



Eugene City Council

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EUGENE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

February 23, 2026

5:30 p.m. CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

City Council meetings will continue to be held in hybrid format using in person and virtual meeting technology. Information about online or other options for access and participation will be available at <https://www.eugene-or.gov/3360/Webcasts-and-Meeting-Materials>

**Meeting of February 23, 2026;
Her Honor Mayor Kaarin Knudson Presiding**

Councilors

Lyndsie Leech, President
Greg Evans
Matt Keating
Alan Zelenka

Eliza Kashinsky, Vice President
Mike Clark
Randy Groves
Jennifer Yeh

5:30 p.m. CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

- 1. WORK SESSION: Annual Human Rights Commission Work Plan Report**
- 2. WORK SESSION: Home Energy Score Engagement and Research Findings**

The Eugene City Council welcomes your interest in these agenda items. This meeting location is wheelchair-accessible. For the hearing impaired, an interpreter can be provided with 48 hours' notice prior to the meeting. Spanish-language interpretation will also be provided with 48 hours' notice. To arrange for these services, contact the receptionist at 541-682-5010. City Council meetings are telecast live on Metro Television, Comcast channel 21, and rebroadcast later in the week.

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EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Annual Human Rights Commission Work Plan Report

Meeting Date: February 23, 2026
Department: Central Services
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: 1
Staff Contact: Fabio Andrade
Phone: 541-682-5009

ISSUE STATEMENT

The Human Rights Commission's (HRC) enabling ordinance, adopted in December of 1990 (Eugene Code 2.280), requires that it develop a biennial work plan for City Council review and approval and annually report on work plan progress. Attached is a partial report on the 2024-2026 HRC Work Plan. This item is informational only and no action is required.

BACKGROUND

The HRC has been very active since September 2024 contributing many hours of volunteer time beyond business meetings serving the community by hosting and attending community events, providing input to Council on human rights and social justice issues, and engaging in collaborative work with other Boards and Commissions, City staff, and community partners. The attached partial 2024-2026 Report provides specifics on the group's achievements and commitments in achieving its work plan goals.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

The HRC work supports the Culture of Belonging and Communication and Outreach strategic goals in the current City of Eugene [Strategic Plan](#).

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

[September 26, 2025 Work Session](#)

Councilor Evans, seconded by Councilor Leech, move to approve the Human Rights Commission 2024-2026 Work Plan as presented in Attachment B.

Passed: 8:0

COUNCIL OPTIONS

The purpose of this work session is to provide updates on work done by the HRC on the goals included in its current work plan and allow councilors to ask questions of the HRC chairs that may support their work for the remainder of the current work plan period. Council may provide the HRC with additional direction as needed.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

None.

SUGGESTED MOTION

Informational only

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Partial Report on the HRC 2024-2026 Work Plan

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Contact: Fabio Andrade, Equity & Community Engagement Manager

Telephone: 541-682-5009

Staff E-Mail: fandrade@eugene-or.gov



Human Rights Commission

Partial HRC 2024-26 Work Plan Report

Per City Code, the HRC must present an annual report to City Council. This document includes a partial report on the Human Rights Commission (HRC) FY 2024-2026 Work Plan, covering the activities developed up to December 2025. The HRC biennial work plan was approved by City Council on February 26, 2025. Below are the highlights followed by tables indicating the status of each of the actions included in the FY 2024-2026 work plan.

Highlighted Work

Events

To help raise awareness, foster respect, create community dialogue, and increase education on human rights issues the HRC hosted, assisted with organization, or had members participate in several events:

- **Reimagining Resistance: Human Rights Community Panel & Awards (Hybrid)** - This event included a community panel made up of individuals who have been successful with their resistance efforts for local human rights. The Human Rights Commission held an open forum for community members to ask questions and share resources with each other.

