



OFFICE OF  
**CLIMATE ACTION**

# We Are Eco-City

Engaging the Community on Climate Action



# Community Engagement and Climate Justice Manager



Developing the position



The importance of my role – connection with EAP



Establishing Alexandria as a leader in the Environment



Ensuring everything is driven by Climate Justice

# Learning, Adapting, Acting Quickly

## Learning

- Posts alone don't result in follow-up
- Twitter & Facebook have little impact
- Campaigns that ask for input = action
- People like videos
- Can't be everywhere
- Must select 1 or 2 messages, not "all"
- Not enough time for *real* engagement

## Adapting & Acting

- Tailor programs for easy 1<sup>st</sup> participation
- Provide deeper involvement later
- Design programs for shared branding
  - (e.g. Eco-City Homes + Stormwater)
- Build specific campaigns
- More interactive content



# Communications

## ► What we learned

It is hard to find communications that works for everyone.

## ► What we found

- Repeating
- Partnering
- Tailoring





# Goal: Establish the Eco-City Brand



**Objectives:** Become a credible source of environmental information.

Expand our digital and in-person reach.



**Metrics:** Increase the number of people we reached out by July 2026.



# Goal: Drive direct adoption of OCA programs



**Objective:** Boost Eco-City Business and Eco-City Homes Program participation.



**Metrics:** Enroll 25 new businesses each quarter into the Eco-City Business program, and 250 Eco-City Homes by March 2026.



# Goal: Have Community Ownership on Environmental Action



**Objective:** Equip local partners with information to promote Eco-City initiatives.



**Metrics:** Number of co-lead events/partnerships and number of people we talked to.





# Getting it Done

- Campaigns and Programs
- Partnership Development
  - Eco-City Coordinating Group
- Equity Action Plan





# Campaigns and Programs



Eco-City  
Academy

Eco-City  
Ambassadors

Eco-City  
Advocates

We Are  
Eco-City

Act Now!

Multifamily  
Challenge  
Program

Solarize  
& Solar Switch

EVs -Plug In  
Alexandria

Eco-City  
Homes  
Program

Eco-City  
Business  
Program



# Eco-City Academy, Ambassadors, and Advocates

The Alexandria Eco-City Academy provides an opportunity for Alexandrians to **learn about the City's climate goals, services, and programs**, and empower them to help others take advantage of programs and take individual actions.







# Act Now Campaign

Motivate Alexandrians to apply for available federal tax credits before they expire.

Act Now!  
Federal Tax Credits  
are Expiring Soon.



Swipe to learn how  
you can qualify



.....



**Solar Tax  
Credits Are  
Ending.**

Go Solar with



Sign up by August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Visit [solarizeva.org](https://solarizeva.org) to get started!



# Preparing for Winter with Eco-City Homes

- Winter Ready Kits
- Energy Efficiency at Home
- Community Care
  - Shelter and warming centers
  - Neighbors
- Weatherization assistance.





# We Are Eco-City

## January 2026

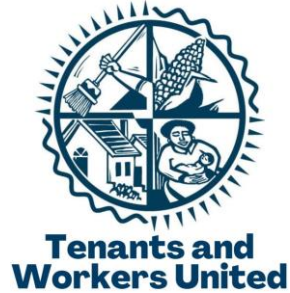
Alexandria's journey to becoming an Eco-City is powered by people, the dedicated employees and departments who make sustainability part of everyday life.

- Showcase the people behind the progress
- Inspire individual and collective action
- Promote a unified message

We are Eco-City .... And so are you!



# Partnership Development





# Eco-City Coordinating Group

The Eco-City Coordinating Group exists to create one **unified City voice on sustainability**, foster **cross-department collaboration**, and ensure **Alexandrians are informed and engaged** in building a greener, more resilient community.

Reinforces **responsibility across** all departments.





# Equity Action Plan

Advancing climate impact **solutions** that **prioritize** social **equity** and environmental justice for all.

