

An Introduction to the IRA Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund

The Local Infrastructure Hub hosted a session on April 16, 2024, to discuss the IRA Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. This session featured **Mayor Barbara Buffaloe** of Columbia, MO; **Mayor Farrah N. Khan** of Irvine, CA; **Jahi Wise**, Acting Director for the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund program at EPA; **Abigail Corso**, Chief Strategy Officer at Elevate; and **Lotte Schlegel**, Senior Advisor at the Institute for Market Transformation.

The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) is a \$27 billion investment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other forms of air pollution by mobilizing private capital to provide accessible and affordable financing for tens of thousands of clean technology projects across the country. This webinar focused on the National Community Investment Fund and the Clean Communities Investment Accelerator under GGRF, discussing the types of projects cities can use GGRF financing for. Some examples included providing community solar to low-income households and communities, decarbonizing municipal buildings, and expanding electric vehicle charging and fueling infrastructure.

Key Insights Shared:

GGRF Basics.

National Community Investment Fund grantees—Climate United Fund, Coalition for Green Capital, Power Forward Communities—will deploy capital directly to cities. They are finalizing their grant agreements with EPA now and financing may be available to cities as soon as late summer 2024. Each grantee has their own way of structuring financing (loan terms, rates, time, etc.); details can be found in their [applications](#) or by reaching out to them directly.

Clean Communities Investment Accelerator grantees will act as intermediaries, passing capital along to community lenders like Community Development Financial Institutions and Credit Unions. These community lenders will in turn finance projects often within their own communities.

Ensure that projects align with President Biden's Justice40 Initiative.

Seventy percent of GGRF funding will flow to low-income and disadvantaged communities. Jahi Wise discussed that GGRF funding is intended to quickly bring commercially available technologies into communities where they are not typically provided. Therefore, qualifying projects should address at least two [burdens](#) identified by the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#).

Community buy-in is critical for cities and their greenhouse gas reduction efforts.

The City of Irvine, CA, developed its [Climate Action and Adaptation Plan](#) in 2021. The CAAP sets ambitious emission reduction targets for the city and lays out goals across municipal operations and the community. Mayor Khan believes the key to achieving these goals is ensuring the community is on board through outreach efforts to unite stakeholders. This gives emission reduction goals credibility and ensures plans will last regardless of who is in office.

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Invest in a green workforce.

A workforce development program is essential in leveraging the GGRF's potential. For example, the [Hoboken Community Solar Program](#) allows qualifying residents of the City to buy solar energy at a low price. Part of the program includes a Green Workforce Training Program that includes two weeks of classroom and hands-on training in construction safety, electrical basics, and solar installation and provides completers an average starting salary of \$60,000. This kind of workforce development creates a strong pipeline of finance-ready projects and establishes a capable workforce to execute them.

Cities will have multiple roles in leveraging the GGRF.

Before Mayor Buffaloe was elected Mayor of Columbia, MO, she wrote the city's [Climate Action and Adaptation Plan](#) as Sustainability Manager. She found that municipal emissions account for only two percent of the community's greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, while GGRF awardees have funding for municipal projects, cities must also play a role in convening private, public, and non-profit partners to address emission reductions city-wide. Although cities will prioritize projects within their jurisdiction, collaborating with community organizations to take advantage of the GGRF can significantly reduce city emissions to meet net-zero goals.

Resources Shared During the Webinar and in Discussion

- [Hoboken Community Solar](#)
- [EPA's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Page](#)
- [Introduction to the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund](#)

Local Infrastructure Hub Bootcamp Materials

The [Local Infrastructure Hub](#) is here to support cities in communicating the success of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law-funded projects through a mix of webinars, practical tools, and templates. Our webinars and Grant Application Bootcamps can guide you through different application processes and actionable steps to submit a strong application.

Register for our [Local Infrastructure Hub Bootcamps](#) now to receive technical assistance for city staff on relevant tools and templates that can be applied to grant applications; learn how to build community engagement plans and leverage community assets; understand how to effectively incorporate data into the grant application process; and how to construct a strong budget and grant narrative.