

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: **RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS OF THE CITY OF NEW HAVEN** Order authorizing the mayor of the City of New Haven to apply for and accept the climate pollution reduction grant award from US Environmental Protection Agency to reduce energy bills and climate pollution through the establishment of a networked geothermal system serving Union Station and the Union Square development, and to enter into associated Agreements in order to accept grant funding and carry out the associated grant program activities.

Submitted by: Steven Winter, Director, Office of Climate & Sustainability

REPORT: **1650-12**

ADVICE: **Approve**

BACKGROUND

The City's Director of Climate and Sustainability is requesting authorization to apply for and accept climate reduction grant awards from the US Department of Environmental Protection (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant program.

The grant would fund a generational investment by the City of New Haven in the design and construction of the Station Area Thermal Energy Network (USATEN) a networked geothermal system to provide the lowest-cost, carbon free heating and cooling to Union Station and the Union Square development across Union Avenue. Networked geothermal systems are unique in their ability to equitably bring affordable clean energy to residents and businesses at the neighborhood scale. USATEN would be designed to support the future addition of adjacent municipal buildings, such as the New Haven Police Department headquarters, and to expand to the nearby Hill South neighborhood.

The City of New Haven would be responsible for managing the design, procurement, and construction of USATEN, and would work closely with the New Haven Parking Authority (NHPA) and the New Haven Housing Authority (NHHA) to complete the grant activities. The City would work together with the NHPA in order to design, procure, and install a geothermal heat pump to heat and cool the building while eliminating on-site fossil fuel use at Union Station. The City would coordinate the construction of USATEN with the NHHA in order to ensure that the networked geothermal system is sized and configured to allow the new buildings constructed at Union Square to tap into the system using geothermal heat pumps for their heating, cooling, and hot water needs. This will result in utility bills for residents and ongoing operating costs for NHHA that are lower than any other form of energy.

The grant request from the EPA is designed to cover all of the costs that the City cannot recoup through Energize CT geothermal heat pump reimbursement rebates and the federal government's

geothermal 40% geothermal direct pay reimbursement incentive. In order to take advantage of these reimbursements, the City would need to provide 40% of the project costs, which the federal government would reimburse after the project is placed in service and Energize CT rebates are claimed

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The City of New Haven Comprehensive Plan **New Haven Vision 2025** states the following goals:

“Grow The number of sustainable and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified buildings within the city by implementing a far-reaching energy program focused on the use of renewable power sources within all new housing developments and encouraging more programs that help reduce energy costs in existing housing.” (Sec. XXV)

“Preserve the quality of the natural environment by encouraging local businesses and industries to make energy-efficient structural, as well as process-based improvements.” (Sec. XXIX)

“Promote energy conservation in public, private, and institutional buildings.” (Sec. III-11)

“Encourage energy conservation and green building designs in new/infill developments, including appropriate green buildings standards, use of green technologies, and careful site planning. Encourage low-impact development to that end by implementing a far-reaching energy program focused on the use of renewable power sources within new and existing housing in the city. Encourage more programs that help reduce energy costs in existing old housing stock.” (Sec. IV-15)

“The City will require a continued commitment to sustainable environmental policy and a systematic approach to energy efficiency and development of renewable energy resources to further improve air quality and ensure a high-quality environment.” (Sec. VII-17).

Overall, in pursuing grant funding opportunities for developing New Haven’s renewable energy infrastructure, the Office of Climate & Sustainability furthers the goals of the City’s Comprehensive plan.

ADVICE

Authorization of this grant aligns with the City’s Comprehensive Plan and the State of Connecticut’s goals.

ADOPTED: May 15, 2024
Leslie Radcliffe
Chair

ATTEST: _____
Laura Brown
Executive Director, City Plan Department