- **Multifamily Focus**



- **Ambassadors Program**



- **Contractors Program**



- **Community Engagement Program**







# Out & About





# Eco-City Business





# Goal: Business Participation + Action

- ▶ EAP specifically lists creation of a green business recognition program
- ▶ EAP and ECCAP recognize the need for private sector action





# Initial Program Launch

- ▶ Engaged business associations, AEDP, Visit ALX in developing application
- ▶ Presented to AEDP, Visit ALX, business associations; announced in their newsletters
- ▶ Announced launch via eNews, social media, Zebra article
- ▶ Feedback: wanted more direct support
  - ▶ “Office hour” workshops (in-person and virtual)
  - ▶ Contacted businesses individually (in-person and virtual) + volunteer canvassing from CCAN
- ▶ Ongoing social media; connections with business associations/AEDP/Visit ALX





# Challenge: Limited Participation

7 applications in the first year

- ▶ 5 received recognition (1 since closed) = **4 participants**
- ▶ Participants were *active* but few

**Learned:** need something more approachable; want more ongoing support



# Solution: Program Revamp

- ▶ New focus on commitment/challenge, networking
- ▶ Still includes recognition
- ▶ New application: <2 minutes to complete
- ▶ Existing action not required
- ▶ Make commitment to action and attend events



# Eco-City Businesses



Alx  
& Co.



HOLISTIC  
H  
HAIR STUDIO



**TREK**  
ALEXANDRIA  
*Sustainably D Marie*



PIPPIN  
TOY CO.



salon  
deZEN



MAD  
BUILDS



ATLAS  
• BREW WORKS •



DISTRICT  
**Biscuit**  
COMPANY





# Looking ahead

## ▶ **Webinars**

- ▶ Stormwater utility fee
- ▶ 2026 – new Dominion programs/funds

## ▶ **Business engagement**

- ▶ Newsletter
- ▶ Bandcamp
- ▶ Coordination on promotion

## ▶ **Adding hotels**



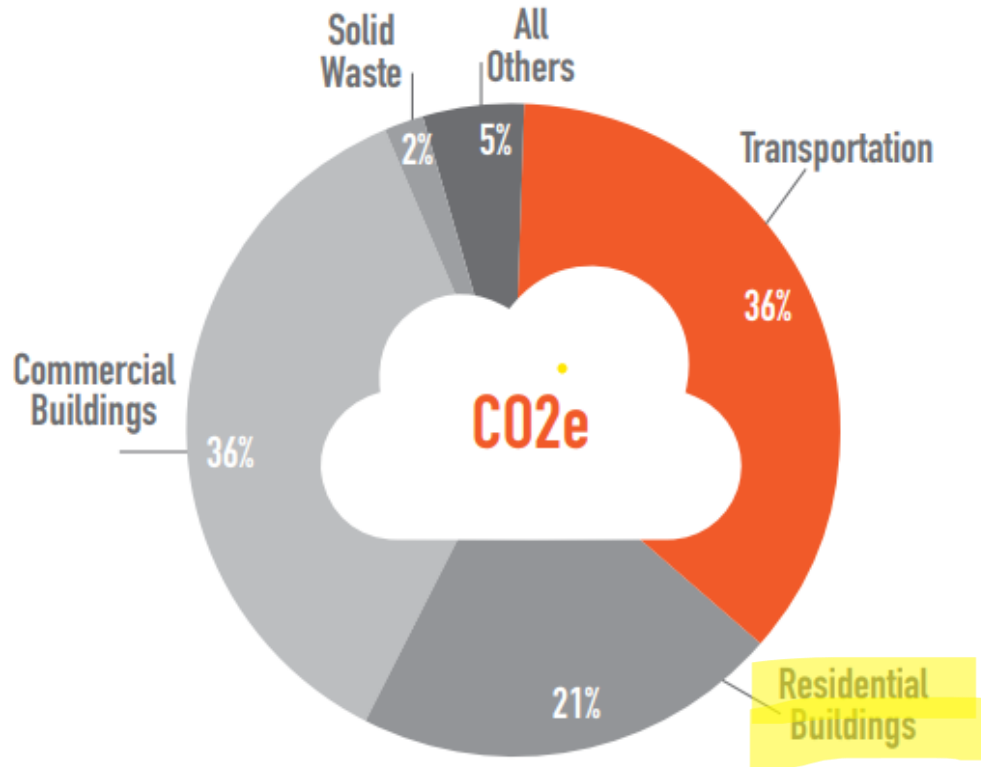
# Eco-City Homes





# Goal: Residential action

Carbon dioxide equivalent emissions  
from the City's 2015 GHG Inventory



The contribution of City emissions from various sectors of the community show that the majority emissions are from the built environment, followed by transportation.

