

## Overview of Federal Funding Opportunities For Buncombe County Arising from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL):

**The following opportunities are organized according to the role, responsibility, and structure of Buncombe County's sustainability efforts.**

County Sustainability Office: Discussions with Sustainability Director Jeremiah LeRoy regarding the County's commitment to 100% renewable energy by 2030 and focus on increasing distributed solar generation led to the following opportunities being identified:

- **Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant:** This program has broad applicability for local communities to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. We are awaiting further guidance on how this program will be implemented as the current version slightly modifies eligible use of funds from the prior American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) era program. It is likely that this will be in the form of formula funds directly distributed to the county. *Anticipated Fall 2022*
- **DOE Loan Program Office:** Given the scale of the programs envisioned for the County, DOE's Loan Program Office may be a unique opportunity as they have recently revised their loan program to invest more broadly in transformative local energy projects. Should the county proceed with the comprehensive plan for decarbonization of county buildings, DOE's LPO could provide a significant loan at a minimal interest rate.
- **Electric Vehicle Corridor and Community Charging Grants:** This program will support increased access to publicly accessible electric vehicle charging infrastructure either located on an alternative fuel corridor (Corridor Program) or located elsewhere (Community charging program). *In addition to this competitive program, the state is anticipated to receive \$109 million over 5 years via the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program. The state is obligated to develop a plan for implementing the NEVI program by August 1, 2022<sup>1</sup>. See: DOT NEVI Guidance<sup>2</sup>*

### **County Water Infrastructure Funding:**

There are numerous new drinking water, wastewater and stormwater opportunities that will become available due to the BIL. Focusing on the rural-urban interface of the County, these two opportunities were identified to support Low-to-Moderate Income communities. Further information about anticipated public works and drinking water, stormwater or wastewater projects could help identify more opportunities from the BIL.

- **Connection to Publicly Owned Treatment Works (Sec 50209):** EPA is establishing this grant program to support non-profits or public entities in assisting low-to-

---

<sup>1</sup> DOT Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Overview for North Carolina. January 21, 2022  
[https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2022-01/BIL\\_North\\_Carolina.pdf](https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2022-01/BIL_North_Carolina.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program Guidance. February 10, 2022 [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/alternative\\_fuel\\_corridors/nominations/90d\\_nevi\\_formula\\_program\\_guidance.pdf](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/alternative_fuel_corridors/nominations/90d_nevi_formula_program_guidance.pdf)

moderate income individuals in covering the costs for connecting households to a publicly owned treatment works through reimbursing connection of laterals to central sewer lines. Still awaiting guidance from EPA on the details of this program.

- **Grants For Construction And Refurbishing Of Individual Household Decentralized Wastewater Systems For Individuals With Low Or Moderate Income (Sec 50208):** EPA is establishing this grant program for private nonprofit organizations to support individual household (or multi household) decentralized wastewater systems helping individuals without access to sanitary sewer systems.

### **County Waste Management / Recycling:**

- **Consumer Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program:** This competitive grant will be open to local governments to support efforts to increase awareness and improve effectiveness of residential and community recycling programs. Projects can focus on door-to-door education, digital outreach, toolkits or other outreach that improves recycling programs and reflects National Recycling Strategy priorities.<sup>3</sup>

### **Partner opportunities**

Sustainability Director LeRoy relayed several other initiatives where Buncombe County is collaborating with partner agencies; the following opportunities from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law may be relevant for these entities:

### **School District/ North Carolina Department of Education:**

- *EPA Clean School Bus Program:* The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law further expands the agency's DERA Clean School Bus program. For more information on the expanded Clean School Bus Program, see EPA's Initial Implementation Report to Congress.<sup>4</sup> Given the complexity of the management and operation of school buses, this opportunity may not be as accessible for Buncombe County, though it should be noted several School Districts in North Carolina recently benefited from EPA's DERA School Bus Replacement Program as well as funds arising from the VW settlement<sup>5</sup>
- *DOE Grants for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Improvements at Public School Facilities:* This competitive program will award grants to local education agencies in partnership with schools to increase energy efficiency, implement renewable energy, or invest in alternative fueled vehicle upgrades and improvements at public schools. DOE has released a Request for Information for this program.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> EPA National Recycling Strategy: <https://www.epa.gov/recyclingstrategy>

<sup>4</sup> Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Clean School Bus Program Initial Implementation Report to Congress <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-02/420r22002.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> WRAL.com "North Carolina schools to receive 5 electric school buses" March 3, 2022 <https://www.wral.com/north-carolina-schools-to-receive-5-electric-school-buses/20169260/>

<sup>6</sup> DOE Request for Information. April 4, 2022 <https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/Default.aspx#Foald2f565267-7810-4605-b85b-a48e6ef98708>

**Local Weatherization Assistance Provider:** DOE recently announced the opening of applications for the Weatherization Assistance Program<sup>7</sup>. The initial press release identified North Carolina as receiving up to \$89,776,045 to support weatherization efforts including insulation, energy efficiency, and retrofits for low-income individuals.

