

# MUNICIPAL ENERGY CHAMPIONS

## PROGRAM GUIDEBOOK

**September 2020**

This guidebook provides an overview of the eligibility requirements, services available, and process for municipalities to participate in the Municipal Energy Champions program.



**Municipal  
Climate Change  
Action Centre**

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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Municipal Energy Champions (MEC) program supports small municipalities that have a low capacity for energy management, climate change planning, or emission reduction projects. Recognizing that smaller municipalities may only require short-term support; this program will offer free person-to-person outreach and advisory services to enable participation in energy management initiatives. Alberta municipalities have indicated that a shortage of staff with knowledge and skills as one of the largest barriers to energy management. The program aims to address this issue by teaching key skills and best practices to municipal staff and create Municipal Energy Champions

As a result of participation, Champions will be able to promote energy management for their municipalities. They will engage staff and council to increase the overall capacity within a municipality. Municipal Energy Champions will add long lasting capacity for their municipality, positively influence municipal operations, and identify opportunities for energy consumption reductions and energy cost reductions.

## SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

The MEC program offers free support for municipalities interested in developing Municipal Energy Champions. Education delivery, technical support, and coaching methods will be used over a 6-month period to build the municipality's internal capacity to better manage and reduce their energy consumption.

The Action Centre will support the municipality through the delivery of a step by step program where participating municipalities will:

1. Complete a baseline assessment.
2. Have all relevant municipal staff and council learn the basics of energy management.
3. Gather preliminary data of municipal energy consumption and define a scope of analysis.
4. Develop an energy profile for the defined scope of work.
5. Understand energy consumption trends in municipal facilities and how to look for energy efficiency improvements.
6. Present findings to all relevant municipal staff and council.
7. Learn how to construct an implementation plan and move forward in the energy management process.

The Champion(s) from the participating municipalities can expect to invest 40-80 hours of total time over the 6-month period to complete the program, starting in January 2021.

## ELIGIBILITY

### Eligible Participants

The following are eligible to participate in the Municipal Energy Champions:

- a. designated Municipalities within the province of Alberta). As per Section 1(s) of the Municipal Government Act, a “Municipality” is defined as:
  - I. a city, town, village, summer village, municipal district or specialized Municipality;
  - II. repealed 1995 c24 s2;
  - III. a town under the Parks Towns Act; or
  - IV. a Municipality formed by a special Act; or, if the context requires, the geographical area within the boundaries of a Municipality described in sub-clauses (i) to (iii).

The program will accept a maximum of 10 municipalities to work with.

### Ineligible Participants

The following are considered ineligible to participate:

- Non-profit organizations;
- Co-operative organizations;
- For-profit businesses;
- Indigenous communities;
- Institutions such as schools, hospitals, universities, or colleges. and;
- Other organizations deemed ineligible by the MCCAC.

### Description of Need

Interested municipalities must submit an Expression of Interest (EOI). Within in EOI, municipalities will be asked to provide background context including the rationale for applying for energy management support and their commitment to provide one or more municipal staff to participate in the program. This description of need should highlight how participating in MEC will address existing barriers. At least one Champion must be identified, to lead the municipality through the program steps.

The Action Centre will review each application to measure the municipality’s justification of need and accept program participants on a case-by-case basis. Selection will be made on the perceived need for energy management support. Each application will be evaluated against all other applications equally.

Criteria that may be used to select participating municipalities include:

- Existing energy management capabilities
- Availability of staff (a minimum of 40 hours commitment is required)
- Scope of proposed facilities and/or other assets to be considered as part of the program
- Number of staff dedicated to utilities or energy management
- Municipal staff roles and responsibilities
- Size of municipality (population)
- Participation in other MCCAC programs

## OUTCOMES

As a result of this program, municipalities will be able to:

- Understand the importance of energy management
- Determine what kind of approach to energy planning is best suited for their municipality
- Create an inventory of their corporate energy consumption to understand their energy use
- Take charge of energy planning by identifying opportunities to save energy and related costs in your municipality
- Develop a preliminary energy management plan for their municipality based on informed energy decisions

## PARTICIPATION TIMELINE

### 1 – Submit an Expression of Interest (EOI)

Municipalities must submit an EOI to notify the Action Centre of their interest in participating in the Municipal Energy Champions program. EOIs will be screened by the Action Centre to identify 10 municipalities best suited to participate in the program. Completion of the EOI does not secure a place as a participant. Municipalities will be notified if their EOI was successful or unsuccessful.

### 2 – Letter of Commitment

Successful municipalities will sign a Letter of Commitment (see Appendix 1) which outlines the responsibilities of the selected Champions to engage in activities outlined below. Upon signing a Letter of Commitment, municipalities are formally admitted to the program. At this step municipalities confirm the primary municipal contact that are taking on the Municipal Energy Champion role. Multiple Champions within a municipality may be identified.

### 3 – Program Launch Webinar

Champions attend a launch webinar. Champions are also provided an opportunity to meet each other. This step creates an initial understanding of program goals and fosters networking between participating municipalities.

### 4 – Baseline Assessment

Champions from each participating municipality will complete a pre-participation interview. This step provides local context of any existing energy management practices and begins to define the scope of energy analysis.