By 2030

- ▶ **53,000** energy efficient housing units (retrofits + new builds)
- ▶ **49%** existing housing uses electric heating\*

\*already met!





# Goal: Residential action

- ▶ Goal: Encourage residents to practice sustainability
- ▶ Approach:
  - ▶ Identify specific actions and provide **resources** and **recognition**
  - ▶ **Visual** recognition to spur further action
- ▶ Developed application with **EPC**







## Eco-City Homes

Would you like to...

- ✓ Save money?
- ✓ Stay comfortable inside?
- ✓ Have healthy air quality at home?
- ✓ Qualify for up to thousands of dollars in tax credits?

Check out Eco-City Homes!

- ✓ Guidance on the most effective actions
- ✓ Tips on financial incentives
- ✓ Recognition program

Visit the Eco-City Homes website

**Eco-City Homes:**  
Efficient. Comfortable. Healthy.

### Apply for the Eco-City Homes Recognition Program!

- Open to all Alexandrians
- Receive a yard sign and window cling
- Get resources and guidance to help in your sustainability journey
- Save money and have a comfortable, efficient, and healthy home
- Help Alexandria reach our climate goals!

It's as easy as 1-2-3:

**Step 1:** Select from the three applications (homeowner, condo owner, or renter)

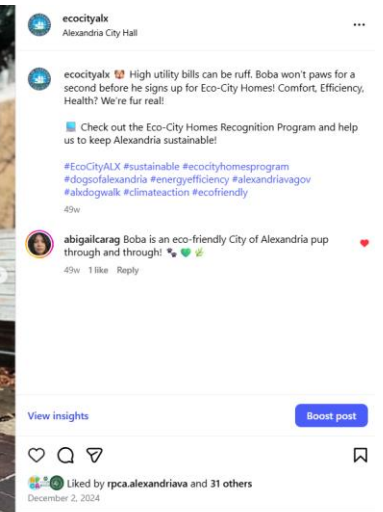
**Step 2:** Fill out the short online application