- **Panelists:**

- Guadalupe Quinn from United – United for Immigrant Justice (UIJ), PLAZA, and GLAD
- Anna Lardner - TALC
- Lauren Herbert or Lisa Livelybrooks - Interfaith Immigration work and Rapid Response Lane County
- Dr. Lawrence Rasheed - LCC/Black Youth Program

Community Leadership Awards recipients:

- Anna Lardner
- Debie Williamson-Smite
- University of Oregon's Museum of Natural History
- **National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day** – Observed nationally on the winter solstice, the longest night of the year. On December 21st, the Homeless & Poverty Work Group hosted a memorial and vigil for people experiencing homelessness in the area who lost their lives on the street. Hot food, donated by the Kiva, warm drinks, and warm clothing were passed out to those experiencing homelessness who were in attendance. Allies joined for a candlelight ceremony and music.
- **Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR)** – TDOR is observed internationally every year since 1999 on November 20th, to honor the memory of transgender, nonbinary, and



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gender-diverse individuals whose lives have been lost to anti-transgender violence. This inaugural event was a collaboration between the Human Rights Commission, Office of Equity & Community Engagement, and Cultural Services. Community partners like Transponder, HIV Alliance, and the Queer Choir all participated in the event.

- **Human Rights** – A celebratory event highlighting the birth of a new organization after a merger between Centro Latino Americano, Downtown Languages, and Huerto de la Familia to increase community capacity to serve Latino and immigrant families in Lane County.

Sponsorship and Community Engagement

Funding and other support were also provided for community events organized by community groups. The HRC supported multiple events/initiatives with endorsement, sponsorship, and/or volunteer work:

• Oregon DesiFest - DesiFest 2024	\$1,000
• Catholic Community Services - Welcoming our New Neighbor event	\$500
• Black Cultural Initiative - Kwanza celebration	\$339
• DisOrient - DisOrient Film Festival	\$1,000
• Eugene Pride - Pride Festival Sober Circle	\$500
• BLAQ Youth, Inc. - Juneteenth Gathering	\$1,000
• Gay Men's Chorus - Performance at the Eugene Pride Festival '25.	\$500
• Comunidad Y herencia Cultural - Noche Cultural	\$1,000
• NAACP Eugene-Springfield – Freedom Fund Dinner	\$1,600

Key Partnerships

The HRC has actively worked to increase communication and collaboration with other City Boards and Commissions, staff, and community groups over the past year to promote human rights and social equity.

Department Collaborations

- **Community Engagement Preferences Listening Sessions:** HRC commissioners supported the OECE staff with a series of listening sessions to understand community engagement preferences from six underrepresented and underserved communities.
- **Boards and Commission Recruitment:** The HRC actively promoted participation in the board and commissions recruitment process and made recommendations on filling vacancies on the HRC.

Boards and Commissions

- **Police Commission:** The HRC has a permanent seat on the Police Commission. Commissioners Dr Booker and then Bradley served on the Police Commission.
- **Civilian Review Board (CRB):** The HRC has a liaison assigned to and from the CRB to share information and highlight issues of mutual concern.
- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):** The HRC has one member on the CDBG Committee that focuses on housing and related issues. The HRC liaison participates in the annual competitive process where applicants seek funding for specific projects.
- **Moving Ahead Transportation Panel:** The HRC monitors this collaboration between the Lane



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Transit District (LTD) and the City of Eugene for its dedication to accessibility.

- **Vision Zero Task Force:** The HRC has a permanent member on the Task Force to provide input in achieving the goal set by City Council.
- **Housing Policy Board:** The HRC is a liaison to the Housing Policy Board, giving voice to community issues related to affordable housing.
- **Youth Advisory Council:** The HRC had an ad hoc liaison to this group who attends meetings as needed.

Recommendations to Policy Makers

- Budget recommendations – Presented on 5/21/2025
- ALPR Recommendations – Presented on 11/24/2025
- Recommendation on family composition policies – In progress

Members Who Served

We are deeply grateful to all the commissioners who served during this work plan and would like to recognize their service:

Current

- Councilor Lindsey Leech
- Commissioner Dr Silky Booker (Chair) – July 2023 - current
- Commissioner Kiana Cabuco – (Vice Chair) July 2023 – current
- Commissioner Cynthia Cannon-Poindexter – July 2023 - current
- Commissioner John Bradley – July 2024 - Current
- Commissioner Martha Baldwin July 2024 – Current
- Commissioner Jamie Bowman – July 2025 – current
- Commissioner Brittany Banna – July 2025 – current
- Commissioner Elaina Oomen – July 2025 – current
- Commissioner Vanitha Murthy – December 2025 – current

Past

- Commissioner Juniper Christopherson – July 2025 to December 2025
- Commissioner Fajardo – July 2024 to February 2025
- Commissioner Blake Burrell – July 2022 to June 2025
- Commissioner Thomas Hiura - July 2022 to June 2025
- Commissioner Jackie Low - April 2024 to June 2025



Human Rights Commission

Progress report: WORKPLAN September 2024 – June 2026

Goal 1 (Community-oriented)

Take a leadership role in fostering respect for social equity, civil rights, and human rights in the community by engaging in education, outreach, listening and collaboration.