**Land of Sky Council of Governments Low/No Emission Bus and Bus Facilities Program Grants:** The Low/No Emission Bus Grants and Grants for Bus Facilities opportunities are currently open until 5/31/2022 for applications that include the acquisition of low emission buses or the funding of bus facilities (including electric bus infrastructure and workforce development efforts necessary to support their deployment). The requests routinely surpass \$1 Million and require a 20% local cost share (80% federal, 20% local). The NOFO can be viewed here<sup>8</sup>

**City of Asheville Reservoir Shading and Floating Solar Panels:** The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (*which increased in funding from the BIL*) specifically allows for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy projects that benefit a water utility. These types of projects are considered “non-traditional eligibility” as they are typically not the central element of a project but are eligible to receive funds as they complement the traditional project scope.

- For more on this see EPA Drinking Water SRF Handbook<sup>9</sup> Section 3.3 Eligible Projects “Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy” as there are numerous examples of mounted solar panels and reservoir shading however combining the two as looks to be unique.
- *Note, while EPA has designated this as a likely eligible use of funds, the SRF program is managed through NCDEQ and would need to be reviewed with them for eligibility.*

The preceding information has been collected by the Southeast Sustainability Directors Network to support Buncombe County and its partners in applying for sustainability-related federal funding arising from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. There are numerous other opportunities for local government funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law as well as considerable opportunities that may arise via state implementation of federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding opportunities (i.e National Electric Vehicle Formula Program). These opportunities were selected based on the projects mentioned by Sustainability Director LeRoy.

**Note on timing: Summer / Fall 2022\***

---

<sup>7</sup> DOE Press Release “Biden Administration Announces Investments to Make Homes More Energy Efficient and Lower Costs for American Families” March 30, 2022. <https://www.energy.gov/articles/biden-administration-announces-investments-make-homes-more-energy-efficient-and-lower>

<sup>8</sup> DOT No/Low Emission Bus Program and Bus Facilities Program. *Deadline May 31, 2022.* <https://www.transit.dot.gov/notices-funding/low-or-no-emission-and-grants-buses-and-bus-facilities-competitive-programs-fy2022>

<sup>9</sup> EPA Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Handbook (*June 13, 2017*): [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2017-06/documents/dwsrf\\_eligibility\\_handbook\\_june\\_13\\_2017\\_updated\\_508\\_version.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2017-06/documents/dwsrf_eligibility_handbook_june_13_2017_updated_508_version.pdf)

*\*Many of these opportunities are anticipated to become available this summer or fall (with some surface transportation grants already being available). As most of these opportunities are authorized funding for the next several years, there is considerable opportunity to prepare applications and projects for a subsequent fiscal year.*

**Appendices:** Please note, the following excerpts were taken from the White House Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and are included as images. The originals can be viewed at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/build/>. These grant overviews, as well as the dates included in the text are likely to change as further guidance is posted from federal agencies.



**Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grants**  
(Community Charging)

---

**Federal Agency:** Department of Transportation  
**Bureau or Account:** Federal Highway Administration

---

**Funding amount:** \$1,250,000,000

**Period of Availability:** 4 year

**Funding Mechanism:** Competitive Grant

**New Program:** Yes

**Recipients:** State or political subdivision of a State, Metropolitan Planning Organization, Local government, Special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, Indian Tribe, Territory

**Description:** Program funds will be made available each fiscal year for Community Grants, to install electric vehicle charging and alternative fuel in locations on public roads, schools, parks, and in publicly accessible parking facilities. These grants will be prioritized for rural areas, low-and moderate-income neighborhoods, and communities with low ratios of private parking, or high ratios of multiunit dwellings.