**Step 3:** Get recognized!

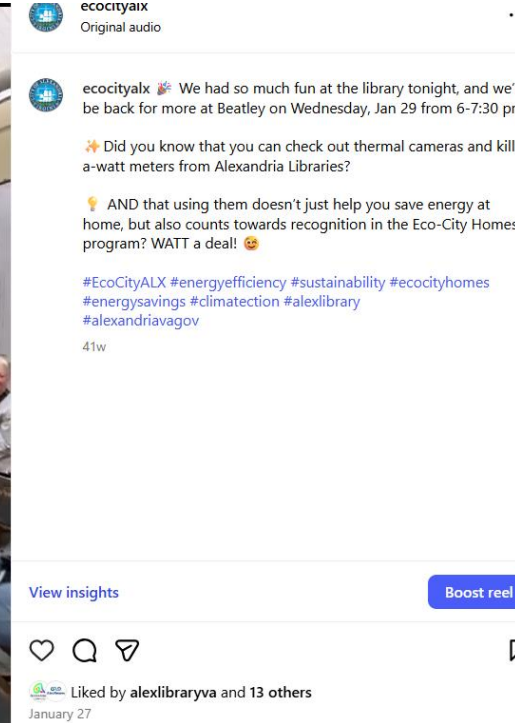
**Homeowner**

**Condo owner**

**Renter**



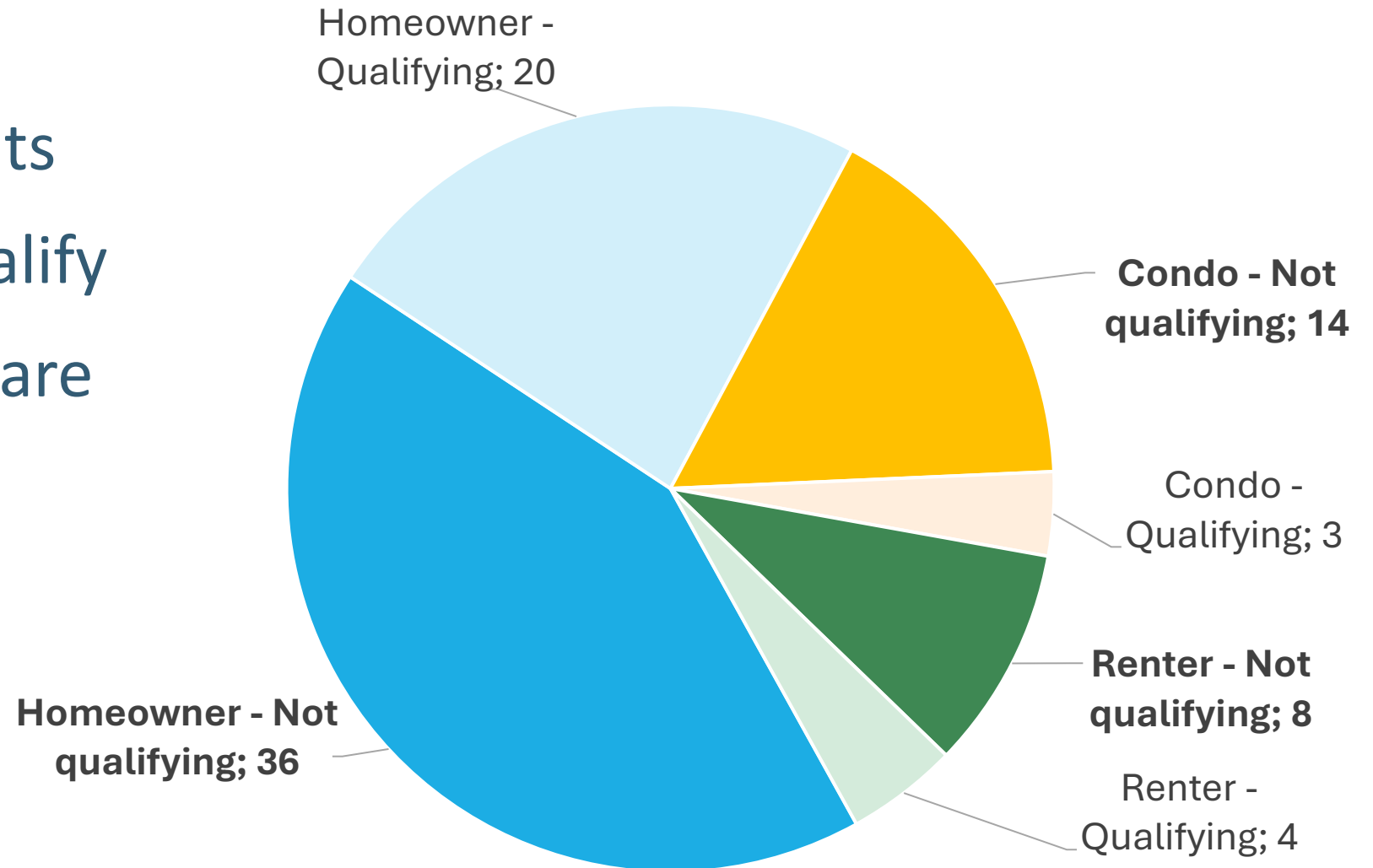
# Initial launch efforts





# Initial launch results

- ▶ 85 total applicants
- ▶ Most did not qualify
- ▶ Most applicants are homeowners





