Publish Round 1 RRC Awards Request for Proposals -Award on rolling basis through Fall 2025	November/ December 2024	RFP for ongoing 2024 pilot project closes in Fall 2024.
4	Renewable Energy Academy technical assistance materials developed, including: -Planning and zoning materials specific for LIDACs -Community Benefits Mediation Services training local government staff, EGLE staff, etc.	April 2025	EGLE staff and contract support are trained to deliver technical assistance.
5	Ongoing RRC Program Support -Contracted regional outreach support assist RRC Program Staff to conduct planning and zoning outreach, education, and engagement and other technical assistance to local governments and Tribes -Marketing and communications -Subaward support to State of Michigan workforce development program and Center for EmPowering Communities (University of Michigan)	Ongoing, once program is launched and through end of CPRG grant period	EGLE staff will adjust any technical assistance, trainings, outreach, and engagement as needed to best provide support to local governments, Tribes, and LIDACs.
6	RRC Awards – Awardee Semiannual Reports -RRC Awards will be disbursed in two amounts: upon project construction and upon project operation. After the first disbursement, the use of the award will be subject to semiannual reporting to EGLE. RRC Awards will be awarded on a rolling basis with Requests for Proposals updated annually. Awardees should ensure projects are operational by Fall 2029. Projects are projected to take 2-3 years from start to finish.	Semiannual, Spring 2025 through end of grant period	EGLE will use these semiannual reports to track progress on permitted projects as well as use of funds by award recipients. It is assumed projects will be operational by Fall 2029.

7	Semiannual Reports to EPA -EGLE submits semiannual reports to EPA. Reports will summarize technical progress, accomplishments, milestones achieved, track program metrics, detail outputs and outcomes (community engagement, progress on job quality, etc.), summary of expenditures to date, and description of planned activities for next six months.	Semiannual, from Spring 2025 through end of grant period	These semiannual reports should alert EGLE staff to performance measures that are lagging.
8	RRC Awards Round 2 -Evaluate and adjust the Request for Proposals for RRC Awards Year 2 -Assess technical assistance, community engagement, and marketing needs for Year 2	Fall 2025	Year 1 funds fully allocated to awardees.
9	RRC Awards Round 3 -Evaluate and adjust the Request for Proposals for RRC Awards -Assess technical assistance, community engagement, and marketing needs for Year 3	Fall 2026	Year 2 funds fully allocated to awardees.
10	RRC Awards Year 4 -Provide necessary technical assistance, community engagement, and other support as needed to ensure RRC Awards are fully disbursed by Fall 2029	Fall 2027	Permitted projects face few obstacles in construction and are operational by 2029.
11	RRC Awards Year 5 -Provide necessary technical assistance, community engagement, and other support as needed to ensure RRC Awards are fully disbursed by Fall 2029	Fall 2028	Permitted projects face few obstacles in construction and are operational by 2029.
12	EGLE submits Final Report to EPA -Final report will summarize accomplishments, report on program metrics that describe outputs and outcomes (community engagement, job quality, etc.), final expenditures, and more.	Fall 2029, or within 120 days of completion of period of performance	Renewable energy projects hosted by RRC Awardees are complete and operational.

Table 2: Tasks and Milestones for Measure 2, Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program

Task #	Task Description	Anticipated Milestones	Assumptions
<i>EPA</i>	<i>Notification of Funding Selection</i>	<i>July 2024</i>	
1	Program Pre-Planning phase for Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program -Develop position description for program manager -Research and plan the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program	October 2024	Relevant EGLE offices work together to plan the Brownfield Program Renewable Energy Pilot Program.
<i>EPA</i>	<i>Anticipated Award</i>	<i>Oct. 2024</i>	

2	Establish Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program -Hire program manager -Subaward the University of Michigan's Center for EmPowering Communities to develop brownfield technical assistance -Contract support to develop Renewables Ready Communities Strategic Plan, specifically to create the state strategy for encouraging renewables energy and energy storage on brownfields	November 2024	Funds received from EPA and distributed to EGLE.
3	Renewable Energy Academy technical assistance materials developed, including: -Guidebook on developing brownfield renewable energy projects -Materials on community engagement for brownfield renewable energy projects -Materials tailored to Tribal and LIDAC needs	April 2025	EGLE staff are properly trained to deliver technical assistance and community engagement.
4	Launch Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program Year 1 Grant Application -Promote the Pilot Program across the state focusing outreach on LIDACs and Tribes -Provide technical assistance to local governments and Tribes -Launch grant application process, accept Pilot Program grant applications on rolling basis	April 2025	Rely on existing EGLE Brownfield Program grant policies in Pilot Program grant design and administration.
5	Ongoing Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program Support -Technical assistance to local governments and Tribes -Outreach and engagement to local governments and Tribes -Marketing and communications -Subaward support to Center for EmPowering Communities (University of Michigan)	Ongoing, once program is launched and through end of CPRG grant period	EGLE staff will adjust any technical assistance, trainings, outreach and engagement to best provide support to local governments, Tribes, and LIDACs.
6	Quarterly Reports from grantees to EGLE -Pilot Program grant recipients complete quarterly reports by following Brownfield Program grant policies. Reports will include progress on project outputs and outcomes and a summary of anticipated work for the following quarter. Grantees will submit invoices for reimbursement to EGLE.	Quarterly, Spring 2025 through end of grant period	The established reporting protocols for the Brownfield Program grants are sufficient for the Pilot Program.
7	Semiannual Reports to EPA -EGLE submits semiannual report to EPA to summarize technical progress, accomplishments, milestones achieved, track program metrics, detail outputs and outcomes (community engagement, progress on job	Semiannual, from Spring 2025 through end of grant period	These semiannual reports should alert EGLE staff to performance measures that are lagging.

	quality, etc.), summary of expenditures to date, and description of planned activities for next six months.		
8	Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program Year 2 Grant Application -Make necessary adjustments and identify outreach and technical assistance needs for Year 2 of the Pilot -Accept Pilot Program grant applications on rolling basis	Winter/ Spring 2026	Year 1 grant funds fully allocated. Funded projects face few obstacles in project construction.
9	Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program Years 3-5 -Provide necessary technical assistance to ensure the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program allocated grants are fully disbursed by CPRG grant program period end. Funded projects are expected to be complete by Fall 2029.	Winter 2027-Fall 2029	Year 2 grant funds fully allocated. Funded projects face few obstacles in project construction.
10	EGLE submits Final Report to EPA -Final report will summarize accomplishments, report on program metrics that describe outputs and outcomes (community engagement, job quality, etc.), final expenditures, and more.	Fall 2029, or within 120 days of completion of period of performance	Pilot Program grants are fully disbursed by Fall 2029, funded projects are complete and operational.