Item	Description	Assigned to	Status
1.1	Invite different equity, civil, and human rights groups to present at meetings or special events on the needs or efforts being made throughout the city quarterly.	Advisory Group	Ongoing
1.2	Organize events recognizing National Homelessness Awareness Month and National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day	Homelessness and Poverty Workgroup	Complete
1.3	Monitor and contribute to efforts and/or policies that assist and/or impact culturally marginalized communities in the City of Eugene.	WeCU Advisory Group	Ongoing
1.4	Promote and support human rights events and efforts in the community	Advisory Group	Ongoing
1.6	Review the status of the recommendations in previous reports and recommendations proposed by the Human Rights Commission such as (2017 Marginalized Voices Report, Persecution of the Unhoused Report, Multicultural Needs Assessment, etc.) within the context of the current state of political, economic, and societal circumstances locally, statewide and nationally.	WeCU Homelessness and Poverty Workgroup	In Progress (WeCU) Not started
1.7	Raise awareness for outcomes of Human Rights Commission meetings and work.	Advisory Group	Ongoing
1.10	Engage culturally marginalized communities such as (BIPOC, LGBTQ, religious minorities, and people with disabilities) and community groups, in coordination with the City of Eugene, to encourage the reporting of hate and/or bias crimes and/or	WeCU	Ongoing



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	incidents. Elicit feedback and document barriers to reporting.		
1.11	In coordination with the City of Eugene, monitor and contribute to efforts and/or policies that assist culturally marginalized communities in Eugene such as (BIPOC, LGBTQ, and religious minorities).	Advisory Group	Ongoing
1.14	Identify barriers to economic advancement and wealth creation within marginalized communities by examining current methodologies and utilizing publicly available data and resources with the goal of hosting a community event, developing programmatic recommendations, or other resources for the public.	WeCU	Ongoing
1.15	Conduct outreach with the City of Eugene and the public about increasing access to basic services such as public restrooms, water fountains, and other public utilities in public spaces in order to provide recommendations on programs, planning, and public infrastructure.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group	Limited Progress
1.17	Coordinate with other boards and commissions within the City of Eugene and other jurisdictions throughout the State of Oregon which are centered on issues related to human rights or social progress to plan public events or coordinated advocacy efforts.	Advisory Group	Limited progress
1.18	Develop strategies to increase access to free hygiene and menstrual products in public spaces operated by the City of Eugene.	WECU Homelessness and Poverty Work Group	Started (WeCU) Limited progress



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Goal 2 (Liaison role)

Maintain strategic HRC liaisons and engage in cooperative endeavors with the community and with City of Eugene advisory groups that support civil and human rights and social equity.

Item	Description	Assigned to	Status
2.1	Monitor and contribute to efforts and/or policies that impact unhoused and economically marginalized communities in Eugene.	Homelessness and Poverty Workgroup	Ongoing
2.4	Continue to advocate to recognize individuals experiencing homelessness as a protected group in all relevant domestic legal frameworks and end policies or measures that discriminate directly or indirectly against homeless people or criminalize, impose fines on or restrict homeless people or behavior associated with being homeless.	Homelessness and Poverty Workgroup Advisory Group	Limited progress
2.6	Collaborate directly with leadership of other boards and commissions to create a more comprehensive approach to advising the City of Eugene.	Advisory Group	In progress
2.7	Coordinate to propose new protected groups currently not included in the City of Eugene Human Rights Code.	Advisory Group	Pending
2.8	Provide recommendations to increase programmatic resources and awareness for individuals fleeing domestic violence, human trafficking, and other forms of violence	WeCU Homelessness and Poverty Workgroup	Limited Progress (WeCU)
2.9	Coordinate with the multicultural liaison to conduct outreach, research legislative models for the City Council, and propose ideas for a new composition of council including a council position representing indigenous communities who once resided on the Kalapuya Ilihi.	Advisory Group	In progress



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Goal 3 (Advisory role)

Study and recommend actions on civil and human rights and social equity issues in areas of concern to the community and City organization.

