

CENTRAL REGION

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe: Guiding Leech Lake to Sustainability

Cass Lake, MN – The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe seeks to significantly advance sustainability in their built environment. Their approach will be threefold: solar readiness of new construction and major renovations, approaching net zero energy and overall sustainability of new construction and major renovations, and electric vehicle readiness and infrastructure support. The funding secured from CERTs will cover the cost of hiring a design professional to develop guidance, policies, and ordinances that will facilitate the implementation of the Band’s new initiatives. (\$5,000)



Community Grassroots Solutions: Community Engagement for Energy Empowerment

Waite Park, MN – Project will reach out to East African Community in Central Minnesota to share information about the existence of energy empowerment programs and how these programs can provide relief to the burden of utility costs and offer support to achieve income security for low-income communities. This project will explain to the community the significant and long-lasting financial benefits that energy efficiency projects can provide. CGS will use several community engagements tools, such as Somali speaking radio, social media, phone calls and zoom meeting. We will also translate information and distribute to the community.(\$3,520)

Hubbard County Food Shelf: Hubbard County Food Shelf LED Lighting Project

Park Rapids, MN – The Hubbard County Food Shelf plans to reduce its electricity expenditures by converting all lighting in their building to LED. Keeping these expenses to a minimum allows them to allocate more funding towards distributing basic necessities to their client base, many of whom are living below the poverty line. The funds awarded by CERTs will help cover the labor costs of the electrical contract work required for the lighting upgrades. (\$1,500)

Rural Renewable Energy Alliance: Solar Schools Curriculum Development

Central MN – In 2019, the Rural Renewable Energy Alliance installed 1.5 megawatts of solar capacity at three area schools. RREAL will expand on this success by developing solar energy education toolkits and online tools for distribution to all 24 schools in Region 5 in Central MN. The end goal will be for students to gain a comprehensive knowledge of solar technology and renewable energy careers, as well as ideas about how they can get involved in their local clean energy economy. (\$3,000)

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RETHOS: Places Reimagined: Energy Efficiency & Home Winterization Workshops

St. Cloud, MN – Rethos will host four workshops to teach homeowners how to maximize energy efficiency and minimize heat loss. Classes will include Why Old is Green, Repairing and Restoring Old Windows, Energy Audit Walkthrough, and DIY Energy Upgrades, which will demonstrate such concepts as the importance of conducting an energy audit, basic weatherization and winterization skills, and ways in which older homes can be upgraded and improved. The CERTs Seed Grant will fund the staff and contracting labor required to develop and implement a curriculum at the workshops and conduct effective outreach to stakeholders. (\$3,000)

City of Wadena: Downtown EV Charging Station

Wadena, MN – As a rural community, Wadena currently lacks EV charging infrastructure, but its location at the intersection of three major state highways makes it an ideal place for drivers to recharge their cars while traveling across the state. Using Seed Grant funding, the City will cover the labor costs of installing two charging stations at parking spaces in the City-owned parking lot along Aldrich Avenue SW. In addition to facilitating use of EVs, Wadena also hopes that this project will energize (pun intended) the city's downtown business district by increasing customer traffic and raising Wadena's profile among eco-conscious consumers. (\$4,500)

METRO REGION

West Bank Business Association: Cedar Riverside in the Green Zone – From Conversations to Action

Minneapolis, MN – There are more than 200 West Bank Businesses with 90% of them still locally owned. A majority of these businesses are run by and employ people of color. These businesses are the most at risk for gentrification and displacement--yet we're behind the curve on preparing for energy and climate impacts. The West Bank Business Association will create outreach educational materials and translations about the importance of Green Zones and work one-on-one with businesses to create an anti-displacement plan for coming changes, sharing tools and opportunities for energy efficiency and conservation. (\$5,000)



