



Community Energy Planning

Overcoming Challenges & Attaining Benefits

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Purpose

In 2016, LAS staff reached out to several municipalities to discuss local experiences of implementing community energy planning. Through these conversations, AMO/LAS wanted to understand what factors encourage municipalities to engage in community energy planning, what benefits and challenges exist for those who conduct the process, and what role AMO/LAS can play to support municipalities who wish to engage in community energy planning, but may not have the awareness, resources, or capacity to undertake such a process.

AMO/LAS are supportive of the province's Climate Change Action Plan (2016) and related policies and strategies such as the Long-Term Energy Plan (2017) that have identified the benefits and opportunities of community energy planning. AMO/LAS are seeking ways to help municipalities capitalize on the opportunities in the low carbon economy to enhance local economic development and energy/environmental sustainability.

The purpose of this paper is twofold. First, to briefly discuss the community energy planning process, some benefits and challenges of the energy planning process, and the roles for municipalities, the Province, and AMO/LAS to overcome these challenges and help Ontario communities attain the identified benefits associated with transitioning to a low-carbon economy. Second, this paper asks a number of questions to help AMO/LAS understand how we can advocate on your behalf and provide programs or services that support municipalities with community energy planning.

A complete list of questions that AMO/LAS are available in **Appendix A**. We encourage members to distribute this paper to the appropriate lead for community energy planning in your municipality to encourage discussion about challenges, benefits and opportunities of community energy planning. With your feedback, AMO/LAS can begin further research into the development of programs and services that can help the membership move both provincial and local energy priorities forward.