Item	Description	Assigned to	Status
3.1	In complement with Section 3 of Council Resolution 5274, dated July 24, 2019 (A Resolution Condemning White Nationalism and Alt-Right Activities and Groups) and in conjunction with existing City efforts, conduct research and engage the Eugene community in identifying place and major street names, etc., in Eugene that honor or glorify white supremacy.	WeCU	In Progress
3.5	Research what other cities are doing regarding city- wide programs to address systemic inequity, identify what works and doesn't work, and identify best practices. Keep track of current and proposed efforts within the City of Eugene to promote diversity, equity and inclusion.	WeCU	In Progress
3.6	Contribute to the development of the City's communications strategy, including the City website, social media, etc., as it relates to culturally marginalized communities (BIPOC, LGBTQ, and religious minorities, and people with disabilities).	WeCU Advisory Group	In Progress
3.7	Initiate the formation of a naming committee (or task force) that conducts research and engages the Eugene community in identifying place names and monuments, etc., in Eugene that glorify white supremacy.	WeCU	In Progress
3.09	Monitor and contribute to efforts and/or policies that impact unhoused and economic marginalized communities in Eugene.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group	Ongoing



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3.10	Review trainings, policies, and procedures provided to City of Eugene staff and departments who engage with or make decisions impacting individuals and families experiencing homelessness and poverty and provide recommendations for areas of improvement.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group	Limited progress
3.16	Explore and provide proposals and alternative procedures for dealing with minor offenses of individuals and families experiencing homelessness to reduce the imposition of criminal penalties for sitting, sleeping, or lying outside on public property, in public ways, or in other places not meant for human habitation when adequate shelter or alternatives cannot be obtained.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group	Limited progress

2024-2026 HRC Work Groups

WeCU (Whole Eugene Community United) Work Group

Objective: Identify and implement strategies to enhance inclusion of marginalized communities into the City of Eugene, local municipalities, educational institutions, healthcare networks, business community, and neighborhoods and to help deter or respond to hate, bias and discrimination, including systemic and individual racism, heterosexism, transphobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and ableism. **Co-Leads:** Cynthia Cannon-Poindexter, Martha Baldwin

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Homelessness and Poverty Work Group

Objective: Monitor and report on laws and policies that have a disparate impact on people experiencing homelessness and poverty; propose policy recommendations to the Eugene City Council and procedural recommendations on issues related to homelessness and poverty to the City of Eugene; and engage in advocacy efforts that combat the marginalization of people experiencing homelessness and poverty. **Co-Leads:** John Bradley

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Advisory Group (Ad-Hoc)

Objective: Maintain an introspective view of human rights issues in Eugene as they arise and develop advisory communication and recommendations to City Council to respond to and support human rights in Eugene. Develop and implement strategies to promote education, outreach, and public engagement. Propose and implement ad-hoc groups to actuate on work plan items and human rights issues brought by the Human Rights Commission.

Co-Leads: Dr Silky Booker, Kiana Cabuco



Human Rights Commission

The following work plan items were deprioritized and will be reconsidered for the upcoming 2026-2028 work plan development process:

Goal 1 (Community-oriented)

Take a leadership role in fostering respect for social equity, civil rights, and human rights in the community by engaging in education, outreach, listening and collaboration.

