



City Receives \$10 Million Energy Efficiency Grant

The City of Chula Vista has been awarded a \$10 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to help owners of multifamily, commercial, and industrial buildings improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gases.



Chula Vista is one of just 19 state and local governments across the U.S., and the only local government in Southern California, to earn the grant. Some funding will be used to develop educational tool kits and resources to assist building owners in implementing low-to-no-cost upgrades.

“Chula Vista has long been a leader in the climate planning world, developing the first Climate Action Plan in the region in 2000,” said City Manager Maria V. Kachadoorian. “With this funding, we can do even more to improve our environment by increasing

energy efficiency in our largest buildings.”

The funding, to be provided over the next nine years, will focus on improving the performance of the City’s 750 multifamily, commercial, and industrial buildings 20,000 square feet or larger. Many older multifamily buildings in Chula Vista were not built with adequate insulation or air conditioning and occupants have experienced rising exposure to extreme heat in recent years, causing potential public health threats. The focus on better-performing buildings is designed to help alleviate many of those issues.

Chula Vista Environmental Sustainability Manager Coleen Wisniewski said the Department of Energy funding is critical to the City’s efforts to help building owners and the community successfully comply with the City’s three-year-old [Building Energy Saving Ordinance](#). The grant will help Wisniewski’s team develop tools, resources, and training.

“Ultimately, this will also improve our building stock so that over time people who want to buy or lease will look for more energy efficient buildings,” said Wisniewski, who will oversee the grant.

While the funding cannot be used to purchase direct building upgrades such as insulation or HVAC systems, it will go towards energy audits, retro-commissioning and energy data verification for buildings that qualify. Additionally, the City will develop a toolkit of educational materials, summaries of low-to-no-cost upgrade measures and a database of local, state, and federal funding resources for owners. The funding will enable the City to hire additional employees in the Office of Sustainability to provide technical assistance, measure compliance and ordinance enforcement.

The Department of Energy grants are funded by the Inflation Reduction Act and were awarded to state and local governments to advance traditional and innovative building energy codes, resulting in more resilient, efficient, and better buildings.

Chula Vista has long been at the forefront of climate planning. City initiatives have included the adoption of water conservation and energy efficiency ordinances, efforts to electrify the City fleet and the installation of over 140 electric vehicle chargers. The City began working with the U.S. Department of Energy more than 10 years ago as a participant in the [Better Buildings Challenge](#) and the [Better Climate Challenge](#). The City also joined the [White House Building Performance Standards Coalition](#) as an inaugural member in January 2022.