

Memo



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
**ENERGY EFFICIENCY &
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

To: Energy Efficiency and Resource Management Council
From: EERMC Consultant Team
CC: Steven Chybowski
Date: June 30, 2022
Subject: Facilitated EE Discussion Topics Summary

CONSULTANT TEAM

I. INTRODUCTION

This memo is intended to serve as a catalyst for discussion during the June 30th Energy Efficiency and Resource Management Council (EERMC) Councilor Education and Advancement (CEA) meeting. The content below in the section titled ‘Potential Discussion Topics’ is an illustrative list of several energy efficiency related topics that are salient in Rhode Island at this time and/or have been raised as areas of interest by EERMC Councilors in recent conversations. The list is offered as a hopefully helpful starting point and is not intended to be comprehensive or to constrain the direction of the discussion among Councilors at the CEA meeting.

II. POTENTIAL DISCUSSION TOPICS

Energy Efficiency Planning Process

The annual energy efficiency planning process begins in February and March when the Council deliberates and votes on its priorities for the next year’s plan. The process is then ongoing throughout the summer as Rhode Island Energy (“the Company”) delivers a high-level plan outline in June, the first draft in July, and the second/final draft in September. Following the submission of the final draft, the Council makes a decision on whether to endorse the plan before the Company submits its filing to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) by October 1st. The Consultant Team files its Cost-Effectiveness Report to the PUC within two weeks of the Company’s plan filing. The remainder of the year involves regulatory proceedings at the PUC that culminates in a PUC Order on the Plan.

Questions

- Are there parts of the planning process that you don’t fully understand or where you would like clarification?
- Do you feel like any of the key deliverables require more or less time and attention?

Resources

- [2022 EERMC Key Deliverables and Schedule \(Updated June 16, 2022\)](#)
- [Rhode Island Energy 2023 Plan Outline Memo](#)

Equity Working Group Commitments

In the 2022 Annual Plan’s Equity section and associated appendix, the Company incorporated fourteen prioritized recommendations from the Equity Working Group’s 2021 report. These sections were incorporated into the final draft, where the specific recommendations informed a table of commitments in the Equity section and the report itself was included as the Equity

appendix. The program administrator will report on progress against these commitments in the Q2 and Q4 quarterly reports this year, and to leverage insights from the participation & multifamily census and non-participant studies during 2022 implementation and 2023 planning.

Questions

- How does the program administrator plan to measure attainment of these commitments? Recognizing this is a relatively new area of efficiency programming that is actively under development, do Council members have ideas or concerns regarding the methods for tracking performance with respect to equity commitments?
- How is progress against the equity commitments in the 2022 Plan progressing? Are there any commitments which have been successfully achieved (or are on track)? What about particularly challenging commitments?

Resources

- [2022 Annual Plan \(includes Equity Working Group 2021 Final Report in Appendix 11\)](#)

Act on Climate

The Rhode Island Act on Climate established statewide greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets (10% below 1990 levels by 2020, 45% by 2030, 80% by 2040, and net-zero by 2050). The Act also charges the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) with developing a GHG Emissions Reduction Plan every five years that describes how targets will be met.

Questions

- How might limits on energy efficiency programs' budget affect energy efficiency's ability to support achievement of statewide GHG emissions reduction targets? Are there strategies available to overcome any potential challenges?
- Without mandated contributions to greenhouse gas emissions reductions, how can the program administrator be encouraged to achieve savings that will sufficiently contribute to statewide GHG emissions reductions targets? How should 'sufficiently contribute' be defined, and by whom?

Resources

- [2021 Act on Climate – Full Text](#)
- [State of Rhode Island – Climate Change Website](#)

Income Eligible/Multifamily Program Performance

The income eligible and multifamily programs have received increased focus from the Council over the past several years. These programs have been a focus both because each has struggled to hit their savings goals at times over the past several years (particularly on the electric side as lighting opportunities have begun to sunset) and because the Council and other stakeholders have increased their focus on ensuring that customers are served equitably.

Questions

- How can the recently completed participation & multifamily census and non-participant studies be best utilized to improve program performance in these areas?
- How can the program administrator make sure that income eligible customers are equitably served both at the statewide level and within and among the different geographic regions of the state?

Resources

- [C-Team Presentation on 2021 Preliminary Year-End Results \(see slides 7-9\)](#)
- [Summary Report on EERMC Vote on National Grid's 2022 EE Plan \(see pg 3-4\)](#)

Workforce Development

Workforce Development involves efforts to both train new members of the energy efficiency/clean energy workforce, as well as upskill existing members to meet demand for energy efficiency services. These trainings, conducted both virtually and in person, support development of technical, marketing, and customer engagement skills. Historically, Rhode Island EE program budgets have not allocated a large share of spending toward workforce development programs, though available funding may increase in 2023.

Questions

- Given the shift away from lighting and other 'light-touch' measures, is the current workforce sufficient to meet increased demand for deeper-saving measures and implementation strategies? What strategies would be effective at augmenting the workforce, if and when that is deemed necessary?
- How can the workforce be diversified to support increased program access in underserved communities that either lack local contractor presences or face other barriers such as language?

Resources

- [RI Energy Efficiency Workforce Analysis – Full Report](#)
- [RI Energy Efficiency Workforce Analysis – Two-Page Summary](#)
- [MA 2022-2024 Workforce Development Update – April 27, 2022 Presentation](#)

Active Demand Response

Active Demand Response or Active Demand Management involve efforts to shift energy consumption from “peak” to “off-peak” in order to save on capacity costs, reduce peak demand prices, improve system reliability, and ensure adequate generation capacity. ADM programs can take many forms, but they commonly employ direct load control (DLC), time-based rates, or pay-for-performance (P4P) participation/incentive models. ADM offerings are available for both Residential and Commercial & Industrial customers.

Questions

- Current ADM offerings and incentives are tied to summer peak reduction, but what offerings should be considered for reducing winter peak demand?
- Under what circumstances might we consider locational adders for additional participant incentives?

Resources

- [Commercial Connected Solutions Program Page](#)
- [Residential Connected Solutions Program Page](#)
- [Location-Targeted Outreach for EE/DR - Presentation](#)

Other Topics

Please do not hesitate to raise other topics or areas for discussion during the Councilor Education and Advancement meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to provide opportunities for learning and engagement among Councilors, and active participation is encouraged, up to and including guiding this discussion of efficiency topics according to your own questions and areas of interest!