Item	Description	Notes
1.5	Conduct outreach, interviews, or listening sessions with individuals and families experiencing homelessness and poverty in the City of Eugene.	Homelessness and Poverty Workgroup
1.8	Research, identify, and liaison with groups, organizations, boards, and commissions in the community, city and county that have overlapping goals with the HRC work plan and goals, and provide this information to the HRC so that we can collaborate on shared goals.	Advisory Group
1.9	Engage unhoused community and community-based organizations to encourage the reporting of hate and bias incidents. Elicit feedback and document barriers to reporting.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group
1.13	Engage in public events, information sessions, and outreach to educate the public about the lived experiences of individuals and families experiencing homelessness and poverty	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group
1.16	Identify barriers to housing affordability and develop strategies to prevent homelessness, reduce rent burdens, and increase homeownership for.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group
1.19	Coordinated with the City of Eugene to provide a human rights lens on goals outlined in the City of Eugene 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.	Advisory Group
1.20	Develop an ad hoc committee centered on addressing ongoing discrimination, bias, and hate crimes impacting members of black community residing in the City of Eugene.	WeCU

Goal 2 (Liaison role)

Maintain strategic HRC liaisons and engage in cooperative endeavors with the community



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and with City of Eugene advisory groups that support civil and human rights and social equity.

Item	Description	Assigned to
2.2	Develop a strategy to increase engagement and communication with the City Council. The strategy will include a plan to develop relationships with individual City Councilors.	Advisory Group
2.3	Identify barriers to housing affordability and strategies for ending homelessness that center communities of color, are culturally specific and/or responsive, and result in the reduction of disparities in homelessness and rent burden among people of color in the City of Eugene.	Homelessness and Poverty Workgroup
2.5	Identify barriers to housing affordability and strategies for ending homelessness that center on LGBTQIA+ communities, are culturally specific and/or responsive, and result in the reduction of disparities in homelessness and rent burden among people of LGBTQIA+ communities in the City of Eugene.	Homelessness and Poverty Workgroup

Goal 3 (Advisory role)

Study and recommend actions on civil and human rights and social equity issues in areas of concern to the community and City organization.

Item	Description	Assigned to
3.2	Identify needs to support long-term economic success of populations who experience systemic economic disadvantages in business creation, access to traditional capital and wealth creation.	WeCU Advisory Group
3.3	Evaluate current economic development incentives, grants, tax breaks, technical assistance, and other supports through the lens of racial justice, and provide recommendations for modifications if appropriate.	WeCU
3.4	Create additional frameworks for reviewing personnel performance within the Office of Equity and Community Engagement that provide input from the public and members of the Human Rights Commission.	Advisory Group



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3.8	Prepare a report on the results for HRC and City Council, with recommendations for place names to be considered for renaming and monuments, etc., to be considered for removal/replacement.	WeCU
3.11	Identify and advocate for strategies that prevent at-risk renters and homeowners from entering into Homelessness.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group
3.12	Assess city-funded programs and initiatives directed towards individuals and families experiencing poverty or homelessness based on a human rights score and other qualitative metrics.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group
3.13	Review and make recommendations on the personnel practices and financial costs associated with camp clearances and citations issued to individuals and families experiencing homelessness and poverty in the City of Eugene and prepare a report for public dissemination.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group
3.14	Review and make recommendations on disaster response plans for individuals and families experiencing homelessness and poverty who are impacted by natural disaster, hazardous weather events, and changing climate	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group
3.15	Promote the use of guidelines from the United Nations Special Rapporteurs' guidelines for the implementation of the right to adequate housing.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group
3.17	Review and make recommendations on policies and procedures used to monitor the number of beds available at emergency shelters or adequate alternatives during camp clearances.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group
3.18	Coordinate with the City of Eugene to produce publicly available resources (maps, catalogs, resource cards, web content, etc.) demonstrating where individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness may legally reside overnight.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group
3.19	Review and make recommendations for right to and monitoring of adequate housing and emergency shelter programs by examining qualities such as the security of tenure, availability of services, affordability, habitability, accessibility, location, and cultural adequacy.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group



Human Rights Commission

3.20	Review trainings, policies, and procedures provided to City of Eugene staff and departments who engage with or make decisions impacting individuals experiencing or families impacted by mental illness and mental health crisis and provide recommendations for areas of improvement.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group
3.21	Review and make recommendations for the allocation of resources towards staff and training dedicated to direct service, crisis intervention, and behavioral health within city-funded programs and initiatives serving individuals and families experiencing homelessness and poverty.	Homelessness and Poverty Work Group

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Home Energy Score Engagement and Research Findings

Meeting Date: February 23, 2026
Department: Public Works
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number 2
Staff Contact: Danielle Klinkebiel
Phone: 541-731-0527

ISSUE STATEMENT

This work session is the first of two sessions responding to prior Council direction on a Home Energy Score (HES) disclosure requirement when a home is listed for sale. At this work session, staff will provide an overview of the HES tool and proposed policy, summarize community engagement findings, and share research on policy outcomes and best practices from other Oregon jurisdictions that have implemented the requirement. At the second session, staff will discuss implementation steps and other considerations, at which time Council may decide to take action.