# Solution: Update to points system + outreach

## Updating to points system:

Addressing application: recognition issue

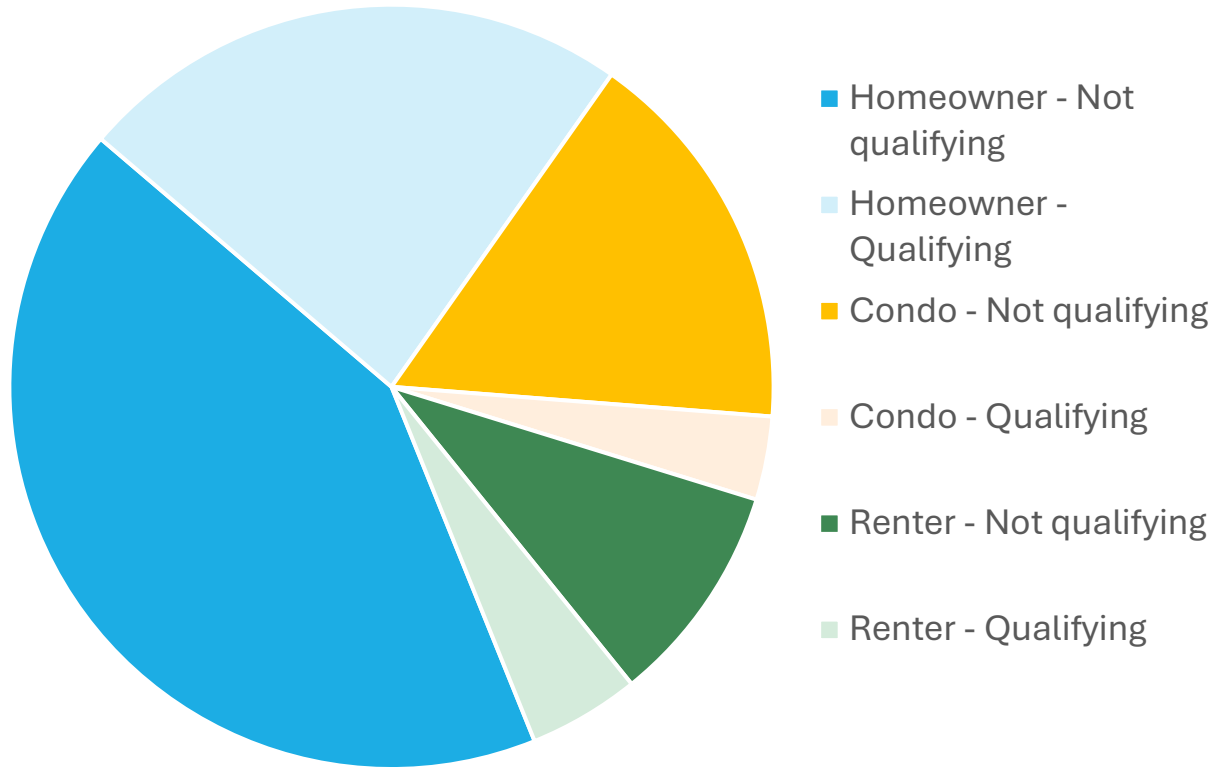
- ▶ Assigned points to questions
- ▶ Points add to tier thresholds

| Homeowner  | Condo Owner  | Renter  |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standard tier: 20 points</li><li>• Silver tier: 60 points</li><li>• Gold tier: 90 points</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standard tier: 20 points</li><li>• Silver tier: 40 points</li><li>• Gold tier: 75 points</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standard tier: 10 points</li><li>• Silver tier: 20 points</li></ul> |