Urban Design Perspectives (UDP): Camp SEE Architecture

Minneapolis, MN – Creating the next generation of renewable energy ambassadors, Camp SEE Architecture educates young women of color on the impact of passive design and building material selection on the built environment. Through a one-week STE(A)M camp, 20 middle schoolers from North Minneapolis will create an exhibit that focuses on strategies to reduce their carbon footprint. Students will also learn and share best practices of local examples in North Minneapolis that currently use solar and wind energy and how these technologies translate into energy savings. (\$5,000)

MN Renewable NOW: Solstar Rooftop Solar Project

Minneapolis, MN – MN Renewable Now is creating a program to offer rooftop solar power systems to properties on the near Northside of Minneapolis, and to flip the ownership to the property owners. We have identified a Project Manager, Engineer, Solar Assessor, Residential Contractor, and solar installers who are all Black/African-American and all reside within North Minneapolis. As a bonus, through this project (which will become a program), we will provide solar installation and OSHA training to those interested in choosing solar as a career path. The property owners will be responsible for solar assessments fee, and transfer of ownership. Community members will be receiving a \$30,000 solar installation for under \$2,000. (\$5,000)

HOURCAR: Electric Vehicle Community Mobility Project

Saint Paul, MN – HOURCAR plans to launch the Twin Cities Electric Vehicle Mobility Project in partnership with Xcel Energy, the City of Saint Paul and the City of Minneapolis. The ultimate aim of this project is to increase affordable access to electric vehicle car-sharing, increase publicly available electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and expand outreach on renewable energy transportation options to historically underserved communities. Under this project plan, about half of the car-sharing hubs will be located in ACP50 communities (area of concentrated poverty, >50% people of color). A strategy for deep engagement in these communities is planned in partnership with embedded community organizations, with a goal of better understanding barriers to access, as well as exploring options to guide and overcome these barriers for more equitable car-share access and usage in these historically underserved communities. (\$5,000)

NORTHEAST REGION

Ecolibrium3: Duluth Citizens' Climate Action Plan

Duluth, MN – Ecolibrium3 will work with the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Duluth Climate and Energy Network to develop a Citizens' Climate Action Plan to guide implementation of sustainability-focused projects, programs, and behavioral change in Duluth over the next five years.

This effort will involve five public engagement sessions and visioning gatherings to look at ways that all citizens can participate in building a greener, more equitable Duluth. The CERTs Seed Grant award will help cover the costs of a facilitator for visioning gatherings. (\$5,000)



The Boreal Farm: Food Preservation with Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy

Duluth, MN – The Boreal Farm was founded as a teaching farm and living classroom for local farmers and students. One of the greatest issues facing farmers is the need for a long-term, high volume, energy efficient means of food preservation; this includes a need for storage systems for everything from fruits and vegetables to cured meat and seeds. The Boreal Farm plans to apply renewable energy and modern technologies in a traditional food preservation method of root cellaring by re-purposing precast concrete septic tanks. By coupling this with solar and wind, and by applying geothermal principles, they will create an efficient, duplicable, low-cost food preservation system to meet the needs of farmers and other artisan food crafters. (\$5,000)

through design LLC: Here Comes the Sun – Family Education Workshops

Duluth, MN – through design LLC, a Duluth-based architecture firm, will work in partnership with the Family Freedom Center, the American Indian Community Housing Organization (AICHO), and Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light to develop a community workshop focused on presenting solar energy information and opportunities to communities experiencing racial and economic inequality. Community members will participate in discussions on renewable energy, climate change, and economic justice, including ways that they can participate and lead in the solar energy revolution. Guest speakers at the event will also provide information on education, training, and jobs in the clean energy sector. The workshop will also present opportunities for attendees to participate in future events relating to solar energy and related educational and creative initiatives. (\$5,000)

