

The U.S. Department of Energy's Better Communities Alliance is a partnership that brings together public and private sector leaders to deliver energy efficiency, sustainable transportation, and renewable energy solutions that create cleaner and more prosperous communities for all Americans. The **Better Communities Alliance** is part of the department's **Better Buildings Initiative**, a national leadership program calling on companies, state and local governments, manufacturers, universities and schools, to make substantial commitments to improve the energy usage in buildings, homes, and plants to save money and increase competitiveness.

Local Governments Leading the Way

With urban centers collectively accounting for roughly 70 percent of global energy usage and carbon emissions, America's local governments are stepping up to the challenge.¹ City and county leaders are setting ambitious energy and carbon reduction targets and taking action to improve the energy efficiency of buildings and infrastructure. The International Energy Agency estimates that by 2030, 87% of US energy will be consumed in cities, up from 80% in 2006.² Local governments are also working to expand renewable energy and sustainable transportation options for their residents and businesses, harness innovative technologies that make their communities smarter about reducing energy, and invest in resilient power systems and community infrastructure.

Yet, many city and county governments lack key resources to plan and fully achieve their goals. And even where clean energy outcomes are being achieved, local governments need common platforms that make place-based innovation and best practices transferable to peer communities nationwide. Overcoming these challenges will empower local governments to make even greater strides and ensure that local successes result in national and global impact.

An Integrated Approach to Clean Energy Solutions

The Better Communities Alliance is a collaborative effort to provide local governments with integrated expertise, resources, and peer-networking opportunities from across the government, nonprofit, philanthropic, and private sectors.

The goals of the Better Communities Alliance are to:

- ▶ Support local governments in achieving their energy, climate, and economic goals through energy efficiency, sustainable transportation, and renewable energy;
- ▶ Advance integrated clean energy planning, technologies, and solutions within communities;
- ▶ Streamline community access to new resources from the public and private sectors;
- ▶ Facilitate actionable dialogues with local governments that enable DOE to be more responsive to local needs and opportunities; and
- ▶ Recognize public and private sector leaders achieving innovative and impactful clean energy outcomes in communities.

Municipal and county governments are invited to join the Better Communities Alliance as partners by participating in at least one qualifying leadership initiative or project led by DOE, and sharing information on local goals, areas of clean energy opportunity, and best practices with DOE and other Better Communities Alliance partners.³

DOE will support Better Communities Alliance partners by providing:

- ▶ Technical assistance tools, resources and engagement as well as clean energy data analysis;
- ▶ Opportunities to access support, expertise, and other resources made available by Better Communities Alliance affiliates;
- ▶ A customized portfolio of existing DOE resources and engagement opportunities that align with the local priorities and interests of each Better Communities Alliance partner;
- ▶ National forums for peer networking and dialogue with DOE leaders and experts; and
- ▶ National recognition and showcasing of efforts commensurate with achievements.

As part of the Better Communities Alliance, DOE also aims to partner with public and private sector organizations that commit to support clean energy progress in communities. Businesses, philanthropic foundations, nonprofit and research groups, local government networks and associations, and other types of organizations are eligible to join the Better Communities Alliance as affiliates by committing to provide in-kind expertise and placed-based resources that support clean energy progress in communities. Better Communities Alliance affiliate commitments will vary and are intended to align with the core capabilities of each organization.

DOE will support Better Communities Alliance affiliates by providing:

- ▶ Promotion of the contributions and opportunities made available to Better Communities Alliance partners;
- ▶ Participation in national forums with DOE and local government leaders; and
- ▶ National recognition and showcasing of efforts commensurate with achievements.

Learn More

Learn more about the Better Communities Alliance and the ways that DOE is already working with local governments to deliver energy efficiency, sustainable transportation, and renewable energy solutions by visiting betterbuildingsinitiative.energy.gov/bca Learn more about how Better Buildings is creating a better, more energy-efficient future by visiting the [Better Buildings Solutions Center](#).

1. Global energy usage and carbon emission information from World Resources Institute Ross Center for Sustainable Cities. <http://www.wrirosscities.org/our-work/topics/energy-and-climate>.

2. IEA (International Energy Agency). 2008. World Energy Outlook 2008. Paris: International Energy Agency. <http://www.worldenergyoutlook.org/media/weowebiste/2008-1994/weo2008.pdf>.

3. Information on U.S. DOE clean energy initiatives and projects available for local government participation are included in the BCA FAQ document.