REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
"Cities Leading through Energy Analysis and Planning (Cities-LEAP)"

DATE: April 14, 2015

SUBJECT: Request for Information (RFI), DE-FOA-0001332

DESCRIPTION of RFI: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) seeks to understand how local governments obtain and use information about energy consumption in their communities and within their government operations.

Consistent with existing DOE and Administration initiatives to work with local governments such as the Better Buildings Challenge, Clean Cities Coalition, and Climate Action Champions, EERE seeks to continue to help cities make important progress in meeting their climate and energy goals. The Cities Leading through Energy Analysis and Planning (Cities-LEAP) project is investigating complementary ways to support cities (or other local governments) in their efforts to include energy analysis and data into their strategic decision-making. Success in this effort can fundamentally challenge the perception of what is possible to achieve through energy efficiency, sustainable transportation, and clean electricity. There are two primary pathways to achieve these goals:

- Work with city and other local governments to obtain data, develop and use tools, set goals, and prioritize actions with a firm analytical underpinning.
- Identify and demonstrate practical pathways (i.e., sets of activities implemented by cities that lead to meeting goals) that can scale to dramatically improve a city's (and collectively the nation's) energy and greenhouse gas emissions footprint.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this RFI is to solicit feedback from city leaders and staff, or organizational representatives that work with cities, on their current use of data in energy-related decision making at the city level. The term "city" is used generically to refer to a local government of any size that is at the sub-state level such as county, village, township, town etc. The term "data" refers to organized energy information (e.g., residential natural gas consumption) or non-energy information (e.g., number of commercial buildings by type) that can be analyzed to better understand opportunities for energy savings or measure the energy-related impacts of city programs.

EERE is specifically interested in information on data collection practices and use of existing datasets; barriers and challenges to adopting data-driven decision frameworks; and success stories for which data-driven approaches have resulted in significant energy savings or clean energy deployment.

Information gathered by this RFI will help EERE better understand how cities use data in energy-related decisions and may impact future EERE program design and implementation. This is solely a request for information and not a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). EERE is not accepting applications.

DISCLAIMER AND IMPORTANT NOTES: This RFI is not a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA); therefore, EERE is not accepting applications at this time. EERE may issue a FOA in the future based on or related to the content and responses to this RFI; however, EERE may also elect not to issue a FOA. There is no guarantee that a FOA will be issued as a result of this RFI. Responding to this RFI does not provide any advantage or disadvantage to potential applicants if EERE chooses to issue a FOA regarding the subject matter. Final details, including the anticipated award size, quantity, and timing of EERE funded awards, will be subject to Congressional appropriations and direction.

Any information obtained as a result of this RFI is intended to be used by the Government on a non-attribution basis for planning and strategy development; this RFI does not constitute a formal solicitation for proposals or abstracts. Your response to this notice will be treated as information only. EERE will review and consider all responses in its formulation of program strategies for the identified materials of interest that are the subject of this request. EERE will not provide reimbursement for costs incurred in responding to this RFI. Respondents are advised that EERE is under no obligation to acknowledge receipt of the information received or provide feedback to respondents with respect to any information submitted under this RFI. Responses to this RFI do not bind EERE to any further actions related to this topic.

PROPRIETARY INFORMATION: Because information received in response to this RFI may be used to structure future programs and FOAs and/or otherwise be made available to the public, **respondents are strongly advised to NOT include any information in their responses that might be considered business sensitive, proprietary, or otherwise confidential**. If, however, a respondent chooses to submit business sensitive, proprietary, or otherwise confidential information, it must be clearly and conspicuously marked as such in the response.

Responses containing confidential, proprietary, or privileged information must be conspicuously marked as described below. Failure to comply with these marking requirements may result in the disclosure of the unmarked information under the Freedom of Information Act or otherwise. The U.S. Federal Government is not liable for the disclosure or use of unmarked information, and may use or disclose such information for any purpose.

If your response contains confidential, proprietary, or privileged information, you must include a cover sheet marked as follows identifying the specific pages containing confidential, proprietary, or privileged information:

This is a Request for Information (RFI) only. EERE will not pay for information provided under this RFI and no project will be supported as a result of this RFI. This RFI is not accepting applications for financial assistance or financial incentives. EERE may or may not issue a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) based on consideration of the input received from this RFI.

Notice of Restriction on Disclosure and Use of Data: Pages [list applicable pages] of this response may contain confidential, proprietary, or privileged information that is exempt from public disclosure. Such information shall be used or disclosed only for the purposes described in this RFI, DE-FOA-0001332. The Government may use or disclose any information that is not appropriately marked or otherwise restricted, regardless of source.

In addition, (1) the header and footer of every page that contains confidential, proprietary, or privileged information must be marked as follows: "Contains Confidential, Proprietary, or Privileged Information Exempt from Public Disclosure" and (2) every line and paragraph containing proprietary, privileged, or trade secret information must be clearly marked with double brackets or highlighting.

EVALUATION AND ADMINISTRATION BY FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL PERSONNEL: Federal employees are subject to the non-disclosure requirements of a criminal statute, the Trade Secrets Act, 18 USC 1905. The Government may seek the advice of qualified non-Federal personnel. The Government may also use non-Federal personnel to conduct routine, nondiscretionary administrative activities. The respondents, by submitting their response, consent to EERE providing their response to non-Federal parties. Non-Federal parties given access to responses must be subject to an appropriate obligation of confidentiality prior to being given the access. Submissions may be reviewed by support contractors and private consultants.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION CATEGORIES AND QUESTIONS: EERE seeks a variety of different types of information to help prioritize city data related needs that may be addressed in the Cities-LEAP project. To this end, EERE seeks detailed and specific information regarding the use of data in energy related decisions:

<u>Category 1</u>: **General Data and Energy Data Collection and Use**: EERE would like information on the current practice in your city (or cities you work with) regarding data access, data collection, and the use of existing datasets and data analytics in city decision making.

