

Hamilton Community Energy & Emissions Plan Community Stakeholder Advisory Committee

Building Retrofit Workshop

Workshop Summary

Date & time: February 5th, 2021, 10:00 -11:00 am

Location: Webex Video Conference

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Attendees

1. Spencer Skidmore (City of Hamilton, Planning)
2. Tom Chessman (City of Hamilton, Energy Office)
3. Trevor Imhoff (City of Hamilton, Public Health)
4. Christine Newbold (City of Hamilton, Planning)
5. Andrea McDowell (City of Hamilton, Public Health)
6. Chris Shilton (City of Hamilton, CityHousing Hamilton)
7. Heidi Levitzky (Hamilton Industrial Environmental Association)
8. Kate Flynn (Centre for Climate Change Management at Mohawk College)
9. Chris Hamilton (Enbridge)
10. Kevin Van Hartingsveldt (McCallumSather/HBSA)

11. Andrew Sebestyen (Stelco)
12. Denise Arkell (Neighbour 2 Neighbour Centre)
13. Ankur Mehrotra (Hamilton Community Energy Inc.)
14. Yuill Herbert (SSG)
15. Mike Frisina (Alectra)

Worskhop Objectives

- To facilitate a discussion on a potential deep energy retrofit program for the City of Hamilton, including constraints, opportunities, obstacles and potential partners.
- Group discussion was guided by a series of questions within a Google Form. The following questions were asked to each group to stimulate discussion:
 - *In order to implement these targets is there a key policy, action, or strategy that needs to be applied? Is there an existing City or other corporate policy or strategy that should be updated?*
 - *Beyond GHG reductions, low-carbon actions are often accompanied by other community benefits, called co-benefits. Which co-benefits do these actions present for Hamilton?*
 - *Who are the "Key Partners" in implementing these actions?*
 - *What will these partners roles or opportunities be in relation to advancing these actions?*
 - *What funding or other resources are available to help implement these actions? Do you know of any similar programs that have succeeded in other cities or jurisdictions?*
 - *What conditions or competing interests might interfere with implementing this action? What might mitigate this challenge or overcome it?*

Building Retrofit Feedback Summary

Participant Comments & Feedback

- Establish a HERO (Home Energy Retrofit Opportunity) Program in Hamilton that focuses on GHGs. Any future home retrofit program should focus on GHG reduction, not only energy efficiency. This includes supporting mechanical systems being electrified.
- Understanding if there are specific strategies that we need to push in terms of PV, geothermal, retrofits upfront and early on in the design process. There needs to be an obvious and clear trigger in the building permit process to require the consideration of energy retrofits.
- Target retrofits that have the greatest return on investment from a GHG reduction perspective.
- Sometimes incentives are missed unless there is a clear trigger through the permit process for owners to investigate a retrofit. A regulatory framework is beneficial as it forces builders and home owners to investigate retrofits.

- There needs to be a business case on deep energy retrofits – you need to improve the energy savings and the return on investment for homeowners. This comes down to other energies being cheap and reliable, there needs to be a good business case to encourage uptake of retrofits.
- This will change as traditional GHG intensive fuels become more expensive due to carbon pricing and the cost of renewables come down.
- There needs to be a good business case for a retrofit – the upfront capital cost needs to make sense in terms of operational savings and when you can recapture the capital cost via savings.
- Various PACE financing models from the US were discussed.
- PACE program funding, coupled with regulatory framework, will increase uptake. The carrot and the stick being used in tandem.
- Regulation allows you to establish a long-term roadmap and provides some assurance/certainty of future requirements. Less likely to change continually with political change.
- Outreach program that targets the general public – we need to increase awareness and outreach. The business case and return on investment need to be key messages.
- Provincial level – there needs to be an opportunity for alignment between provincial, federal and municipal governments. This will create less confusion when all levels of government are aligned.
- There needs to be a one stop shop for home energy retrofits to increase transparency (accelerator).
- Energy Audit for homes. Make home energy audits mandatory for selling a property. Establish home energy audits as a mandatory baseline. This is done in some European jurisdictions.
- Home energy audits could be linked with an information package on what some of the opportunities to increase energy efficiency and associated savings are. Gives new buyers an understanding of what they can do to improve efficiency and what costs can be saved.
- Make it a point of civic pride, make the neighbourhood proud of retrofits – report by neighbourhood. Similar to what is going on in the EV market, societal shift to pride in reduction of GHG emissions through retrofits.
- Business case and stats for employment – retrofits are in a very large part LOCAL jobs and local economic development. Local because the framework is local and for the most part, the contractors completing the work are likely local.
- Energy poverty – we really need to take a look at tiered support programs and targeting marginalized communities who need savings the most. Potential grants to low-income households?
- Barrier is making it price effective for low income residents.
- ROI is always a barrier – how do we make the return on investment appealing to people, so appealing that they can't avoid it.
- How do we make people prioritize a home energy retrofit over other home improvements?
- Motivating landlords who may not be motivated to retrofit because they don't pay utilities. How can we target landlords to take part? Tax credit?
- Energy benchmarking for buildings – similar to what's done in Europe.
- Enbridge – working on greening natural gas, low-carbon solutions. We could reach out in the future for a presentation from Enbridge on their green priorities. Enbridge focused on RNG (renewable natural gas) – locally produced RNG.

- Enbridge could provide furnace retrofit stats – the number of Hamilton households that have participated in the retrofits and what retrofits those households have done. This may give us an idea for uptake of a future retrofit program.
- We also need to celebrate success – we could “certify” or acknowledge buildings that have undergone retrofits under the program. These “certifications” could be used as a source of civic pride or a marketing tool when selling the asset.
- Perhaps develop a digital dashboard that shows where in the City buildings have been retrofitted as part of the program?