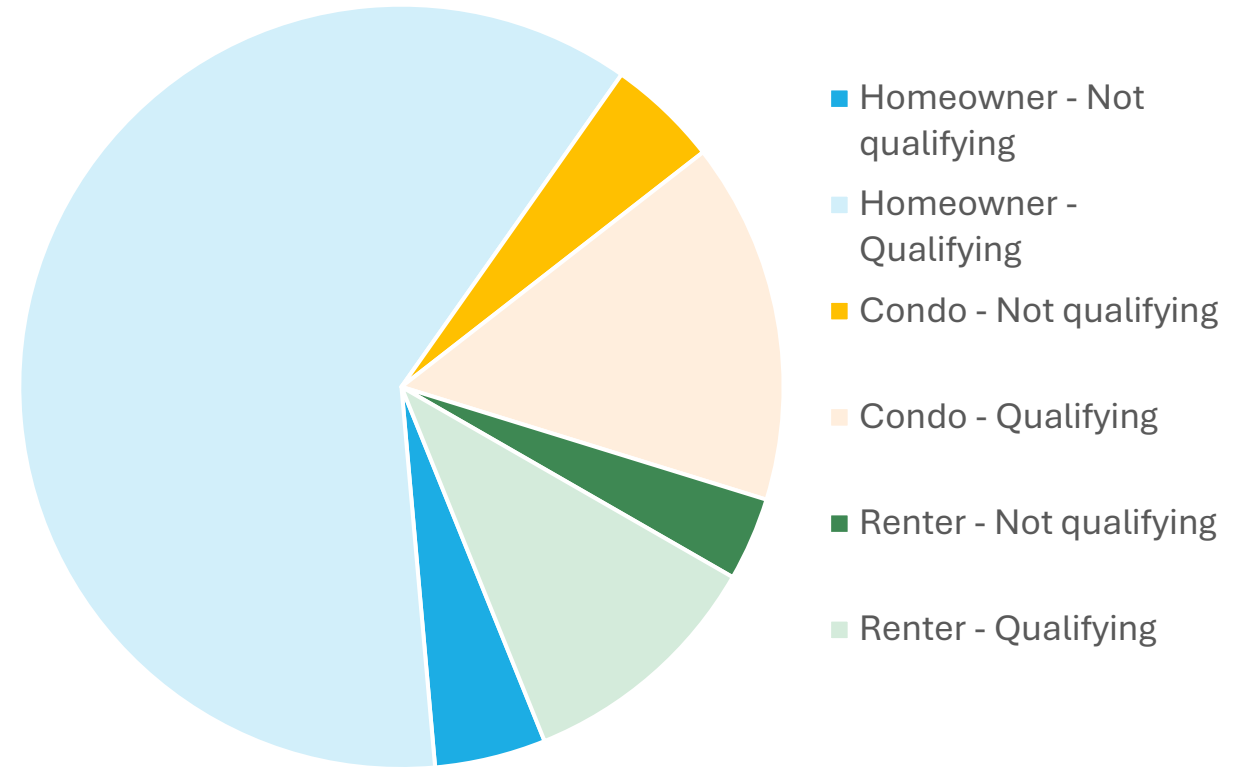


# Solution: Update to points system

## Before



## After







# Solution: Outreach campaign

- ▶ Incentive giveaway
- ▶ Multifamily outreach
- ▶ Social media, eNews, connection with community leaders







# Looking ahead

- ▶ ECH program recruitment
  - ▶ Incentives
  - ▶ Multifamily
- ▶ Electrify Alexandria campaign

The logo for "GO ELECTRIC DMV" with a lightning bolt icon and a plug icon.

**Helping neighbors in the DMV area electrify their homes**

Navigating the switch to an all-electric home is easier with our local volunteer team of electric coaches by your side.

[CONNECT WITH A COACH](#)



# **Multifamily Existing Buildings**

## **Challenge Program**



### Scale of Action to Reduce GHG Emissions in Alexandria

#### By 2030

- 53,000+ housing units retrofitted with efficiency upgrades or built to be high efficiency
- 49% of existing housing units use electric heating

#### By 2050

- 106,000+ housing units retrofitted with efficiency upgrades or built to be high efficiency
- 65% of existing housing units use electric heating

## Multifamily Existing Buildings

- ECCAP housing units retrofits
  - 53,000+ by 2030 106,000+ by 2050
- Majority of Alexandrians live in multifamily buildings
- Individual impact by renters is limited
- Owners/Operators need to be shown the benefits
- Condo owners can have more control over individual space (subject to CC&R's) and can influence/vote on common space improvements

# MF Challenge Goals



Develop opportunities to meet ECCAP goals



Incentivize action to reduce energy use and operational costs



Build community through friendly competition, challenge



1st. Phase targets renters

Minimum 6 participating MF rental buildings



2nd. Phase targets condo owners

Minimum 6 participating Condo Owners





# Owners/Operators Challenge

- Min. 5% energy reduction for recognition
- Commit to 1 year reporting energy usage
- To 'win' must engage Owners + Resident Council
- City provides technical resources & partnerships
- Report monthly progress Energy Star Portfolio  
Mgr





# Resident Teams/Council

- ▶ **Friendly competition between buildings**
- ▶ **Points for actions taken**
  - ▶ **LED lights installed**
  - ▶ **Programmable thermostats**
  - ▶ **Eco-City Home signups**
- ▶ **Regular meetings**



# City, partner resources

- ▶ City: provide technical information, resources, industry webinars, prizes
- ▶ 1-on-1 support to participants – Owners/operators and renters
- ▶ Potential Partners:
  - ▶ Local utilities – promote existing programs
  - ▶ Equipment/service providers
  - ▶ Real estate property organizations – AOBA, ULI
  - ▶ Retail – Home Depot, Lowe's