**Eligible Uses:** Acquisition and installation of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging or alternative fueling infrastructure, operating assistance (for the first 5 years after installation), acquisition and installation of traffic control devices

**Next Milestone:** Federal Highway Administration will publish a Notice of Funding Opportunity in 2022.



**Charging & Fueling Infrastructure Grants**  
(Corridor Charging)

---

**Federal Agency:** Department of Transportation  
**Bureau or Account:** Federal Highway Administration

---

**Funding amount:** \$1,250,000,000

**Period of Availability:** 4 year

**Funding Mechanism:** Competitive Grant

**New Program:** Yes

**Recipients:** State or political subdivision of a State, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Local government, Special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, Indian Tribe, Territory

**Description:** Deploy electric vehicle charging and hydrogen/propane/natural gas fueling infrastructure along designated alternative fuel corridors and in communities.

**Eligible Uses:** Acquisition and installation of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging or alternative fueling infrastructure, operating assistance (for the first 5 years after installation), acquisition and installation of traffic control devices

**Next Milestone:** Federal Highway Administration will publish a Notice of Funding Opportunity in 2022.



**Grants for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Improvements at  
Public School Facilities**

---

**Federal Agency:** Department of Energy

**Bureau or Account:** Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

---

**Funding amount:** \$500,000,000

**Period of Availability:** Available until expended

**Funding Mechanism:** Grant

**New Program:** Yes

**Recipients:** Consortium of One Local Education Agency and one or more Schools, Non-Profits, For-Profits, and Community Partners

**Description:** To provide competitive grants to make energy efficiency, renewable energy, and alternative fueled vehicle upgrades and improvements at public schools.

**Eligible Uses:** Energy efficiency (envelope, HVAC, lighting, controls, etc.), ventilation, renewable energy, alternative vehicles, and alternative fuel vehicle infrastructure improvements.

**Next Milestone:** An official Request for Information is expected to be published in March 2022. The opportunity to apply for funding is expected to be open in the Fall of 2022.



## Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program

---

**Federal Agency:** Department of Energy

**Bureau or Account:** Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

---

**Funding amount:** \$550,000,000

**Period of Availability:** Available until expended

**Funding Mechanism:** Block and Competitive Grants

**New Program:** Yes

**Recipients:** State/Local Government/Tribes

**Description:** To assist states, local governments, and Tribes to reduce energy use, reduce fossil fuel emissions, and improve energy efficiency.

**Eligible Uses:**

- (1) Development and implementation of an energy efficiency and conservation strategy
- (2) retaining technical consultant services to assist the eligible entity in the development of such a strategy, including—
- (3) conducting residential and commercial building energy audits;
- (4) establishment of financial incentive programs for energy efficiency improvements;
- (5) the provision of grants to nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies for the purpose of performing energy efficiency retrofits;
- (6) development and implementation of energy efficiency and conservation programs for buildings and facilities within the jurisdiction of the eligible entity, including—
  - (A) design and operation of the programs;
  - (B) identifying the most effective methods for achieving maximum participation and efficiency rates;
  - (C) public education;
  - (D) measurement and verification protocols; and
  - (E) identification of energy efficient technologies;
- (7) development and implementation of programs to conserve energy used in transportation, including—
  - (A) use of flex time by employers;
  - (B) satellite work centers;
  - (C) development and promotion of zoning guidelines or requirements that promote energy efficient development;



- (D) development of infrastructure, such as bike lanes and pathways and pedestrian walkways;
  - (E) synchronization of traffic signals; and
  - (F) other measures that increase energy efficiency and decrease energy consumption;
- (8) development and implementation of building codes and inspection services to promote building energy efficiency;
- (9) application and implementation of energy distribution technologies that significantly increase energy efficiency, including—
- (A) distributed resources; and
  - (B) district heating and cooling systems;
- (10) activities to increase participation and efficiency rates for material conservation programs, including source reduction, recycling, and recycled content procurement programs that lead to increases in energy efficiency;
- (11) the purchase and implementation of technologies to reduce, capture, and, to the maximum extent practicable, use methane and other greenhouse gases generated by landfills or similar sources;
- (12) replacement of traffic signals and street lighting with energy efficient lighting technologies, including—
- (A) light emitting diodes; and
  - (B) any other technology of equal or greater energy efficiency;
- (13) development, implementation, and installation on or in any government building of the eligible entity of onsite renewable energy technology that generates electricity from renewable resources, including—
- (A) solar energy;
  - (B) wind energy;
  - (C) fuel cells; and
  - (D) biomass;
- (14) programs for financing energy efficiency, renewable energy, and zero-emission transportation (and associated infrastructure), capital investments, projects, and programs, which may include loan programs and performance contracting programs, for leveraging of additional public and private sector funds, and programs that allow rebates, grants, or other incentives for the purchase and installation of energy efficiency, renewable energy, and zero-emission transportation (and associated infrastructure) measures.