Table 3: Potential Risks for Measures 1 and 2

Risk	Effect on GHG emission reductions	Mitigation Strategy
Community opposition: Siting utility-scale renewable energy can be a contentious issue in communities.	Delays may reduce cumulative GHG emission reductions in the near-term (2025 – 2030).	The RRC Program will work to proactively engage and educate local governments before they are approached by renewable energy developers or as early in the process as possible. This develops trust and provides local governments the necessary technical assistance, tools, and resources to encourage early and meaningful public engagement in their communities in zoning and permitting processes.
Supply chain: Materials for solar panels and wind turbines are subject to price volatility. Rising demand for the materials combined with external factors can potentially reduce availability, increase prices.	Delays may reduce cumulative GHG emission reductions in the near-term (2025 – 2030).	In the short term, the RRC Program will remain flexible enough to account for potential supply chain issues. In the longer term, the State of Michigan, through initiatives like the “Make it in Michigan Advanced Manufacturing and Clean Tech Competitiveness Fund,” is bringing manufacturing in the clean energy sector to Michigan to help address this challenge.
Workforce: Demand for workers in the renewable energy construction industry	Delays may reduce cumulative GHG emission reductions in the	EGLE will partner closely with labor organizations throughout the RRC Program and will provide subawards to existing State of Michigan workforce development programs. LEO

is much higher than the available talent.	near-term (2025 – 2030).	is creating an office to help transition workers affected by the energy transition. These combined efforts will help address the potential renewable energy industry worker shortage by providing the resources necessary to train/retrain workers and find them high-quality jobs in clean energy industries.
Brownfields: Siting renewables on brownfields pose unique challenges because of higher costs, fears of liability, and in some cases, ongoing environmental cleanups.	Delays may reduce cumulative GHG emission reductions in the near-term (2025 – 2030).	By developing a state-specific program with \$10 million to award in grants and technical assistance support, costs and other challenges to renewable energy brownfield development will be reduced. EGLE will follow best practices promoted by the EPA’s “RE-Powering America’s Land” initiative.

Michigan’s Priority Climate Action Plan

Both measures in this grant proposal, the RRC Awards and the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program, are supported by [“Implementing the MI Healthy Climate Plan: Michigan’s Priority Climate Action Plan”](#) (Michigan’s PCAP). Reduction Measure #1 of Michigan’s PCAP is: “Drive clean energy deployment including improving siting for renewable energy and energy storage across Michigan, including on brownfields and former industrial sites and emphasizing equitable access for Michigan’s LIDACs.” By deploying clean energy to Michigan’s electric grid, this PCAP reduction measure will create significant emission reductions across multiple sectors of the economy. Michigan’s electric power sector emitted 58.2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent from the burning of fossil fuels making it one of Michigan’s largest sources of emissions. As other sectors electrify, such as transportation and heating for buildings, the resource mix for generating electricity will play a transformational role in meeting Michigan’s decarbonization goals.

Michigan’s PCAP analyzed the state’s 50 percent renewable energy standard by 2030 and found it would have significant impacts. Given the analysis in Michigan’s PCAP, and previous analysis for the MI Healthy Climate Plan, EGLE determined it is possible to reach the more ambitious MI Healthy Climate Plan goal of 60 percent by 2030 with CPRG funding. An important consideration of the 2023 legislation is that utilities can downscale the implementation of renewable energy projects should the 50 percent renewable energy goal prove too difficult to accomplish. However, the efforts of the RRC Program could prevent utilities from downscaling efforts and prevent a shift back to fossil fuels. Beyond ensuring the achievement of the 50 percent renewable energy standard, the RRC Program also applies to projects built pursuant to voluntary green pricing programs (where a customer elects to pay a premium to ensure their electricity comes from renewable energy above and beyond that required by law). The 60 percent goal keeps the State of Michigan on track to meet science-based targets and the state’s longer-term goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. As of 2023, approximately 12 percent of Michigan’s electric grid is made up of renewable energy, including 966 MW of solar and 3580 MW of wind.² As detailed in the Technical Appendix of this application, the State of Michigan estimates that approximately 16,475 additional MW of renewable energy and 743 MW of energy storage need to be incentivized via the RRC Program to reach 60 percent renewable energy by 2030.

² [Electricity Data Browser | U.S. Energy Information Administration | 2024](#)

The measures in this grant application will advance the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) CPRG goals as follows:

1. Achieve significant cumulative GHG reductions by 2030. The RRC Awards will incentivize the local permitting and hosting of the necessary utility-scale renewable energy projects, approximately 16,475 MW of wind and solar and 743 MW of energy storage, to help achieve 60 percent renewable energy by 2030. The Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program will create a model for siting renewable energy projects (which may include energy storage) on brownfields, transforming the renewable energy potential for contaminated lands across Michigan.
2. Both measures will provide substantial community benefits, particularly for LIDACs. Utility-scale and brownfield renewable energy projects will create jobs and encourage economic growth, which will be especially beneficial in municipalities with high unemployment and lower incomes. The RRC Awards will provide municipalities with funding to invest in public goods and services. The renewable energy projects will lead to a reduction in co-pollutants and improvement in air quality in Michigan. Improvements in air quality, particularly for LIDACs near currently operating power plants or those with legacy fossil-fuel pollution, can lead to positive health outcomes including fewer respiratory issues, improved health and well-being, and fewer hospitalizations and lost workdays.
3. The proposed incentive awards for renewable energy projects complement other federal and state funding sources to maximize both GHG reductions and local community benefits. While the existing programs and tax credits help mitigate market barriers, they do not address siting. The proposed technical assistance helps local governments develop the appropriate zoning and permitting processes to become viable locations for renewable energy projects that can then access those other incentive programs. The RRC Awards incentivize local governments to approve proposed projects.
4. Finally, the efforts of the RRC Program can be replicable and scaled across similar jurisdictions to help drive renewable energy deployment across the country. During the grant period, the early success of municipalities that participate in the RRC Awards or the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program will encourage other Michigan municipalities to welcome renewable energy development. The RRC Program will demonstrate a way for other states to accelerate the siting, zoning, and permitting of renewable energy.

1.b. Demonstration of Funding Need

CPRG implementation funding is necessary to fully implement the proposed GHG reduction measures. EGLE explored other federal and state funds and tax incentives, but these avenues are not sufficient to fully achieve the 17,218 MW of renewable energy projects needed by 2030 (16,475 MW of wind and solar, 743 MW of energy storage).

Table 4: Funding Sources Examined in Connection to Measure 1, RRC Awards

Funding Source	Funding Status	Need for CPRG funding
State of Michigan one-time budget allocation (FY 2024)	EGLE has a one-time budget allocation of \$30 million for the RRC Awards pilot program, which launched in 2024. This funding is solely for the financial incentives, not staff support or workforce development.	One-time budget allocation is insufficient to reach 60 percent renewable energy by 2030 goal.