City of Grand Marais: Municipal Fleet Electric Vehicle Suitability Assessment

Grand Marais, MN – The City of Grand Marais will conduct a study using Geotab telematics devices and Sawatch Labs analytics software in municipal vehicles to gather data that will help identify opportunities for integrating electric vehicles (EVs) into the city fleet. The City will install telematics devices and engage consulting services to conduct the research, data analysis, and education necessary to successfully identify EV integration opportunities and present these findings to the city council. The ultimate hope is that this study will construct a sound rationale for purchasing electric vehicles for the Grand Marais fleet, thus furthering the city's goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2040, as well as share the findings with neighboring communities in Cook county. (\$5,000)

NORTHWEST REGION



Care and Share of Crookston: Building upgrades for efficiency, safety, and comfort

Crookston, MN – We are a homeless shelter, soup kitchen, and food shelf that serves low-income and disproportionately minority community members. Grant funds will cover three improvement projects to keep the weather out, make our building more efficient, and save money. Installing a new window, putting in two new doors, and fixing our roof will also improve the safety and comfort of the building, not to mention the aesthetics. (\$5,000)

Opportunities in Science: Headwaters Science Center: Shine a Light on Science

Bemidji, MN – The Headwaters Science Center (HSC) was founded in 1994 to provide hands-on science and technology exploration in northern Minnesota. The Center will use its CERTs Seed Grant to replace outdated lighting in the building with energy-efficient LEDs. In addition to providing a brighter, more visitor-friendly atmosphere, these lights will serve as a science exhibit in their own right, demonstrating the benefits of energy-efficient lighting to the nearly 30,000 visitors who pass through the Center's doors each year. (\$8,277)

University of Minnesota Energy Transition Lab: Community-Scale Energy Storage Guide for Renewable Energy

Red Lake, MN – The Energy Transition Lab at the University of Minnesota will develop a user-friendly energy storage guide in both print and web-based decision tools for community-level sites that are interested in using energy storage to maximize their renewable energy systems. The funding from CERTs will provide some of the labor costs of battery installation at a demonstration site on the Red Lake Nation. This pilot project will benefit the local community and allow the Lab to gather information on the value of effective energy storage systems. (\$1,723)

University of Minnesota Crookston: LED Retrofit for Dowell Hall & Campus Education

Crookston, MN – The University of Minnesota Crookston will use the funding awarded by CERTs to install light controls and LED lights at Dowell Hall, one of the most heavily-used buildings on the campus. By posting signage throughout the building and conducting outreach to the broader Crookston community on the financial benefits of LED lighting, the University further hopes to educate students, faculty, and the general public about the practical advantages of adopting energy efficient infrastructure. (\$5,000)

SOUTHEAST REGION

Winona Climate Action Network: Winona DC Fast Charger for EVs

Winona, MN – The Winona Climate Action Network plans to help close the gap in electric vehicle charging stations in the Highway 61 corridor by installing three publicly-available stations on the grounds of Winona State University. These new chargers will elevate the visibility of electric vehicles within the Winona community and serve as a focal point for future community outreach efforts surrounding renewable energy transportation technologies. (\$3,030)



Ridgeway Community School: Ridgeway Community Solar Project

Houston, MN – The Ridgeway Community School will hire a contractor from paleBLUEdot to assist with the logistical and financial research necessary to develop a feasible plan for a photovoltaic array. The goal is to offset a portion of the school's electrical use and possibly also that of a handful of community member investors. The solar array would serve to both lighten the financial burden for the school and provide an example to the community of how clean energy technologies can cut down on utility bills. (\$2,000)

City of La Crescent: La Crescent Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

La Crescent, MN – The City of La Crescent will install two level two electric vehicle charging stations adjacent to the city's new event center and hotel. By installing these stations, La Crescent hopes to promote renewable energy-based transportation options, educate drivers on the lower operating costs associated with electric vehicles, provide electric vehicle charging options within the city itself. (\$3,030)

Mankato West High School YES! Team: Scarlets RetroLED the Hallways!