**Next Milestone:** The first funding opportunity is expected for release in the Fall of 2022.





## Reduce, Reuse, Recycling Education and Outreach Grants

---

**Federal Agency:** Environmental Protection Agency  
**Bureau or Account:** State and Tribal Assistance Grants

---

**Funding amount:** \$75,000,000

**Period of Availability:** Available until expended

**Funding Mechanism:** Cooperative Agreements and/or Grants

**New Program:** Yes

**Recipients:** States, a Unit of Local Government, Tribal Governments (federally recognized), A Native Hawaiian Organization, The Department of Hawaiian Homelands, The Office of Hawaiian Affairs, A Non-Profit Organization, Or A Public-Private Partnership

**Description:** Communities across the country are burdened by pollution impacts from inefficient waste management systems. This historic investment will transform public education and outreach regarding how to reduce, reuse, and recycle right.

**Eligible Uses:** To award grants focused on improving material recycling, recovery, management, and reduction. To improve the effectiveness of residential and community recycling programs through public education and outreach. Funded projects should inform the public about residential or community recycling programs, provide information about the recycled materials that are accepted, increase collection rates and decrease contamination.

**Next Milestone:**

- Stakeholder outreach and engagement to inform development of grant program to begin: (Estimated): 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2022
- Funding Opportunity Availability: (Estimated) 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2022



## Weatherization Assistance Program

---

**Federal Agency:** Department of Energy

**Bureau or Account:** Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

---

**Funding amount:** \$3,500,000,000

**Period of Availability:** Beginning Fiscal Year 2022 (to remain until expended)

**Funding Mechanism:** Formula Grant

**New Program:** No

**Recipients:** States, Tribes

**Description:** To increase the energy efficiency of dwellings owned or occupied by low-income persons, reduce their total residential energy expenditures, and improve their health and safety, especially low-income persons who are particularly vulnerable such as the elderly, the handicapped, and children.

**Eligible Uses:** Improvement of heating and cooling of dwellings by the installation of weatherization materials such as attic insulation, caulking, weather-stripping, furnace efficiency modifications, certain mechanical measures to heating and cooling systems, and replacement furnaces, boilers, and air-conditioners. Grantees may receive formula-based allocations and can perform weatherization retrofits with an average cost of up to \$8,009 per dwelling unit in Fiscal Year 2022. Up to 10 percent of each grant may be spent by a Grantee and its subgrantees for administrative expenses (in the Formula Grants a Grantee may not use more than 5 percent of the total State grant for such purposes).

**Next Milestone:** Estimated first round of funds released date, 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2022

# Renewable Energy and Efficient Energy Loan Guarantees



Through its Title 17 Innovative Energy Loan Guarantee Program, LPO can help finance catalytic, replicable, and market-ready renewable energy and efficient energy technologies with \$4.5 billion of available loan guarantees.

Contact LPO today to schedule a pre-application consultation: [LGProgram@hq.doe.gov](mailto:LGProgram@hq.doe.gov)



## The Value of Working With LPO

LPO provides borrowers access to capital, flexible financing, and expert project support to help reinvigorate, advance, and transform America's energy infrastructure.

### Access to Capital

LPO can provide first-of-a-kind projects and other high-impact, energy-related ventures with access to debt capital that private lenders cannot or will not provide. LPO has approved more than \$30 billion of loans and loan guarantees for more than 30 projects.

### Flexible Financing

LPO can provide flexible, custom financing to meet the specific needs of individual borrowers. LPO works closely with industry to bridge gaps in the commercial debt market when innovative technologies may not be well understood by the private sector.

### A Committed Project Partner

LPO can engage with projects early in development and remains involved for the entire lifetime of the loan. Projects are supported by an in-house team of experienced financial, technical, legal, risk mitigation, portfolio management, and environmental professionals.

## Renewable Energy & Efficient Energy (REEE) Technology Areas

Technology areas of interest for REEE loan guarantee eligible projects include—but are not limited to—the following broad categories:

### Advanced Grid Integration & Storage

Renewable energy generation including distributed generation incorporating storage, and smart grid systems incorporating demand response.

### Drop-in Biofuels

New bio-refineries or bio-crude refining processes, and/or modifications to existing ethanol facilities to produce drop-in molecules.