Renewable Energy Siting through Technical Engagement and Planning (R-STEP)	State of Michigan applied for the R-STEP program to support communities in siting renewables. The R-STEP application proposes to consolidate all resources, services, and experts relevant to energy planning and zoning into a one-stop-shop at EGLE called the Renewable Energy Academy. The R-STEP application requested funds for one staff position within EGLE to run the Renewable Energy Academy.	R-STEP funds would not sufficiently support the development of all needed technical assistance, nor would it sufficiently staff the Renewable Energy Academy. Funds from the CPRG would not be used for activities that would be duplicative with the R-STEP funding and would be used to expand and complement R-STEP funding.
Solar for All through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund	If the State of Michigan is awarded the Solar for All funds, it would focus on distributed renewable energy projects, specifically rooftop solar and community-serving solar for low-income households.	The Solar for All funds would not be duplicative to the CPRG funding request. There would be no overlap in the projects funded through either program.
Federal Tax Credits	For renewable energy projects certain tax credits (§45Y, §48E) are available if the project meets all the necessary criteria, with values ranging from 6 percent of the taxable value of a project to as much as 70 percent of the taxable value of a project.	Tax incentives will make projects more cost-effective but that does not solve the challenge of permitting projects at the local level. The tax incentives are insufficient on their own to solve the challenges this proposal seeks to address.
Solar payment-in-lieu-of tax arrangement (PILT) legislation	Passed in 2023, Public Acts 108 and 109 allow local governments and commercial solar energy developments to opt into solar PILT, which allows those governments to take payments of \$7,000 per MW of nameplate capacity, depending on facility type, rather than taxes. For projects sited on brownfields, the payments are \$2,000 per MW of nameplate capacity.	Solar PILT is only applicable to solar projects. Solar PILT provides local governments with more predictable and stable revenue, but it is not a notable difference in local revenue from previous tax revenue and in some cases is less than local governments would have received. While complementary to the measures included in this proposal, the solar PILT is insufficient on its own in driving local siting of renewables.
MPSC siting process includes community host payment	PA 233 streamlines the siting process for large-scale wind, solar, and storage projects by allowing the MPSC to review proposed projects if a local government does not establish a compatible ordinance. PA 233 requires developers to pay localities \$2,000 per MW in community benefits agreements if the MPSC process is utilized.	The RRC Award is meant to incentivize local permitting by offering a greater financial award than the MPSC process, which also saves the developer money. The financial incentives of the MPSC process are mutually exclusive of the RRC Awards.

The goal of Measure 1, to zone, permit, and site 16,475 MW of renewable energy and 743 MW of energy storage, will not be implementable without CPRG funding. With the 2024 RRC Awards pilot program, the one-time budget allocation is expected to incentivize approximately 5,000 MW of renewable energy (3,351 MW) and energy storage (1,571 MW) projects. With CPRG funding, EGLE estimates the RRC Awards will incentivize more than four times the MWs of renewable energy sited through the 2024 pilot, enabling Michigan to reach the critical goal of 60 percent renewable energy by 2030. The CPRG funds will fully staff the proposed Renewable Energy Academy to deliver much-needed technical assistance across the state. While the tax credits will reduce costs of utility-scale projects, these alone have not significantly made permitting and siting of renewable energy easier. Since community buy-in is a critical part of siting renewables, the RRC Awards’ focus on local permitting and direct community payments will encourage new hosts to step forward, accelerating the overall trajectory of renewables in Michigan.

Table 5: Funding Sources Examined in Connection to Measure 2, Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program

Funding Source	Funding Status	Need for CPRG funding
EGLE Brownfield Program Financial Incentives	1. Grants and loans to promote the re-use of contaminated sites. 2. Brownfield Site Assessments at no cost to facilitate brownfield redevelopment (with funds from EPA and State of Michigan’s “Renew Michigan Grant”). 3. Michigan Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act of 1996 authorized tax increment financing as a funding tool to help cover associated costs with redeveloping a brownfield.	These funds do not specifically encourage renewable energy on brownfields and capital costs for renewable energy projects are not an eligible activity for the grants or loans program.
EPA State and Tribal Response Program Grants	Michigan received funding from Brownfield categorical grants.	These funds do not specifically encourage renewable energy on brownfields.
Federal and State Incentives	Like the RRC Awards, the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot will be able to take advantage of the two listed federal tax credits (§45Y, §48E). The solar PILT for brownfields in Michigan is \$2,000 per MW of capacity for projects greater than 2 MW.	These funds and tax credits alone have not encouraged renewable energy on brownfields.

It is difficult to encourage renewables on brownfields without brownfield grants dedicated to renewable projects, technical assistance tailored to the unique challenges of renewable energy on brownfields, and project staff to plan and administer the program. Funds from the CPRG will enable EGLE to create a focused program that incentivizes brownfield renewable energy projects that would not occur otherwise.

EGLE acknowledges the EPA’s intention to not fund the same measure in the same location and commits to ensuring projects pursuant to both measures proposed in this application do not receive funding from more than one CPRG implementation grant award within Michigan. Any project funded with other CPRG implementation funds in Michigan will not be eligible to receive CPRG incentive awards or grants through the RRC Program.

1.c. Transformative Impact

EGLE's RRC Program will create transformative impacts that lead to significant GHG emission reductions. The RRC Program measures will transform and accelerate the rate of clean energy deployment, reduce significant GHG emissions, provide substantial community benefits, and further the impact of all other decarbonization efforts in Michigan. Siting renewable energy is the most urgent effort needed to reduce GHG emissions. By decarbonizing the electric grid through siting renewables, other decarbonization goals for transportation, buildings, and industry become more attainable. The efforts of the proposed RRC Program, through the RRC Awards and the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot, will streamline renewable energy siting by incentivizing the local permitting and hosting of projects that will be replicable and scalable across Michigan.

The RRC Awards will accelerate deployment of renewable energy across the state, thereby providing jobs, increasing local tax revenue and granting local governments additional funding, and delivering environmental benefits. The additional LIDAC incentive and targeted technical assistance will help LIDACs overcome obstacles that limit their ability to take part in renewable energy planning and siting processes and maximize the community benefits that can be attained through renewable energy projects. The technical assistance provided by the RRC Program's Renewable Energy Academy will encourage early and meaningful public participation and equitable access in the planning and zoning process. The Renewable Energy Academy aims to develop a pipeline of municipalities fully prepared to permit and host renewable energy projects upon a project's proposal.