Mankato, MN – The YES! Team at Mankato West High School plans to reduce electricity usage by nearly 50% by replacing 731 lightbulbs in the school with energy-efficient LEDs. In addition to the estimated \$3,000 worth of savings generated annually from the upgrade, the team will use this opportunity to engage staff and students in critical thinking about energy usage, energy costs, and actions they can take to reduce their personal energy consumption. The CERTs Seed Grant will cover the labor costs for the electrician contracted to remove ballasts, rewire fixtures, and install the LED lamps. (\$5,000)

City of Northfield: Solar for Northfield

Northfield, MN – The City of Northfield's Climate Action Plan seeks to be 100% carbon free by 2040. Developing the city's solar potential is a critical step in achieving this ambitious goal. With this project, Northfield plans to create a citywide solar PV potentials study detailing both economic and environmental benefits. They further hope to identify the current energy usages of government buildings compared to regional/national peer groups, conduct outreach on renewable energy for affordable multi-family housing, and ultimately create a Solar PV Master Plan for City-owned facilities. CERTs Seed Grant funding will go towards engaging consulting services that will facilitate the process of research and development. (\$3,000)

City of Red Wing: City of Red Wing Climate Action Plan

Red Wing, MN – The City of Red Wing will hire a consultant to develop a Climate Action Plan that provides a comprehensive pathway addressing climate change in Red Wing. The City engaged in a two-year process of listening to the community in service of developing a Red Wing 2040 Community Plan that truly reflected the concerns of the city's constituents. One finding that emerged from these sessions was that a majority of the community wanted climate change to be recognized by the City in its actions and policies. Hiring a consultant to research and compile a Climate Action Plan is the first step in facilitating proactive decision-making to enhance the safety and long-term resilience of the Red Wing community. (\$3,030)

Rochester Parks and Recreation: Prairie House Battery Storage at Quarry Hill Nature Center

Rochester, MN – The Quarry Hill Park and Nature Center (QHP&NC) provides free, outdoor activities and educational programming for the greater Rochester community. Its solar system produced 8.8 MWh of energy in its first year, double the amount required for the building's functions, but was unable to store the surplus energy. With this grant, QHP&NC will partner with Solar Connection--installers of the original solar panel system--to connect batteries for storage and use of renewable energy onsite. The center's high profile and strong community connection mean that this project will serve as a model for other buildings in the region and provide opportunities for community education on the benefits of renewable energy coupled with storage. (\$910)

SOUTHWEST REGION



United Community Action Partnership, Inc.: In Home Education and Energy Saving Program

Southwest MN – The United Community Action Partnership (United CAP) plans to work with clients in Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, and Redwood counties to conduct in-home education sessions on energy upgrades and weatherization for eligible applicants. Clients may not be aware of opportunities to save on their energy bills and reduce consumption, but, by assessing their homes in person, United CAP will be able to determine if they are viable candidates for weatherization or appliance replacement. Energy savings in these cases provide significant financial benefits to clients. The funds provided by the CERTs Seed Grant will cover the cost of the staff labor required for effective outreach and implementation of this project. (\$5,000)

Marshall-Lyon County Library: Get Wired at Marshall-Lyon County Library

Marshall, MN – When the Marshall-Lyon County Library opened in 2011, the county hoped that the combination of the geothermal heating/cooling system and updated light fixtures would cut down on utility costs, allowing more public funds to go to acquiring additional materials for the library's collection and expanding programs offered to residents. However, by 2016, the electric bill for the building was on schedule to exceed \$50,000 annually. The Library has made tweaks to the geothermal system and instituted other strategic changes that have cut down on these costs significantly, but replacing fluorescent bulbs remains the last big step to true efficiency. With the funds provided by the CERTs Seed Grant, they will finally be able to close the gap between aspiration and reality by retrofitting the building with LED lamps and fixtures. (\$2,500)

