

Colorado Multifamily Electrification Hub

Colorado Housing and Finance Authority

Rental Housing: Encouraging New Construction

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Summary

The Colorado Multifamily Electrification is an online technical assistance resource for affordable housing developers seeking to implement all-electric and electric-ready building designs into their developments. The Hub was developed by Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA) in close partnership with a steering committee comprised of industry experts and partners. The site includes technical explainers, a filterable resource library, and case studies from developers throughout Colorado.

Introduction

The State of Colorado has adopted sustainability goals to achieve 100 percent Renewable Energy by 2040 and Climate Action Goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 26 percent below 2005 levels by 2025, 50 percent by 2030, and 90 percent by 2050. These goals shape priorities and guidelines within the multifamily affordable housing community in Colorado and for CHFA.

A key component to assist the state and affordable housing developers in meeting these climate goals is to design multifamily affordable housing developments to be all-electric or electric-ready. In addition to local code compliance, building electrification can help reduce carbon emissions, improve indoor air quality for residents, reduce operating costs, and more. Traditionally, multifamily developments in Colorado have often utilized gas for hot water heating. Thus, the transition to all-electric entails a new set of challenges and opportunities for the development community to learn and overcome.

The [Colorado Multifamily Electrification Hub](https://multifamily-ehub.chfainfo.com) (the Hub), online at multifamily-ehub.chfainfo.com, is a web-based platform designed to help equip the multifamily affordable housing community in Colorado with electrification design and decisions through access to technical resources, peer learning, and financing and development resources. The intent is for this site to serve as a resource to help the affordable housing development community make informed decisions regarding building electrification.

Innovation

Colorado's climate action goals established a call to action to the affordable housing development community to play a role in creating a more sustainable future for the state. Electrification in itself is an innovative solution to the State's climate action goals and developers, general contractors, architects, and engineers are faced with a new set of opportunities and challenges to learn and adapt to. This call to action created a whole new set of questions and learning opportunities, and few existing resources for the community.

The Hub builds on a 2021 collaboration between CHFA, the Colorado Energy Office, and the Department of Local Affairs, for a technical study to advance understanding of the opportunities, benefits, and challenges to building new and preserving existing affordable multifamily housing that is all-electric. The report recommended creation of a one-stop resource for the affordable housing development community to address technical questions and locate resources on building electrification. Launch of the Multifamily Electrification HUB completes this critical step in the roadmap.

Replicability

CHFA is proud to be a national leader among housing finance agencies (HFA) in the multifamily affordable housing electrification space, paving the way for other states to support electrification within their development communities. The bones of the Hub are simple by design and could be replicated by other HFAs.

The Hub includes three key sections:

- **Technical Roadmap:** intended to help those interested in multifamily building electrification navigate the complexity of the adoption of electric technologies and appliances in new construction or rehabilitation. Hover over each icon to learn which building electrification pathway it represents.
- **Colorado Resource Finder:** a filterable, searchable database of funding, financing, and incentive opportunities for multifamily affordable housing electrification.
- **Case Studies:** these highlight how electrification has been incorporated into multifamily affordable housing developments in Colorado today.

A Link Library is also part of the Hub and serves as a repository of links to additional multifamily electrification resources. The Hub and its components are continually being added to and updated as the acumen and resources around electrification grows, keeping the resources relevant and up to date for the community.

Responding to an Important State Housing Need

Colorado is facing immediate, local impacts from climate change. Snowpack evaporates early and wildfires endanger homes. Heat intensity shortens school schedules. Drought threatens regional water supplies and agriculture. Respiratory health is compromised by wildfire smoke and ozone. Across the state, low-income Coloradans are often the most vulnerable to the negative effects of climate change. Colorado is also experiencing a housing crisis. A 2020 Root Policy Research report estimated 150,000 households were considered severely cost burdened in early 2020, paying more than 50% of their income on housing. The number was projected to rise to 360,000 households by the end of 2020.

Electrification of affordable housing lies at the intersection of the housing and climate crisis. The greening of Colorado's electricity grid makes the elimination of on-site fossil fuel use a critical GHG reduction strategy. All-electric systems offer benefits to HTC properties beyond climate change mitigation. The elimination of in-unit carbon monoxide sources increases resident safety. Removing other combustion products from exterior venting improves local air quality and resident health outcomes.

Demonstrating Measurable Benefits to HFA Targeted Customers

The Hub is an interactive online resource developed to help equip the multifamily affordable housing community in Colorado with technical and practical knowledge related to electrification design. The site includes case studies, technical explainers, and a searchable library of financing and development

resources. The benefit to customers is illustrated by improved access to resources and technical knowledge to support the creation of affordable multifamily units that are all-electric.

A proven Track Record of Success in the Marketplace

Since its launch in December 2023, the Hub has earned more than 3,600 page views from nearly 800 unique users, averaging approximately 900 views per month. CHFA is encouraged by these early metrics, and we continue to collect and implement feedback from site users on additional content suggestions, including the addition of more case studies.

Providing Benefits that Outweigh Costs

The creation of the Hub established a statewide resource for the low cost of developing a website with broad accessibility. This is a resource for the entire state and wide array of users. The Hub is interactive and will grow with time as knowledge and resources continue to advance.

Demonstrating Effective Use of Resources

The Hub is a one stop shop for both state and federal resources as well as the technical explainers. Not only can users gain insight into resources available, but they can review case studies, which illustrate how to deploy the resources effectively. Users can get the most out of the site using filters to find resources that best fit their unique needs. Resources can be filtered by project type, utility provider, county, municipality, purpose and funds, and type of funding.

Effectively Employing Partnerships

The Hub is the result of collaboration between CHFA, Enterprise, the Colorado Energy Office, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, The Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Energy Outreach Colorado, Group14 Engineering, and other stakeholders within the multifamily affordable housing community. Collectively, these partners comprised a Steering Committee that met monthly to strategize the priorities, audience, and content of the Hub. Partnership and collaboration has been an effective way to create a robust resource that takes into consideration a variety of perspectives and needs within the diverse multifamily affordable housing development community.

Achieving Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives that the Hub supports go back to the desires of the State of Colorado to achieve its 100 percent Renewable Energy goals by 2040 and Climate Action Goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 26 percent below 2005 levels by 2025, 50 percent by 2030, and 90 percent by 2050. These objectives address stakeholders in every aspect of Colorado's economy, including those in the development sector, as [buildings are responsible for about 42 percent of carbon emissions globally](#). The Hub is a resource that empowers affordable housing development community to navigate the critical decision points in pursuing building electrification.

Colorado Multifamily Affordable Housing Electrification Hub

Our Partners



Getting Started



Technical Roadmap

Explore the various pathways for multifamily building electrification and compare different electric technologies.



Colorado Resource Finder

Explore funding, financing, and incentive opportunities available to support electrification considerations for new construction or rehabilitation projects.



Case Studies

Learn how these principles are in use today in Colorado communities.

Colorado Resource Finder

Welcome to the Colorado Resource Finder. This is a filterable, searchable database of funding, financing, and incentive opportunities for multifamily affordable housing electrification. Users may select as many or as few of the provided filters as applicable to find the opportunities best suited to their projects.

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