The EPA's RE-Powering America's Land initiative emphasizes the need for state-specific programs that encourage renewable energy development on potentially contaminated land. States with a dedicated brownfield renewable energy program have more solar capacity installed on contaminated land than states without programs.³ The CPRG funds are the mechanism that will allow EGLE's Brownfield Program to dedicate time, funding, and staff capacity to developing a state-specific program. The pilot program will be catalytic, creating examples of brownfield renewable energy developments that can be replicated across underutilized lands statewide. The Pilot Program also increases the types of communities that can participate in renewable energy projects, especially in urban areas where available land is limited. As a result of the CPRG funds, EGLE's Brownfield Program will be able to build long-lasting programmatic capacity to support renewable energy projects on brownfields. Currently, Michigan has four RE-Powering projects, and with CPRG funding, the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program anticipates developing at least ten brownfields with renewable energy, more than tripling the current number of projects.

Section 2: Impact of GHG Reduction Measures

Table 6 below provides an estimate of the cumulative emission reductions in metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (mtCO₂e) anticipated from the implementation of the RRC Program for two time periods: 2025 to 2030 and 2025 to 2050. Details on quantification methods are included in the Technical Appendix, which explains the methodology and assumptions used to develop the estimated GHG emission reductions associated with each measure. These calculations consider the direct impact of the two measures on the electric power sector. However, as other sectors electrify, renewable energy projects sited in accordance with this proposal will likely aid in further fossil fuel displacement in buildings, transportation, and industry, yielding a greater amount of emissions reductions than the estimates in Table 6.

³ [RE-Powering America's Land | EPA | 2024](#)

Table 6: Cumulative GHG Emission Reductions Anticipated from Implementation of Measures 1 & 2

GHG Reduction Measures	Cumulative GHG emission reductions, electricity sector (mt CO ₂ e)	
	2025–2030	2025–2050
Measure 1: Renewables Ready Communities Awards	77,104,073.88	455,549,689.69
Measure 2: Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program	6,096.28	30,481.41
Total	77,110,170.16	455,580,171.10

These conservative estimates find that the RRC Program will reduce over 77,110,170 mtCO₂e by 2030 and 455,580,171 mtCO₂e by 2050 in the electricity sector alone. The estimate only includes the GHG reductions attributable to the CPRG grant. It is assumed that the renewable energy projects that result from the RRC Awards and Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program grants will qualify for a 30 percent tax credit through Section 48 (and 48E) of the U.S. Tax Code, five times the six percent base rate because projects should meet prevailing wage and apprenticeship requirements. As explained in the Technical Appendix, EGLE attributes 70 percent of the emission reductions from the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program (Measure 2) to the CPRG funds, assuming all projects will also qualify for the 30 percent federal tax credit. The RRC Awards (Measure 1) emission reductions were calculated with the RMI Energy Policy Simulator (EPS) tool which assumes an increased adoption of renewable energy in the business-as-usual scenario (BAU) due to federal tax incentives such as those provided by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). Because the BAU scenario already includes IRA tax incentives, the scenario modeled for the RRC Awards accounts for the difference in renewable energy uptake due directly to the CPRG funds and does not take credit for renewable energy uptake or the resulting emissions reductions expected to result from the IRA tax incentives.

The RRC Program will result in a permanent reduction in GHG emissions. For one, there are no foreseeable issues with the lifespan of renewable energy technologies. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) expects the average lifespan of a PV module to be 30-35 years, and expected lifespan of wind turbines is 30 years.^{4,5} Secondly, due to the significant time, cost, and resource investment of developing renewable energy systems and supporting development of the corresponding workforce, it is extremely unlikely that utilities and other entities would return to higher emitting technologies and practices after disbursement of CPRG funds. Therefore, both measures will have durable emission reduction impacts.

The implementation of the proposal is highly cost effective. The cost effectiveness of the cumulative reduction measures for the period 2025-2030 is \$1.67 per ton of CO₂e, and \$0.28 per ton of CO₂e reduced for the period 2025-2050. For more details on the costs of each measure, please refer to the Budget Narrative and Budget Spreadsheet included in this application. The cost effectiveness of the proposal could be affected by changes to the RRC Awards amount, disruptions to supply chains, and unforeseen costs associated with the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program, as detailed in Table 3, “Potential Risks for Measures 1 and 2.” However, EGLE does not anticipate these issues to occur nor have significant impact on the GHG reductions in the near or long-term.

⁴ [Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy | DOE](#)

⁵ [Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy | DOE | 2023](#)

Section 3: Environmental Results – Outputs, Outcomes, and Performance Measures

This proposal supports the EPA’s strategic plan Goal 1, “Tackle the Climate Crisis”; Objective 1.1 “Reduce Emissions that cause Climate Change.” Specifically, these measures will aggressively reduce GHG emissions from the electric power sector and enable use of renewable energy by ambitiously siting, zoning, and permitting renewable energy projects in partnership with local host communities.

3.a. Expected Outputs and Outcomes

Expected outputs for both measures over the five-year grant period include:

- Number of RRC Awards distributed to incentivize an estimated 16,475 MW of utility-scale solar and wind projects.
- Number of RRC Awards distributed to incentivize an estimated 743 MW of energy storage.
- Number of RRC Awards for projects in LIDACs.
- Number of grants awarded through the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program.
- Number of grants awarded through the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program in LIDACs.
- Additional full-time employees or equivalent hired to run the EGLE RRC Program.
- Number of RRC Awards or Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program grants allocated for renewable energy projects in Tribal communities. At least \$10 million of incentives will be reserved for projects in Tribal communities.
- Development of the “Renewables Ready Communities Strategic Plan,” a comprehensive strategy for siting utility-scale renewable energy and brownfield renewable energy in Michigan.
- Technical assistance materials developed for siting, zoning, and permitting renewables in majority LIDAC communities.
- Technical assistance materials developed for siting renewables on brownfields.
- Number of communities participating in offered trainings for siting, zoning, and permitting renewables.
- Environmental risk monitoring: if there is an environmental risk at one of the brownfield sites, the EGLE Remediation and Redevelopment Division will update the Remediation Information Data Exchange database to select a risk level of the property and follow existing protocols.
- Semiannual progress reports.
- Detailed final report.

Expected outcomes of both measures:

- Reduction in cumulative metric tons of GHG emissions in the electric sector:
 - 2025-2030: 77,110,170.16 mtCO₂e
 - 2025-2050: 455,580,171.1 mtCO₂e
- Reduction in annual amount of criteria air pollutant emissions by 2030. These measures are projected to decrease criteria air pollutants including sulfur oxides (SOx), nitrogen oxides (NOx), particulate matter (PM 2.5), and other co-pollutants such as volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO), and ammonia (NH₃). These reductions will improve overall air quality and provide health benefits. It is anticipated that these co-pollutant reductions will improve air quality in LIDACs, however the calculations in Table 7 below are estimated statewide reductions. See the Technical Appendix for more details.