Balaton EDA: Balaton Business Energy Efficiency CERT Partnership

Balaton, MN – The City of Balaton Economic Development Authority (EDA) will use CERTs funding to facilitate energy efficient improvements to selected businesses in the community. In a small town like Balaton, businesses are vital to the strength of the local tax base, and improving energy efficiency for the facilities that house these enterprises will improve their bottom line and reduce energy consumption in ways that boost the vitality of the local economy and encourage entrepreneurship. (\$3,750)

The New Ulm Turnverein, Inc.: Gym Electrical Upgrades

New Ulm, MN – Turner Hall Gymnastics is the oldest continuing program in the state of Minnesota. Their low-cost gymnastics programming provides instruction to youth 18 months to 18 years of age, and has managed to keep enrollment levels sustainable for over a century. The facility currently uses an outdated breaker box to turn the lights off and on in the gym, a stopgap measure that is both inefficient and potentially hazardous. They will use their CERTs Seed Grant award to replace the breaker box with appropriate lighting infrastructure that is both safer and more energy efficient. (\$5,000)

City of Slayton EDA: Façade Improvement/Energy Efficiency Program

Slayton, MN – The City of Slayton Economic Development Authority (EDA) plans to incorporate an energy efficiency component in their existing commercial façade improvement program. Under this reimbursable program, entrepreneurs in Slayton apply to receive up to a 35% grant for improvements to the façade of their business. By ensuring that businesses no longer “bleed” money that they could be saving with energy efficient upgrades to their buildings, the EDA will generate economic benefits for the Slayton community as a whole. (\$3,750)

WEST CENTRAL REGION

United Community Action Partnership, Inc.: In Home Education and Energy Saving Program

West Central MN – The United Community Action Partnership (United CAP) plans to work with clients in Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, and Renville counties to conduct in-home education sessions on energy upgrades and weatherization for eligible applicants. Clients may not be aware of opportunities to save on their energy bills and reduce consumption, but, by assessing their homes in person, United CAP will be able to determine if they are viable candidates for weatherization or appliance replacement. Energy savings in these cases provide significant financial benefits to clients. The funds provided by the CERTs Seed Grant will cover the cost of the staff labor required for effective outreach and implementation of this project. (\$5,000)



University of Minnesota Morris Campus: Community-Scale Energy Storage Guide for Renewable Energy

Morris, MN – The University of Minnesota-Morris, in partnership with the Energy Transition Lab, will develop a user-friendly energy storage guide and both print and web-based decision tools for community-level sites that are interested in using energy storage to maximize their renewable energy systems. This pilot project will benefit local communities and allow the Lab to gather valuable information on the value of effective energy storage systems in implementing successful clean energy projects within Minnesota communities. (\$4,000)

Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center: YES! Students Install Home Energy Kits

Spicer, MN – YES! students in grades 7 to 12 will install energy-saving devices at home. YES! will create a partnership with their local energy utility, assemble and distribute the Home Energy Kit with educational materials and a checklist to students, and then work with students to implement the Kit in their household. (\$5,000)

Greater Milan Initiative: Milan Community Center LED Retrofit Project

Milan, MN – The Greater Milan Initiative (GMI) will work in collaboration with its partners to retrofit the old Milan school building/community center with LED bulbs. The community center provides a comfortable, welcoming space to host recreational and educational activities such as sports and wellness events, family parties, church services, and meetings of the monthly 4-H club. Completion of the project will both increase the facility's energy efficiency and increase cost savings that will, in turn, allow GMI to allocate funding towards other community programming and capital projects. (\$4,200)

Winthrop Market, LLC: Market LED Lighting Upgrade for Sales Floor and Backroom

Winthrop, MN – Winthrop Market will replace 218 T8 and 6 T12 fixtures in its facility with new, energy-efficient LED bulbs. They are engaging a local electrical contractor to complete the project, and estimate that the switch will save them an average of \$2000 in utility bills per year. (\$1,800)