### Waste-to-Energy

Methane from landfills or ranches via biodigesters, as well as use of municipal solid waste, crop waste, or forestry waste.

### Enhancement of Existing Facilities

Powering non-powered dams or upgrading existing hydro facilities, or retrofitting existing renewable facilities with innovative technology.

### Efficiency Improvements

Improve or reduce energy usage in residential, institutional, and commercial facilities, buildings, and/or processes; and recover, store, or dispatch waste energy or underused renewable energy sources.

*Note: LPO can also support certain types of Distributed Energy Projects and Electric Vehicle and Alternative Fuel Vehicle Charging Infrastructure, subject to additional guidance.*

## Basic Project Eligibility Requirements

Renewable Energy & Efficient Energy projects must satisfy all four of the following basic eligibility requirements to be considered for the Title 17 Innovative Energy Loan Guarantee Program:

- ✓ **Innovative Technology**
- ✓ **Greenhouse Gas Benefits**
- ✓ **Located in the United States**
- ✓ **Reasonable Prospect of Repayment**

## Loan Application Process

- 1 Pre-Application Consultation**  
Engage with LPO for a no-fee, pre-application consultation to review project technology areas and basic eligibility requirements.
- 2 Formal Application Process**  
Submit Part I application to LPO to determine basic eligibility, followed by a more thorough Part II application to determine project viability.
- 3 Due Diligence & Term Sheet Negotiation**  
Enter due diligence, negotiate term sheet, and receive a conditional commitment offer.
- 4 Loan Closing & Project Monitoring**  
Negotiate and execute loan documents. After loan closing, LPO monitors construction and operation throughout the life of the loan.



### Title 17 Innovative Energy Loan Guarantee Program

#### Project Spotlight

#### Catalyzing Large-Scale PV Solar

Over the past decade, LPO has focused on helping companies overcome the unique financing hurdles that come with trying to bring innovative energy technologies from demonstration to commercialization in the United States.

In 2011, at a time when the largest photovoltaic solar power project in the United States was 20 megawatts (MW), LPO financed the nation's first five photovoltaic solar power projects larger than 100 MW. Leveraging the lessons learned in the financing of those first projects, the private sector has since financed dozens of projects larger than 100 MW across the United States.

In addition to photovoltaic solar, LPO has vast experience financing other large-scale renewable energy and efficient energy projects, including onshore wind, concentrating solar power, and geothermal. Along with this expertise, LPO can provide the capital, flexible financing, and project support necessary for innovative renewable energy & efficient energy projects across the United States.

## Contact Us & Learn More

Contact LPO to schedule a no-fee, pre-application consultation at: [LGProgram@hq.doe.gov](mailto:LGProgram@hq.doe.gov)

Learn more about LPO & the Title 17 Innovative Energy Loan Guarantee Program at: [energy.gov/LPO](http://energy.gov/LPO)

Renewable Energy and Efficient Energy

Contact: [energy.gov/LPO](http://energy.gov/LPO) | [LGProgram@hq.doe.gov](mailto:LGProgram@hq.doe.gov)



**LPO**  
Loan Programs Office



## Clean School Bus Program

---

**Federal Agency:** Environmental Protection Agency  
**Bureau or Account:** State and Tribal Assistance Grants

---

**Funding amount:** \$5,000,000,000

**Period of Availability:** Available until expended

**Funding Mechanism:** Grant, Rebate and Contract

**New Program:** Yes

**Recipients:** Local or State Governmental Entities;  
An Eligible Contractor; A Nonprofit School Transportation Association; Or an Indian Tribe

**Description:** State or local governments, eligible contractors, and nonprofit school transportation associations are authorized to receive grant funds. Fifty percent of the funds are authorized for zero-emission school buses, and 50 percent of the funds are authorized for alternative fuels and zero-emission school buses. Funds may be prioritized for rural or low-income communities and entities that have matching funds available. The Environmental Protection Agency Administrator is authorized to provide funds to cover up to 100 percent of the costs for the replacement of the bus.

**Eligible Uses:** State or local governments, eligible contractors, and nonprofit school transportation associations are authorized to receive grant funds. Fifty percent of the funds are authorized for zero-emission school buses, and 50 percent of the funds are authorized for alternative fuels and zero-emission school buses. Funds may be prioritized for rural or low-income communities and entities that have matching funds available. The Environmental Protection Agency Administrator is authorized to provide funds to cover up to 100 percent of the costs for the replacement of the bus.

**Next Milestone:** Applications for funding will be made available [here](#) later this spring.