Table 7: Criteria Air Pollutants and other Co-Pollutant Cumulative Reductions

Co-pollutant	Cumulative metric tons 2025-2030	Cumulative metric tons 2025-2050
SOx	30,425.12 mt	157,758.86 mt
NOx	30,039.87 mt	181,652.68 mt

PM 2.5	6,709.70 mt	28,038.80 mt
VOCs	2,181.54 mt	9,319.94 mt
CO (RRC Awards Only)*	15,119.62 mt	92,661.24 mt
NH3 (Brownfields Only)*	0.16 mt	0.79 mt

**Note: As explained in the Technical Appendix, the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program emission reductions were calculated with the EPA AVOIDed Emissions and geneRation Tool (AVERT), which does not calculate reductions for CO. The RRC Awards emission reductions were calculated with the RMI Energy Policy Simulator (EPS) tool, which does not calculate reductions for NH3.*

- Increased staff capacity for EGLE to implement GHG Reduction measures, including administering the RRC Awards, the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program, and providing technical assistance to local governments.
- Enhanced level of community engagement for renewable energy projects, as measured by the number of actions to engage local governments, organizations, the public at large and residents of disadvantaged communities, etc.
- Number of high-quality jobs created through the siting of renewable energy projects.
- Number of zoning ordinances enacted to facilitate siting renewables.
- Number of permits granted to renewable energy projects.
- Number of Tribal renewable energy projects developed.
- Number of brownfields developed with renewable energy projects.
- Number of MW of solar, wind, and energy storage installed by 2030.
- Achieving the MI Healthy Climate Plan goal of 60 percent renewable energy by 2030.

3.b. Performance Measures and Plan

The following performance measures will track progress towards expected outputs and outcomes.

- Number of RRC Awards disbursed, including tracking and reporting on awardees and the full and partial award expenditure.
- Number of Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program grants awarded, including tracking and reporting on grantee expenditure.
- Benefits to LIDACs, including co-pollutant changes that are quantifiable, number of quality-jobs created, economic benefits, number of community engagements, etc.
- Annual total MW of solar installed and total number of projects sited.
- Annual total MW of wind installed and total number of projects sited.
- Annual total MW of energy storage installed and total number of projects sited.
- Total number of localities that benefit from incentive awards and grants, noting how many are LIDACs or an IRA energy community.
- Annual GHG emission reductions, as well co-pollutant reductions.

EGLE will track progress for each of the listed performance measures through semiannual reports. The disbursement of the RRC Awards and the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program grants will be tracked based on existing processes in EGLE. The RRC Award pilot uses semiannual reports to track progress on projects that are awarded incentives. Projects will likely be awarded the first half of the financial award upon commencement of project construction and the remaining funds will be disbursed upon project operation. The Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program will track progress on awarded grants through quarterly reports required by the Brownfield Redevelopment grants program.

3.c. Authorities, Implementation Timeline, and Milestones

The State of Michigan has existing legislative and regulatory authority to implement these measures without additional action. Both proposed measures are voluntary and implementation ready. The RRC Awards builds on an existing pilot and the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program will follow existing guidelines for the EGLE Brownfield Redevelopment grants program. In addition to the Michigan state constitution (Const. 1963, Art. V, § 2, Eff. Jan. 1, 1964) which led to the establishment of EGLE, and other relevant laws, the “Clean and Renewable Energy and Energy Waste Reduction Act” – as amended most recently in 2023 – provides authority to implement these measures along with PA 3 of 1939 – as amended most recently in 2023 – which provides the authority for the Michigan Public Service Commission to regulate investor-owned utilities in the state.

To implement these measures, additional financial support may be necessary. The State of Michigan has the authority to receive and accept “any grant, devise, bequest, donation, gift or assignment of money, bonds or choses in action, or of any property, real or personal” per MCL §§ 21.161. In addition, MCL §§ 18.1384 authorizes EGLE to follow state budget processes to apply for and receive and appropriate federal funds.

For more information, Section 1.a. details the implementation timeline for each measure, along with milestones and responsible parties.

Section 4: Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities

Based on the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), the State of Michigan has 996 census tracts that are identified as disadvantaged, representing 35 percent of Michigan communities. Based on data in the EPA’s EJScreen, excluding the census tracts identified as disadvantaged by CEJST, an additional 661 census block groups are considered disadvantaged because they are in the 90th percentile for any of EJScreen’s Supplemental Indexes when compared to the national and state average. Finally, 100 census block groups in Michigan are within tribal lands according to EJScreen. Attached to this proposal is a list of all LIDAC census tracts and block groups affected by this proposal, as identified by CEJST and the EPA EJScreen national and state percentiles and geographic area within tribal lands.

4.a. Community Benefits

The RRC Program and its two GHG measures will deliver substantial economic, environmental, and health benefits to LIDACs. The impacts of this proposal on LIDACs, as defined by EPA, will be both statewide and local to where renewable energy projects are sited. Statewide, any effort to mitigate climate change and drastically reduce GHG emissions will greatly benefit communities particularly vulnerable to climate impacts, especially LIDACs that increasingly face risks related to flooding, extreme heat, and air quality issues. In the near term, this grant proposal will improve air quality in Michigan by reducing reliance in the electric power sector on fossil fuel sources such as coal-fired power plants and natural gas. Section 3 discusses how the RRC Program will likely reduce criteria air pollutants and other co-pollutants across the state. Better air quality can lead to improved health outcomes including fewer respiratory issues, hospitalizations, and lost workdays. LIDACs with higher rates of chronic disease will also see health benefits from air quality improvements.

There are additional community benefits for localities that site renewable energy projects through the RRC Awards or Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program grants. While these benefits will be true across localities that participate in either reduction measure, the benefits will be especially impactful in communities that are a majority LIDAC. Benefits from approving and hosting renewable energy projects include an increase in local tax revenue, creation of good-paying jobs, and an increased sense of community cohesion for projects with equitable community engagement.

For the local government recipients of the RRC Awards, the financial awards can support various public services or projects. RRC Awards are encouraged to be used on projects that benefit the whole community, such as repairing roads, adding broadband access, amenities such as a new park or community center, etc. Most utility-scale renewable energy projects in Michigan will occur in rural areas, some of which experience high rates of unemployment and whose local governments are lower-resourced. CEJST census tracts in rural Michigan are often recognized as IRA Energy Communities, which means the communities either had/have a coal plant closure or meet the Fossil Fuel Employment threshold and have high unemployment rates. Wind, solar, and energy storage projects create short-term construction jobs and longer-term employment in the maintenance and operation of the projects. For example, utility-scale wind projects in Michigan create an estimated seven to 11 full time jobs per 100 MW, so a 200 MW windfarm could provide 14-22 local jobs.⁶ Throughout the RRC Program, efforts will be made to encourage local workforce development and local hiring.