BACKGROUND

In 2022, City Council set a goal to decarbonize existing buildings by 2045 and directed staff to engage the community on potential pathways for achieving it. In response, staff conducted extensive outreach, engaging more than 800 residents and businesses to understand opportunities and challenges.

Key themes that emerged from that engagement effort included the need to expand awareness of incentives for home energy improvements and to provide education and guidance on improving home energy performance. A HES disclosure requirement aligns closely with these priorities by providing standardized, accessible information about a home's energy performance and connecting residents to available resources and incentives at a key decision-making moment. City Council has directed staff to explore a HES disclosure requirement when a home is listed for sale, similar to policies that have been implemented in many other cities across Oregon, including Bend, Hillsboro, Milwaukie, and Portland.

Overview

A HES is a standardized tool developed by the U.S. Department of Energy that summarizes a home's energy performance on a 1–10 scale and identifies cost-effective opportunities to improve energy use. A more thorough description of the HES methodology is included as Attachment A.

Under a disclosure requirement, sellers obtain a score prior to listing and include it in the Multiple Listing System so buyers can view it when looking at prospective homes. There are three primary goals of a HES disclosure requirement: (1) increase transparency about home energy features and costs; (2) identify cost-effective improvements for homeowners and buyers; and (3) connect homeowners to resources and incentives to finance improvements.

A HES disclosure requirement does not require sellers or buyers to make energy improvements—it simply provides information to support informed decision making.

Community Engagement and Research Results:

Staff engaged 630 people to understand the community's perspective on a HES disclosure requirement. Engagement included an online survey, mock debates, one-on-one interviews, and group meetings with real estate agents, builders and contractors, environmental groups, neighborhood leaders and others.

Overall, participants expressed mixed but generally favorable views. Approximately two-thirds of respondents supported or strongly supported the concept of a disclosure requirement, while just under one-third opposed it, and a small share expressed no opinion. Perspectives varied by stakeholder group. A more detailed summary of engagement methods, themes, and feedback is provided in Attachment B.

Engagement and supporting research identified the following key themes:

1. Transparency of home energy information:

Engagement and research both reinforced that most buyers are not aware of a home's energy performance or energy features. Research suggests that HES disclosure mainly helps fill an information gap by increasing awareness about home energy performance during the purchase decision and allowing for consistent comparison across listings.

2. Impact on completing energy efficiency upgrades:

Both engagement and research results are aligned in that greater transparency about energy information would lead to greater uptake of energy efficiency incentives and completion of improvement projects.

3. Impact on housing prices:

There were concerns about the impact of HES disclosure on home sale prices—that prices for high-scoring homes would increase and that low-scoring homes would be harder to sell. Research shows that while modest home sale price increases are observed in high-scoring homes, these increases reflect the energy cost savings accrued over time and actual investments in the home, enabling sellers to recover costs and occupants to benefit from lower energy expenses over time. There is no evidence that buyers avoid low-scoring homes.

4. Impact on the real estate market:

While realtors worry HES disclosure will create delays in the real estate transaction process and generate redundant information (e.g., to a home inspection), these outcomes have not been observed in cities where the policy is implemented.

5. Impact on climate and emissions:

Both engagement and research align in that HES disclosure is unlikely to deliver significant GHG reductions. However, research in other jurisdictions shows the policy can provide a foundation on which to develop future climate initiatives. Better data on the local housing stock and increased community-wide understanding about energy efficiency can help to more effectively target and implement other priority decarbonization strategies, such as expanding incentives, addressing energy burden, and scaling clean energy supply.

6. Implementation considerations:

A variety of concerns were raised related to how the policy would be implemented, including issues related to enforcement, exemptions, subsidies, and workforce capacity. This feedback generally did not reflect opposition to the policy, but rather questions and concerns about implementation.

