

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **City of Berea Awarded an Energy Cost-Savings Grant**

Berea, KY - The City of Berea has received approval of a \$19,000 federal matching grant through the Appalachian Regional Commission to develop a comprehensive energy cost-savings plan for the entire city, including households, businesses and other institutions.

The first step in the plan will be a comprehensive, computerized inventory of all community and city government energy usage, followed by a process to set energy savings targets, develop a cost-savings plan. The City will also see through an implementation program and conduct ongoing monitoring to measure energy and cost savings progress. The plan format is based on the International Council of Local Government Initiatives (ICLEI) process that has assisted hundreds of communities save money through energy efficiency. The City of Berea signed up as an ICLEI member in 2009.

“The city will implement this strategy to achieve energy efficiency goals, target job creation in the energy field, and save money,” said Berea Mayor Steve Connelly. “To the best of our knowledge, our completed ICLEI plan would be the first in Appalachia and would serve as a showcase in using a comprehensive, money-saving approach.”

The City has contracted with local urban planner, Henry Jackson, of Lexington, to coordinate the energy inventory. Mr. Jackson has had experience with similar energy audits and studies in Frankfort and Lexington. The Berea based Kentucky Environmental Foundation and Sustainable Berea, Inc. worked with the City and Mr. Jackson to design the grant proposal, and will assist in creating a community wide dialogue to garner involvement from community groups.

“We want this plan to be created with full involvement from community members,” said Elizabeth Crowe with the Kentucky Environmental Foundation. “Only with input and ownership from civic groups, businesses, health and environmental groups, together with city department leaders will we have specific action steps and tangible energy saving results, rather than just a nice document on the shelf.”

City Administrator Randy Stone said, “Ideally, this process can also help synergize other existing energy-related plans that the City has underway and infuse these concepts into other city functions so that city administrators, department heads and partner community groups are all using our time efficiently.”

“Most cities are looking for ways to save money, and a comprehensive energy cost savings plan will help Berea do just that and have a positive impact on the environment and the health citizens in the city and the region,” said Henry Jackson. “That’s a win-win situation for everybody.”

Background information on ICLEI can be found at <http://www.icleiusa.org>.