Additionally, the RRC Awards and the Renewable Energy Academy offers additional support and incentives to ensure all LIDACs, rural and urban, receive the benefits of the State's clean energy transition. Through a subaward to the University of Michigan's Center for EmPowering Communities, EGLE anticipates creating a training for public officials and local government staff to learn how to negotiate community benefit agreements with renewable energy developers. This will aim to maximize returns a community may realize from hosting renewable energy. Oftentimes, under-resourced local governments are unable to secure the maximum benefits possible because of limited knowledge and understanding of the benefit possibilities. The RRC Awards also provide additional incentives to local unit(s) of government that approve and host utility-scale renewable energy projects whose communities are a majority LIDAC, as discussed in section 1.a. The \$15 million budgeted for the RRC Awards additional LIDAC incentives will provide an increased dollars-per-MW incentive and may allow for a lower eligible MW threshold for projects located in LIDACs, to help address challenges LIDACs face in adopting renewable energy.

For the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program, an added benefit of renewable energy on contaminated lands is an improvement in the aesthetics and quality of the local environment. Around 492 census tracts in Michigan are in the EJScreen 90th national percentile for proximity to underground storage tanks and 125 census tracts for Superfund proximity. While brownfields are found throughout Michigan, many brownfields are in urban areas and LIDACs. Encouraging renewable energy on brownfields increases the number of communities that can benefit in locally siting renewable energy, and the jobs and local tax revenue benefits these projects bring. According to the EPA's RE-Powering America's Land Initiative, around 14 percent of all RE-Powering projects report job creation.⁷ Technical assistance and workforce development programs can help projects create pre-apprentice job-training and placement programs, which help residents participate in local projects. This was done in the development of the O'Shea Solar Park in Detroit.⁸ Finally, cleaning up a brownfield for renewable energy provides numerous environmental benefits and turns blight into an economic opportunity.

EGLE does not foresee potential disbenefits or negative consequences of the RRC Program to LIDACs. However, to try to mitigate any potential unintended negative consequences the program will provide extensive technical assistance, support stakeholder engagement processes, and use reporting mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the RRC Program's progress. To ensure that majority LIDAC

⁶ [Clean Energy in Michigan | University of Michigan | 2020](#)

⁷ [RE-Powering America's Land Initiative Benefits Matrix | EPA | March 2023](#)

⁸ [Clean Energy in Michigan | University of Michigan | 2020](#)

communities equally participate in and benefit from the RRC Awards, the Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program grants, and the Renewable Energy Academy, performance measures will track and evaluate program progress, as described in Section 3.b. For example, semiannual reports will track the types of communities that are awarded RRC Awards and Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program grants, including localities that are majority LIDAC. Further tracking will measure progress on the number of high-quality jobs created, the financial benefits realized, the estimated co-pollutant and criteria air pollutant reductions, and other qualitative and quantitative benefits. The program intends to focus marketing, outreach, and technical assistance to LIDACs through both the RRC Awards and Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program grants. If semiannual reports indicate that LIDACs are not receiving at least 40 percent of the financial benefits, the program will be flexible enough to find ways to increase program participation in LIDACs.

4.b. Community Engagement

EGLE conducted extensive community outreach and engagement during the development of the “Implementing the MI Healthy Climate Plan: Michigan’s Priority Climate Action Plan.” Public feedback was incorporated into the PCAP Reduction Measure #1, related to this proposed program. Community engagement for Michigan’s PCAP built on strategies used in the development of the 2022 MI Healthy Climate Plan. These strategies included leveraging and strengthening existing relationships with advisory groups and local partners as well as additional in-person and virtual input sessions.

LIDAC Input in the State of Michigan Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Process

EGLE regularly meets with the [Michigan Advisory Council on Environmental Justice](#), the [Council on Climate Solutions](#), works with municipalities through the EGLE [Catalyst Communities](#) program, and has strong relationships with regional planning districts, labor unions and associations, and many grassroots and frontline partners, including groups in all regions of Michigan. EGLE consistently meets with all twelve federally recognized Tribal governments in Michigan and through the CPRG PCAP planning process, met bi-weekly with the Tribes that received CPRG Planning grants. Through a CPRG Planning grant subaward to the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, EGLE will continue to engage with Tribes in a meaningful way as the State develops its Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP). Another CPRG Planning grant subaward is to the University of Michigan to help EGLE develop a benefits analysis for LIDACs for the CCAP.

The Michigan PCAP engagement sessions were developed with consideration of EGLE’s core engagement principles including equity, accessibility, transparency, continuous improvement, and a place-based focus. In September 2023, EGLE released a Request for Information (RFI) to get early and wide-ranging feedback on design and process of MI Healthy Climate Plan strategic implementation and meaningful public participation. The feedback received from this RFI was used to develop the methods and objectives of the PCAP regional public input sessions. The five in-person input sessions occurred in November and December of 2023, held in locations across Michigan including Detroit, Grand Rapids, Flint, Marquette, and Petoskey. One additional in-person session was held in Acme to gather specific input from federally recognized Tribes in Michigan during a quarterly Michigan Tribal Environmental Group meeting. EGLE also held two virtual public listening sessions.

The five in-person input session locations were selected with LIDACs at the forefront. Of the six counties with the highest amount of census tracts identified as LIDACs, five of them are within proximity to Detroit and Flint, comprising 55 percent of all census tracts identified by CEJST as LIDACs. The remaining county is Kent County, where the Grand Rapids engagement was held. Petoskey and Marquette also have identified LIDAC census tracts and are identified by the IRA as Energy Communities. EGLE made a deliberate effort to ensure that voices from low-income, disadvantaged, and historically underserved

communities were included in engagement. Environmental justice and accessibility were considered before, during, and after input sessions. EGLE ensured that invitations and registrations for the in-person sessions were shared via an extensive environmental justice contacts listserv along with targeted outreach to trusted messengers and coalitions within LIDAC communities. EGLE also provide a variety of ways and formats for the public to submit comments and feedback.

Sessions were planned to maximize community participation. For example, events were held in the evening from 6-8 p.m. on weekday nights and food and refreshments were provided. Arabic, Spanish, and ASL translation services were advertised in advance of the events, although none were requested. Most locations were chosen with local partners and emphasized access to public transit. Notable partnerships included: the Detroit input session was held at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 58 Zero Net Energy Center in partnership with the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (CPRG Planning Grant MSA recipient); the Grand Rapids input session was held in partnership with the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council (CPRG Planning Grant MSA recipient); and the Flint input session was held at the Michigan State University (MSU) College of Human Medicine in partnership with the MSU Department of Public Health, and Pediatric Public Health Initiative.