### 5 – Complete Energy Management Basics Learning Activity

The activity uses energy management basics education material developed for the Action Centre by the Canadian Institute for Energy Training. 3 modules will be covered in this section, Global Trends in Energy and GHG emissions, Energy Basics, and Energy Management Basics. This online webinar will be delivered to all relevant municipal staff and / or council members. The schedule will determine with the

Champions. This step creates a general understanding on the importance of energy management with a municipality.

#### **6 – Collect Municipal Energy Information**

Champions will work with the Action Centre to collect information on where, when, why, and how energy is being used in their operations. If the participating municipalities have existing inventories or records, the Action will provide feedback on the existing system. The Champion will propose a scope of energy analysis to the Action Centre. This step starts to create an understanding of municipal energy use and define the scope of energy analysis to be completed.

#### **7 – Quantify Energy Use**

The Action Centre will use energy bills, costs records, and other data from the inventory, to establish an energy profile for the defined scope of work. Detail and quality of analysis will be dependent on the proposed scope by the Champion. This step allows for a quantification for how much energy is being used by the municipality. Tracking and recording energy use allow for a comparison against a set standard of best practice, other energy users, or future energy consumption.

#### **8 – Understand Energy Consumption in Buildings**

Participating municipalities will be provided with resources that can enable them to conduct simple assessments of their own buildings. Resources that evaluate behaviors that impact energy consumption will also be provided. This step provided knowledge of how to look for energy efficiency improvements in buildings.

#### **9 – Presentation of Findings**

The Action Centre and Champions will present the findings of the energy profile and trend analysis to relevant municipal staff and council members. This step creates an organizational wide understanding of the current local energy management context.

#### **10– Complete Implementation Planning and Continuing Success Learning Activity**

This activity uses energy management education material developed by the Canadian Institute for Energy Training for the Action Centre. 2 Modules will be delivered in this session, Municipal Energy Plans, and Energy Efficiency Financing. The learning materials for continuing success will cover other advisory or funding opportunities available to participating municipalities. Multiple Champions may be invited to participate in these learning sessions together. The schedule and location are to be determined with participating municipalities. The goal of this step is to help municipalities determine an approach in developing an implementation plan.

## EVALUATION

Participating municipalities will be invited to provide feedback on the MEC outcomes at the beginning of the program. Municipalities will also be asked to help the Action Centre determine the extent to which the MEC program achieved the intended outcomes and objectives at the end of the program.

Participating municipalities will also be asked to reflect on their participation in the program and provide testimonials for the Action Centre to use in reviewing and communicating the program's impact.

The findings from the project will help inform future energy extension services, open to all AUMA and RMA members. This work is funded by the Community Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Grant awarded to the AUMA by the Government of Alberta.

## COMMITMENT

Participation in MEC offers municipalities the opportunity to learn more about how municipal energy management can improve municipal operations, reduce utility costs and build the internal capacity needed to identify and implement energy projects. The Action Centre requires participating municipalities to be fully committed and dedicated to completing each step in the program. Active participation means that municipalities will dedicate a minimum of one municipal staff member to each step of the program over the six-month schedule.

Each participating municipality will be required to complete a Letter of Commitment (see Appendix 1). This letter formalizes acceptance into the program and establishes the foundational working relationship between the Action Centre and participating municipalities.

The Action Centre wants to assure you of our commitment to supporting your participation in the MEC program. To advance energy management in your municipality, the Action Centre will ensure you have a productive and meaningful experience that sets the stage for future work. The Letter of Commitment clarifies the expectations of both parties in relation to the length of time commitment, confidentiality, learning event attendance and completion of the activities identified in the Municipal Energy Champions Guidebook.

Municipalities are responsible for all activities completed by their Municipal Energy Champion. The Action Centre nor any of its affiliates shall be liable to the municipality or to any other party for damages to property or injuries to persons caused by, or arising from, any activities associated with this program.

## CONTACT US

Questions about this program may be directed to:

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## APPENDIX 1. LETTER OF COMMITMENT

This Letter of Commitment clarifies the working relationship between the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre and the \_\_\_\_\_ (Municipality) and the formal acceptance of participate in the Municipal Energy Champions program beginning on \_\_\_\_\_ and ending on \_\_\_\_\_.

The Municipal Climate Change Action Centre commits to:

- Delivering program supports for a six-month period in a flexible format
- Providing information and training to advance energy management skills
- Explaining the purpose of the program and providing the support and encouragement needed to achieve the desired results
- Assigning you a named staff-person who will provide you with regular support throughout the program
- Receiving comments and feedback to improve the program
- Recognizing your commitment in achieving the goals of the program

The Municipality commits to:

- Appoint one (or more) staff members to be identified as a Municipal Energy Champion
- Recognizing the Municipal Energy Champion as a significant obligation
- Committing to spend 40 hours to the program, at minimum, over a six-month period
- Fulfilling each step in the MEC program as outlined in the program guidebook
- Coordinating with the Action Centre to meet program deliverables
- Actively participate in all program activities and requests for assistance and feedback
- Profiling the work of the Municipal Energy Champion across the municipality

### Acknowledgement

I have read and fully agree to this Letter of Commitment and the program guidebook. I look forward to working with the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre and advancing energy management efforts in our operations through a Municipal Energy Champion.

Our appointed Municipal Energy Champion(s) is identified below:

Champion Name	Champion Email	Champion Phone Number

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name:

Title:



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