

Board of Directors

Meeting date: July 15, 2025

Agenda Item #: 8 – B

Innovation Pilot Grant Program- Round 1 Recommendations

Agenda item type: Consent agenda

Summary

Recommended projects for the Innovation Pilot Grant Program, a \$6 million initiative designed to accelerate building electrification and energy efficiency adoption through regional pilot projects.

Background

The Power Ahead Colorado Innovation Pilot Grant Program will award subgrants of approximately \$200,000 to support community-driven innovations and small business-led projects that accelerate the adoption of clean heating. The program's goals are to:

- Demonstrate scalable solutions to persistent market barriers.
- Inform decarbonization decision-making with public data, analysis, and case studies.
- Support entrepreneurial approaches and underserved communities in adopting clean technologies.
- Round one of awards are selected based on four proposed focus tracks for funding:
 - Track 1: Making Electrification Easier to Deliver. How might we reduce the time, cost, and complexity for a tenant, business, or homeowner?
 - Track 2: Demand Flexibility and Technical Performance. How might we support affordable and easy-to-deliver electrification projects in service of customer, contractor, and system benefits?
 - Track 3: Coordinated Deployment and Planning Strategies. How might we identify the places, properties, or portfolios where electrification can move faster, cost less, or reach more people at once?
 - Track 4: Expanding Access, Health, and Trusted Delivery. How might we increase access to clean, healthy, and efficient buildings for all households, especially those facing financial or structural barriers?

A target of \$1.4 million was set for total Round 1 funding. VEIC serves as the Program Administrator for this program and has led the solicitation, review, interview scoring and selection process on behalf of Power Ahead Colorado.

Project Funding Recommendations

A total of 32 submissions were received for the program with one submission deemed ineligible by VEIC and DRCOG. Initial applications were scored according to the approved scoring matrix by VEIC staff. DRCOG staff participated in reviewing draft scores and provided input based on local context and subject matter expertise.

A total of 18 applications were advanced to interviews conducted the week of June 22, 2026. Power Ahead Colorado staff and subject matter experts from local government staff participated in interviews as non-scoring members.



Based on scoring adjustments after the interviews, VEIC and Power Ahead Colorado staff present the following recommendations for funding.

Table 1: Recommended Round 1 project selections

Proposal Name	Lead Organization	Final Score	Funding Request
Colorado Heat Pump Fleet Intelligence Pilot	Elephant Energy, Inc.	98	\$200,000
Flexible Voltage Heat Pump Water Heater (FLEX HPWH)	New Buildings Institute	92	\$199,850
Real-World Beneficial Electrification Strategies and Operating Cost Insights for Colorado Affordable Housing	Group14 Engineering, PBC	90	\$114,975
Alternative Electrification Delivery Infrastructure Pilot	Elephant Energy, Inc.	88.5	\$200,000
Heat Pump Rooftop Unit Market Accelerator	Slipstream	86	\$229,000
Denver Public Schools - Strategic, District-Wide Mechanical Systems Framework	CMTA, Inc.	86	\$190,000
Project Lightspeed	Zero Homes	85.5	\$350,000
Total Funding- Round 1			\$1,483,825

The program team also identified the next four highest scoring proposals for a project funding waitlist. If recommended projects do not proceed or additional funding or capacity is identified the team may contract with the following waitlisted projects:

Table 2: Recommended Round 1 project waitlist

Proposal Name	Lead Organization	Final Score	Funding Request
The Emergency Conversion Pilot: Helping Front Range HVAC Contractors Sell Heat Pumps and Homeowners Get Quality Equipment Faster	Rock Rabbit	83	\$340,000
Longmont On-Bill Repayment Pilot	Collective Clean Energy Fund	81	\$300,000
The DRCOG House Call: A Municipal Heat Pump Concierge Pilot	Pearl Edison Colorado LLC	80	\$262,000
Building Science Alliance	Maize Mechanical	79	\$332,900
A Low-Cost Load Management Solution to Avoid Electrical Upgrade Pilot	Slipstream	78.5	\$216,000



The following applications were not selected to advance for Round 1:

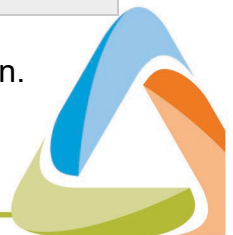
Table 3: Round 1 proposals interviewed and not recommended for funding

Proposal Name	Lead Organization	Final Score	Funding Request
Coordinated Electrification and Efficiency Targeting Pilot: A Data Fusion Platform for High-Impact Building Upgrades in DRCOG Disadvantaged Communities	Touchstone IQ	77	\$225,000
Thermal Storage Pilot	The Heat Pump Store	77	\$280,000
Preparing Mobile & Manufactured Homes for Electrification	Institute for Social and Environmental Transition (ISET)	74	\$170,200
Emergency HVAC Replacement	Zero Homes	71	\$230,000
From Compliance to Comfort: An Electrification Readiness Accelerator for Underserved Multifamily Buildings	Gradient	64.5	\$300,000
Accelerating Electrification Through Contractor Engagement	Go Electric Colorado	64	\$189,250

Table 4: Round 1 proposals not advancing to interviews

Proposal Name	Lead Organization	Funding Request
Electrification Discovery Chatbot for the Power Ahead Colorado Contractor Finder	Plentiful.ai	\$199,000
Micro-Targeting Enhanced Electrification Outreach Pilot	Go Electric Colorado	\$316,150
Reducing Barriers to GeoExchange Adoption in Colorado Affordable Housing	Familia Verde	\$275,000
Making multifamily building electrification easier to deliver with all-weather packaged window-mounted heat pumps (PWHPs).	Sustainable Real Estate Solutions (SRS)	\$350,000
Colorado Energy Savings Navigator: Screening from program applications	MyFriendBen	\$259,260
Mobile Home Electrification Pilot	ARUS Consulting LLC	\$350,000
AI-Driven Remote Commissioning Toolbox for the Power Ahead Colorado Program Implementer	Plentiful.ai	\$169,317
Home Energy Labeling Partnership (HELP) - Colorado	Earth Advantage	\$198,000
Building-Specific Home Electrification Roadmap for DRCOG Homeowners on PowerAheadColorado.org	Plentiful.ai	\$199,685
Commercial Electrification Opportunity Desk	Colorado Market Intelligence LLC	\$225,000
Demand-Ready Home Incentive Pilot	COSSA Institute	\$299,500
Micro Grid for Whole Home Electrification	My Electric Home	\$297,000
Fill Once, File Everywhere: Automating Contractor Paperwork for Electrification Projects	Plentiful.ai	\$173,395

Details about the recommended projects can be found in the attached staff presentation.



Previous discussion/action

[April 15, 2026- Board of Directors](#)

Recommendation

Move to approve the recommended projects presented for the Innovation Pilot Program - Round 1.

Attachment

Staff Presentation

For more information

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at 303-480-6701; or Mac Prather, Incentives, Advising and Comfort for All Program Manager, mprather@drcog.org.