At each session, EGLE provided a brief overview of the MI Healthy Climate Plan, and the rest of the time was spent in group activities, developing, and sharing ideas on how to implement the MI Healthy Climate Plan in line with the CPRG program. Virtual listening sessions were designed as an open-forum comment period for Michiganders to discuss any topic as it related to prioritization of measures for inclusion in the PCAP and broader MI Healthy Climate Plan implementation. As a result of the in-person and virtual engagement opportunities, EGLE reached approximately 400 individuals who provided 1,500 comments, project ideas, and feedback. Post-event surveys for the in-person sessions and the virtual listening sessions found that 90 percent of attendees increased their understanding of the MI Healthy Climate Plan. As a final form of public engagement in completing Michigan's PCAP, EGLE released draft PCAP measures for public feedback and received 66 survey responses. Changes were incorporated into the PCAP measures based on this feedback.

For ongoing outreach, EGLE maintains a website on the MI Healthy Climate Plan and associated CPRG activities, which helps make information publicly accessible and increases transparency in planning processes. EGLE updates its website regularly with ways to get involved, key deadlines for input, and CPRG opportunities of interest to community partners. EGLE primarily promotes public engagement opportunities through emails, social media, and through pre-existing relationships with community-based organizations and nonprofits that directly engage community members.

Meaningful Engagement in the Implementation of the RRC Program

In the development and implementation of the proposed GHG reduction measures, EGLE will continue building on engagement successes with Michigan communities with an emphasis on equitable involvement of LIDACs. EGLE's updated [Public Participation Policy](#) and [Language Access Plan](#) guide engagement efforts to include a diversity of linguistic, cultural, institutional, geographic and other perspectives throughout program development and implementation. EGLE adheres to the Statewide Meaningful Language Access Coordination Act of 2023, which requires state departments to take reasonable steps to help Michiganders with limited English proficiency access state services. In general, EGLE provides translation and interpretation services as needed and uses a four-factor analysis to determine if and when language access issues arise. When seeking public input, EGLE offers a variety of opportunities for community members to provide input – from virtual engagements to different types of public meetings – to increase the diversity and reach of Michiganders and stakeholders engaged in EGLE's work. Through the CPRG grant opportunity, EGLE will continue to closely work with the Michigan

Advisory Council on Environmental Justice, Tribal governments in Michigan, and other environmental justice partners, and anticipates forging new partnerships.

In developing the 2024 RRC Awards pilot, EGLE engaged a variety of stakeholders including local officials from municipalities with utility-scale renewable energy projects, renewable energy developers, electric utilities, and staff of the MPSC. Research on the barriers to siting and zoning renewable energy from the University of Michigan's Center for EmPowering Communities also informed the RRC Awards pilot. Initial outreach for the pilot launched in early 2024 and so far, has included a public webinar on the RRC Awards program and email marketing targeted to Michigan Public Service Commission listservs, members of the Michigan Energy Innovation Business Council, Michigan Township Association, Michigan Association of County, Michigan Association of Planning, and Michigan Municipal League. The webinar had over 250 registrants and further outreach is planned.

The CPRG-funded RRC Program will incorporate lessons learned from the 2024 RRC Awards pilot. The success of RRC Awards relies on offering extensive support and early engagement with local governments, so they understand the expectations and rewards of potentially hosting renewables. These early engagements are critical for a successful buildout of renewable energy and will help ensure communities feel satisfied and proud of their efforts. EGLE intends for the RRC Program's Renewable Energy Academy technical assistance and community engagement to be delivered in part through CPRG-funded EGLE staff and through CPRG-contracted outreach and engagement support to ensure state-wide coverage. The Renewable Energy Academy will provide a community-centered approach to proactive education and engagement on siting and planning for renewable energy. For example, the Renewable Energy Academy will provide guidance to municipalities on available zoning pathways and how to best reflect their community's priorities and zoning preferences through municipal renewable energy plans. These offerings are intended to be provided to municipalities that are not currently working with a renewable energy developer to ensure that community conversations and educational sessions can occur prior to a proposed development, increasing transparency throughout the entire process.

Each community holds varying levels of trust in the state government, so having a suite of resources provided by many different organizations through the program could ease community concerns. If awarded R-STEP funds, EGLE intends to partner closely with the Michigan State University Extension network, University of Michigan's Center for EmPowering Communities, the Michigan Association of Planners, and other trusted partners. While the majority of EGLE's outreach will be directly with local governments, EGLE will also provide guidance on how local governments can meaningfully involve the public in the decision-making process around zoning and permitting renewable energy.

The Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program will also involve extensive community engagement. As the EPA RE-Powering America's Land initiative recommends, any state program addressing site reuse for renewable energy needs to coordinate early and consistently with stakeholders. These stakeholders include renewable energy developers, site owners, municipal agencies, regional and local economic development organizations, electric utilities, environmental justice community organizations, and labor organizations, among others. Early and consistent engagement is especially important in LIDACs, where there may be less trust in the government and greater need to put contaminated land back into reuse. The Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program will develop a community engagement guide and all grants awarded will require community engagement throughout the project process. The Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program will build on the success of EGLE's Brownfield Program, which engages with local governments, community groups, and communities throughout the state through regional meetings, trainings, webinars, and workshops. There are Brownfield Redevelopment Program

Coordinators who live and work in each of EGLE's ten District Offices, ensuring outreach coverage to the entire state.

Finally, as a part of the RRC Program, EGLE will reserve \$10 million for either RRC Awards or Brownfield Renewable Energy Pilot Program grants for renewable energy projects in Tribal communities. Close partnerships with Tribal governments and the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan ensures that EGLE and Tribes will work together to successfully disburse the funds to Tribal communities. If selected for R-STEP funding, the EGLE Renewable Energy Academy plans to develop technical assistance for Tribes. Through CPRG funding, EGLE will have the necessary staff to ensure technical assistance reaches Tribal communities. The Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan provided a letter of commitment for this application.

Section 5: Job Quality

To meet the surge in demand for developing renewable energy projects created by this program, Michigan anticipates the need for a significant increase in skilled workers. Key objectives in the MI Healthy Climate Plan are to spur economic development, create good-paying jobs, and position Michigan as a leader in climate action. Workforce development is a critical component on the path to decarbonization. EGLE and the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunities (LEO) support education, outreach, and other training activities that provide Michigan businesses, communities, and citizens with information to make informed climate and energy decisions with special attention being given to energy equity issues.

Through CPRG funding, EGLE will subaward existing workforce development programs that leverage worker-centered training models, pre-apprenticeship, and registered apprenticeship programs to ensure workers are receiving the necessary skills to meet the growing demand for renewable energy workers. These programs may offer industry-specific training as well as education on standards and safety procedures. To ensure high-quality jobs and workforce participation from LIDAC participants, Michigan aims to expand equitable access to recruit workers through targeted outreach with trusted, local community partners, train workers in market-leading, worker-focused training and apprenticeship programs, place workers in high-quality, family-sustaining careers that prioritize worker rights, and retain workers by ensuring wrap-around services that enable LIDAC workers to enter and stay in training programs.

