



Davis and Georgetown University Energy Prize Background Briefing

Introduction

Davis has been selected as a semi-finalist in the Georgetown University Energy prize, a nationwide competition that challenges medium size communities across the US to rethink their energy use, and implement creative strategies to increase efficiency. \$5 million dollars will be given to the city that demonstrates the most success in sustainably reducing energy consumption over a two-year period. The City of Davis, Davis Joint Unified School District and Cool Davis have partnered to seek to win the prize.

What is the purpose of the Georgetown University Energy prize?

The Georgetown University Energy Prize was launched formally in April 2014 and is the result of years of study and development that brought leading academics together with government officials, industry professionals, and top national and global non-governmental organizations. It hopes to use the prize to spur innovative local approaches to the difficult challenge of energy efficiency that can then be showcased to a national audience? [More information: www.guep.org](http://www.guep.org)

What is the timeline and process for the prize?

Over 70 communities participated in the application and quarterfinalist rounds during 2014. On January 14, 2015, the semi-finalist communities - including Davis - will be announced. These semi-finalists will now compete through 2016 to reduce their energy consumption in order to make it into the Finalist round in 2017.

The finalists will be decided on their ability to demonstrate:

- Reductions of energy consumption, sustained over a two-year period with significant improvements in adoption rates.
- Evidence that their actions are replicable and scalable in other communities across the country.

Why the focus on energy efficiency?

Energy efficiency is one of the most cost-effective ways to both meet energy needs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The energy saved through investments in efficiency eclipses the energy generated by any other single fuel source, including coal, oil, gas, biofuels, and solar. But America ranks only 9th worldwide in terms of overall energy efficiency and 4th for energy efficiency of buildings. Moreover the adoption rate for energy efficiency programs, such as home retrofits, remains very low despite various initiatives. According to GUEP, "this is a 'stuck' problem and we need serious, breakthrough thinking to improve America's energy standing for the future."

Why is Davis taking part in the Georgetown Prize?

Davis has entered the competition both to win \$5 million for energy efficiency work in this town, but also because it will strengthen and support our existing goals to reduce our community's greenhouse gas emissions (GHG).

What are our Davis' existing goals on energy efficiency?

In 2010, Davis City Council voted unanimously to adopt the City of Davis Climate action plan. This sets goals to reduce carbon emissions by 15% below 1990 levels by 2015 and to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. 75% of Davis GHG are associated with home energy use and personal transportation, which means that the whole community has to be involved to meet these goals.

Who is Cool Davis?

Cool Davis was established in October 2010 to implement the City of Davis Climate Action and Adaptation plan. It is an active network of residents, community organizations and local businesses with a mission to inspire our community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to a changing climate, and improve the quality of life for all - while having fun in the process. It is now a coalition with over 60 community partners, and is known for its annual Festival in October each year which attracts thousands of residents for its information booths, kids activities, a bike circus, food exhibits and the way it showcases the best of Davis' sustainability efforts. More information: www.cooldavis.org

What are Cool Davis plans?

Cool Davis has identified three major areas of green-house gas emissions where we will focus our reduction efforts within the community:

1. Built energy – efficiency, conservation and energy production for our homes and commercial buildings
2. Transportation – helping the community shift to non-fossil fuel vehicles and modes
3. Consumption – reducing consumption and waste of food, water, and goods and services

In the last year, Cool Davis has been working on strategies to address each of these areas and been fundraising to mobilize the money to deliver on our goals. With the help of some Civics park Interns, Cool Davis will be reaching out in 2015 and 2016 to the whole Davis community with specific support and strategies that will help Davis households - of all kinds - reduce their GHG while saving money and improving quality of life at the same time.

Davis' Cool Accomplishments

Cool Davis has a strong track record of packed public events - particularly our annual festivals that attract 2000+ participants. In 2013, Cool Davis engaged 450 households in a program to reduce energy and transport emissions that led to Davis being crowned the 'Coolest City' in California by the Air Resources Board outscoring seven other cities for our residents' reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Cool Davis also supports and integrates other sustainability initiatives throughout Davis that have also led to widespread and nationwide recognition. For example in 2012, UC Davis was named America's 'Coolest school' by the Sierra Club for its efforts to address climate change and sustainability. We similarly look to build on learning from UC Davis and projects

such as the UC Davis West Village, the largest planned zero net energy community in the United States

Why does Davis think we can win?

We believe we have a good chance of winning because we have already won a statewide competition and forged a strategy, experience and a team that can now win at a national level. We can combine academic excellence and research insights from UC Davis with strong experience of community outreach through Cool Davis. The strategy we presented to qualify as a semi-finalist is unique in the way it combines:

- Deep data mining – staff will research and document property data from first built to current status, compare building permit information and GIS data to develop analytics and coding to identify properties that would benefit from energy upgrades.
- Identifying new financing and rebate incentives for single family and multi-family units.
- Focusing efforts primarily on energy-intensive low-income neighborhoods.
- Attracting and utilizing Energy Ambassadors in every neighborhood to assist with door-to-door outreach and neighbor-to-neighbor engagement.
- Hosting workshops on how residents can DIY their home to reduce energy usage.
- Trying radically unique approaches to behavior change, using gamification or the latest methods in social science research.

What can I do?

Take Action and become a Cool Home by filling out the Cool Homes survey on the CoolDavis website - www.cooldavis.org - This will help you track what you have already done, give advice, top tips and support on what you can do to reduce energy and save money in your home, and help move our community towards winning the prize.