1. Which of your departments collects data on energy and what external energy data sources do your departments rely upon? Is the scope of existing data collection limited to municipal operations or does it include community-wide data?

2. Does your city connect data across city departments? If so, what organizational entity is responsible for the central data collection and compilation? Is the compilation done manually or automatically, routinely or *ad hoc*?

3. If cross-departmental data sharing responsibility belongs to a specific individual (e.g., Chief Information Officer), what is that individual's title, how is it funded, and is it a full time position?

4. Does your city have access to community wide utility data (electricity, natural gas, and water)? If so, what is the level of granularity (e.g. by customer class such as residential, commercial, or industrial, by location such as zip code or address, and by timing such as hourly, monthly, or annually) for that data? How often is local utility data provided to the city (e.g., yearly, monthly, or on-demand, etc.)?

5. Does your city have an accurate inventory of all the buildings within jurisdictional boundaries— publicly owned and privately owned? If so, does the inventory include details such as building size, ownership, block/lot, and building characteristics?

6. Do you have examples of existing city-developed or third party data analysis tools being used to analyze energy data for policy prioritization or program design? What organizations or third parties does your city currently work with or receive resources from (e.g., funding, expertise or staff)? Is there a staff person (specifying permanent or temporary) assigned to this, or is it performed by a third-party?

7. Are there key questions your city has that could be answered if the appropriate energy data and analysis were available? What are key energy data gaps or missing protocols (e.g., a standard method for calculating energy savings in a certain industry) that, if filled, could aid in data-driven decision making for energy programs and policies?

8. If EERE were to provide grant funding supporting data-driven decision-making for local energy policies, programs, and/or project implementation, how could grant funds be most useful?

Category 2: Barriers and Challenges: EERE is interested in the types of barriers that your city (or cities you work with) has encountered in establishing and adopting a data-driven decision-making framework.

9. From your experience, indicate which barriers are most prevalent. Provide a brief description of the city's strategy approaching the barriers, using specific project examples (if applicable):
    a. Organizational Capacity (e.g., limited staff time for data collection)
    b. Technical Barriers (e.g., lack of sensor hardware or information technology (IT) data collection platform inadequate)
    c. Analytic Barriers (e.g., data is available but quality is not reliable enough or sufficiently validated to drive policy decisions, data is not integrated or managed in ways and/or

systems that do not lend themselves to extraction and analysis, or challenges in connecting data analysis with appropriate strategies for improvements in city operations and/or city projects/policies/programs)

   d. City and Departmental Support (e.g., resistance to adopting or using data analytics or competing/conflicting departmental priorities)
   e. Political, Regulatory or Privacy Barriers (e.g., lack of public interest supporting data-driven decision-making or concerns by the state public utilities commission (PUC) regarding the release of customer utility data)
   f. Other

10. What types of external support could best help address the barriers identified above? (e.g., funding for staff, technical assistance, best practices, tool development, political support, case studies, success stories, etc.)?

Category 3: Success Stories: EERE is seeking best-in-practice examples of city data-driven decision frameworks that have resulted in significant energy savings and/or increased adoption of clean energy, either as primary benefits of city actions (e.g., energy use disclosure policies) or co-benefits of non-energy focused city actions (e.g., traffic signal optimization).

11. City-wide or within a specific city agency, how has data-driven decision-making benefited the identification, prioritization, evaluation and selection of specific policies, programs, and projects? How and to what extent has city energy data (both municipal operations and community wide) been connected or used in conjunction with non-energy specific city-datasets (e.g., housing, zoning, public health, taxation, etc.)?

12. Describe an example of city-related cost savings (e.g. operational costs or capital project costs) or revenue generation (e.g. taxation or fees) resulting from adoption of data-driven decision making.

13. Please provide examples of integration of energy policy priorities into city rules and regulations not typically focused on energy (e.g., minimum energy efficiency standards integrated with existing building code requirements, or explicit guidelines allowing for renewable energy generation, for example solar photovoltaics (PV) within existing historic preservation and zoning bylaws).

14. If possible, provide examples of city decisions from which significant energy impacts (i.e., energy savings or increases in energy use) are expected, but energy is not a major consideration (e.g., elements of zoning rules or capital improvement projects).

Category 4: **Optional Documentation**: EERE would be interested in any documentation (e.g., plans or ordinances) or other shareable media (e.g., datasets) cities have regarding energy planning, energy-related goal setting, or participation in external programs (e.g., foundation grants) or contests with strong data and energy criteria. This could include city action plans developed to accomplish goals; descriptions of analysis tools used to assess goals; or other data-related components of applications, monitoring, or demonstration of progress.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION RESPONSE GUIDELINES: Responses to this RFI must be submitted electronically to Cities.LEAP@ee.doe.gov no later than 5:00 pm (ET) on May 29, 2015. Responses must be provided as attachments to an email. It is recommended that attachments with file sizes exceeding 25MB be compressed (i.e., zipped) to ensure message delivery. Only electronic responses will be accepted.

Please identify your answers by responding to a specific question or topic if possible. Respondents may answer as many or as few questions as they wish.

EERE will not respond to individual submissions or publish publicly a compendium of responses. A response to this RFI will not be viewed as a binding commitment to develop or pursue the project or ideas discussed.

Respondents are requested to provide the following information at the start of their response to this RFI:

- Company / institution name;
- Company / institution contact;
- Contact's address, phone number, and e-mail address.