Modeling after the eight Good Jobs Principles developed by the U.S. Department of Labor and Department of Commerce, Michigan will prioritize workforce development that meets high labor standards. Additionally, Michigan will support a workforce that empowers workers to freely join and form unions, ensures job security and safe working conditions, cultivates a supportive organizational culture, provides fair and transparent pay, and promotes skills development and career advancement opportunities for all workers. This will apply for all partners involved in implementing the GHG reduction measures, including contractors, sub-contractors, and sub-awardees. For the RRC Awards, eligible projects must meet the labor requirements that comply with the Davis-Bacon Act and that meet or exceed the requirements established in Michigan under clean energy legislation passed in 2023 (including in PA 233 of 2023). These requirements include, but are not limited to, paying at least the prevailing wage rate standard, requiring construction contractors participate in a Department of Labor certified apprenticeship program, and requiring contractors to enter into a project labor agreement where permitted by law. In addition to Davis-Bacon Act requirements, strategies to ensure these measures support high-quality jobs may include:

- Ensure workers' free and fair choice to collectively bargain/to join or form a union.
- Remain neutral in union organizations/operations with the use of the Project Labor Agreement and prioritize local workforce pipelines.

- Hire certain percentage of workers from LIDAC workforce development training programs.
- ‘High road’ labor practices (e.g., family-sustained benefits, predictable work schedules, retirement contributions).
- Include qualifying as a minority- and/or women-owned business or businesses in historically underutilized business zones (as defined by Small Business Administration’s “HUBZone”).
- Demonstrate a commitment to paying prevailing wages and paying at least the median area income for all workers (where prevailing wage is not required by law).

Overall, Michigan will continue to partner with labor organizations including unions and workers’ rights groups to develop best practices that lift up Michigan workers, families, and businesses. In the first few years of the CPRG grant, Michigan will further identify anticipated workforce shortages that could prevent the state from achieving the goals of these measures and identify potential solutions and partners at the state, regional, and/or local level that are equipped to help address those challenges.

Section 6: Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Listed below are five relevant federally funded assistance agreements within the last three years. Key to EGLE’s success in meeting federal funding requirements are its staff; attached to this proposal are the resumes of EGLE staff members who are key project members in this grant proposal. For the RRC Awards, the team running the current pilot project have graduate degrees in environmental policy and planning, geospatial data sciences, and sustainable systems and experience in participatory planning, proactive zoning, and community engagement in renewable energy projects. The EGLE Brownfield Program is highly regarded. Most of the staff have backgrounds in the environmental sciences and the Brownfield Program staff who contributed to this grant proposal are “Climate Liaisons,” meaning they work with the Office of Climate and Energy to further integrate climate considerations into EGLE’s work.

Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund (LUST)

- Program Assistance Agreement Number: (Cooperative Agreement #) LS-97534216
- Funding Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Assistance Listing Number (e.g., CFDA number): 66.805
- Description: The LUST grant is an ongoing, two-year grant from the EPA that provides funds to ensure the appropriate investigation and cleanup of petroleum release sites from leaking underground storage tanks for the protection of human health and the environment.
- Funding Agency Contact: Ethel Crisp, crisp.ethel@epa.gov, 312-353-1442
- Status: Ongoing. The LUST grant is a two-year grant to fund EGLE’s implementation of the LUST program. EGLE reports to the EPA biannually on various program metrics.
- Reporting History: EGLE’s Remediation and Redevelopment Division (RRD) submitted adequate and timely biannual reports to the EPA about progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes, challenges to meeting expected outputs and outcomes during the reporting period, and strategies to address such challenges.

Section 106 Monitoring Initiative

- Program Assistance Agreement Number: 01E01479-0
- Funding Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Assistance Listing Number: 66.419
- Description: This grant included a project titled, “Climate Change Monitoring Plan,” which was intended to outline objectives and a potential sampling plan for the Great Lakes Watersheds Assessment, Restoration, and Management Section to measure impacts to biological stream communities from climate change.
- Funding Agency Contact: Ed Hammer, hammer.edward@epa.gov, 312-886-3019

- Status: Complete. This project deliverable is complete and the Section developed a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) with a project start date of summer 2024.
- Reporting History: The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy's Water Resources Division submitted annual reports to the EPA about progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes, challenges to meeting expected outputs and outcomes during the reporting period, and strategies to address such challenges.

Wetland Program Development Grant – Shorelines and Shallows

- Program Assistance Agreement Number: CD00E02070
- Funding Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Assistance Listing Number: 66.461
- Description: Developing Tools to Protect and Restore Wetland Shorelines and Shallows
- Funding Agency Contact: Kristen Faulhaber, Faulhaber.kristen@epa.gov, 312-353-4378
- Status: Complete. This project has significantly advanced Michigan's ability to address the challenges and improve protection of riparian wetlands on inland lakes statewide.
- Reporting History: EGLE submitted annual reports to the EPA about progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes, challenges to meeting expected outputs and outcomes during the reporting period, and strategies to address such challenges. Annual reports to the EPA included funded activities and explained progress towards the expected environmental outputs and outcomes.

State Clean Diesel Grant Program

- Program Assistance Agreement Number: 00E66606
- Funding Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Assistance Listing Number: 66.04
- Description: Michigan Diesel Emission Reduction Strategy supports a just transition to a low carbon economy with program priorities to implement vehicles, engines, or equipment replacements that reduce diesel engine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), ozone, and oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) emissions.
- Funding Agency Contact: Julia Frusciante, frusciante.julia@epa.gov, 312-886-1478
- Status: Complete. Michigan submitted reporting in a timely matter and received an additional award to continue the program.
- Reporting History: EGLE's Materials Management Division submitted adequate and timely annual reports to the EPA about progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes, challenges to meeting expected outputs and outcomes during the reporting period, and strategies to address such challenges.

Superfund Management Assistance Cooperative Agreement

- Program Assistance Agreement Number: (Cooperative Agreement #) V-07E00776
- Funding Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Assistance Listing Number: 66.802
- Description: Superfund Management Assistance annual grant funding is used to provide technical and community relations support for Federal lead projects in Michigan. Eligible activities under the grant include technical assistance, community relations assistance, legal support, and project coordination and review.
- Funding Agency Contact: Lindaa Ross, ross.lindaa@epa.gov, 312-353-6626
- Status: Ongoing.
- Reporting History: EGLE's Remediation and Redevelopment Division submits adequate and timely bi-annual progress reports to the EPA about state involved site progress and expenditure.