

March 28, 2024

Mayor Justin Elicker
The City of New Haven
165 Church St
New Haven, CT 06510



Housing Authority of New Haven

Karen DuBois-Walton, Ph.D.

President

Subject: Funding Opportunity #EPA-R-OAR-CPRGI-23-07,
Climate Pollution Reduction Grants Program: Implementation Grants General Competition

To: City of New Haven

Dear Mayor Elicker,

On behalf of Elm City Communities (ECC), the Housing Authority of New Haven, I am writing this Letter of Intent in strong support of the City of New Haven's application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Climate Pollution Reduction Implementation Grants Program.

The City of New Haven's proposal represents a bold effort to decarbonize a critical transit hub that serves over 625,000 riders annually while providing clean geothermal energy to the energy-burdened community adjacent to it via a strategic deployment of shared energy infrastructure known as a Thermal Energy Network. If the City is awarded funding for this project, the gateway to New Haven, its busiest train station and the housing development greeting new arrivals, will be transformed into a highly visible symbol of the environmental, health, and resilience benefits of Thermal Energy Networks.

At ECC, our mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of residents of the City of New Haven through the development and operation of affordable communities of choice and by providing opportunities for greater self-sufficiency.

ECC is excited to be part of a coalition application as a partner of the City of New Haven and the New Haven Parking Authority. ECC plans to connect geothermal heat pumps in its new construction at the Union Square site to the networked geothermal system the City is proposing to build in order to provide clean, affordable space heating, space cooling, and water heating to residents of Union Square. ECC will determine feasible open space sites on the Union Square properties where construction of new buildings will not take place in which the City may drill geothermal boreholes for the proposed geothermal network. ECC intends to work with the City of New Haven and New Haven Parking Authority to draft and execute a Memorandum of Agreement before July 1, 2024 that describes the roles, responsibilities, and commitments each partner will make to ensure project success. As part of drafting the Memorandum of Agreement, ECC intends to conduct a feasibility analysis and finalize its commitment to installing geothermal heat pumps in its new construction at Union Square and connecting these heat pumps to the City's geothermal network.

Elm City Communities/Housing Authority of the City of New Haven
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Reliable and equitable access to clean, renewable energy is critically needed by the New Haven community. To achieve its goal of eliminating fossil fuel emissions by 2030, the City of New Haven must pursue bold, transformative energy projects like this one, which seeks to provide clean, affordable energy to an entire area of the city, rather than individual homes or buildings. This project would install a thermal energy network that would provide low-cost, pollution-free heating and cooling to both Union Station and the planned 1,000-unit, mixed-income housing development ECC plans to construct across the street. The Union Station Area Thermal Energy Network (USATEN), would be designed to support additional buildings in the future and may expand or extend into other nearby neighborhoods. Serving as a model for municipally-owned neighborhood-scale decarbonization, USATEN will utilize modern public-private partnership, engineering design best practices, and highly refined project planning techniques emphasizing local participation and equity. The State of Connecticut's Priority Climate Action Plan, which includes thermal energy networks as a carbon pollution reduction measure, provides the framework for this project.

This transformative project is of particular interest to ECC because lower energy bills for our residents and lower operating costs for our properties helps ECC to provide greater opportunities for self-sufficiency to our residents.

I strongly recommend this proposal as it serves both as a critical first step toward the decarbonization of the city's housing stock and transit system and serves as a vehicle for building a coalition of proponents who can support the expansion of thermal energy networks in New Haven.

I look forward to working together with you on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "KDW", is placed over the typed name.

Karen DuBois-Walton, Ph.D.

President

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