Additional Feedback:

A variety of additional comments also emerged during engagement. While these comments are not presented in a weighted manner, collectively they provide a more complete picture of community input.

- Benefits for economic development, workforce development and local businesses
- Concern about HES methodology and adequacy
- View that HES tool is affordable and accessible
- Concern that HES disclosure could limit mortgage lending
- Recognition that HES disclosure could help unlock additional financing tools
- Unsupportive of requirements or regulations
- Cost to implement
- Need for expanded incentives to help finance upgrades
- Need for additional guidance to make energy improvements
- Feedback that the policy should be extended to rentals

Overall, community engagement and research suggest that a HES disclosure requirement can address a significant information gap for homebuyers and support greater awareness of energy efficiency opportunities. These findings provide a foundation for Council's discussion of implementation steps and key considerations at a future work session.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

The [City of Eugene Strategic Plan](#) highlights climate action as an urgent community need. One of Council's strategic goals is to advance climate action and community resilience to natural and human-caused disasters.

[CRO](#) is a City ordinance that establishes Eugene's climate goals, including both greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuel use reduction targets for the Eugene community and for City operations.

[CAP 2.0](#) identifies the actions that the City of Eugene and community partners are taking to reduce emissions and address climate risks to create an equitable and livable community for everyone.

[Envision Eugene Comprehensive Plan](#) is the City's guiding policy document for land use planning in Eugene's urban growth boundary and is helping the City to grow more sustainably and reduce transportation-related emissions.

[Housing Implementation Pipeline \(HIP\)](#) is a five-year internal work plan (FY23-FY27) to coordinate housing goals and priorities. The HIP priorities of investing in housing preservation, energy-efficient new construction, and housing support services help to advance the City's sustainability goals.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

[November 17, 2021 Work Session](#)

Staff presented the first CAP2.0 Implementation Plan. Council passed several motions related to HES.

Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to direct the City Manager to complete a community engagement process and schedule a work session to share feedback from that process and develop a framework of a draft ordinance requiring sellers of residential, single-family homes to obtain and disclose an energy performance rating prior to publicly listing the home for sale and to include the rating in sale listings.

Passed 8:0

Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to direct the City Manager to bring back an implementation plan including potential funding sources for the mandatory Home Energy Score Program.

Passed 8:0

Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to direct the City Manager to develop additional Home Energy Score Program options for renters in alignment with CAP2.0 Action B3.

Passed 7:0

[July 27, 2022 Work Session](#)

City Council discussed potential ways to advance building decarbonization work.

Councilor Syrett, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to direct the City Manager to formalize as a City goal the decarbonization of residential and, as feasible, commercial buildings by 2035 and industrial buildings by 2050.

Passed 6:2 (Opposed by Councilors Clark and Groves)

Councilor Syrett, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to direct the City Manager to return to Council in the Fall with a proposal for engaging the community in developing a plan for the transition of buildings to be decarbonized that has at its foundation social, environmental, and economic equity with the emphasis on engagement of historically marginalized communities and their representatives.

Passed 6:2 (Opposed by Councilors Clark and Groves)

[July 17, 2024 Work Session](#)

Staff presented the results of engagement on building decarbonization.

Councilor Leech, seconded by Councilor Zelenka, moved to direct the City Manager to return to Council prior to the end of 2024 to discuss a potential pathway forward and potential

consequences for implementing strategies presented by staff to decarbonize homes and buildings in Eugene and monitoring regulatory actions being taken by other jurisdictions for possible local adoption.

Passed 7:0

[December 9, 2024 Work Session](#)

Staff identified potential pathways forward for implementing building decarbonization strategies. Implementing a HES disclosure requirement was identified as a top priority. Staff also shared potential long-term funding strategies to fund climate work.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

None. This is an informational item only.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

None. This is an informational item only.

SUGGESTED MOTION

None. This is an informational item only.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Home Energy Score Scoring Methodology (by U.S. Department of Energy)
- B. Final Report: Results of Engagement and Research on a Home Energy Score Disclosure Policy
- C. Results from Research and Analysis of Home Energy Score Policies for the City of Eugene, Oregon (by Earth Advantage)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Home Energy Score Scoring Methodology

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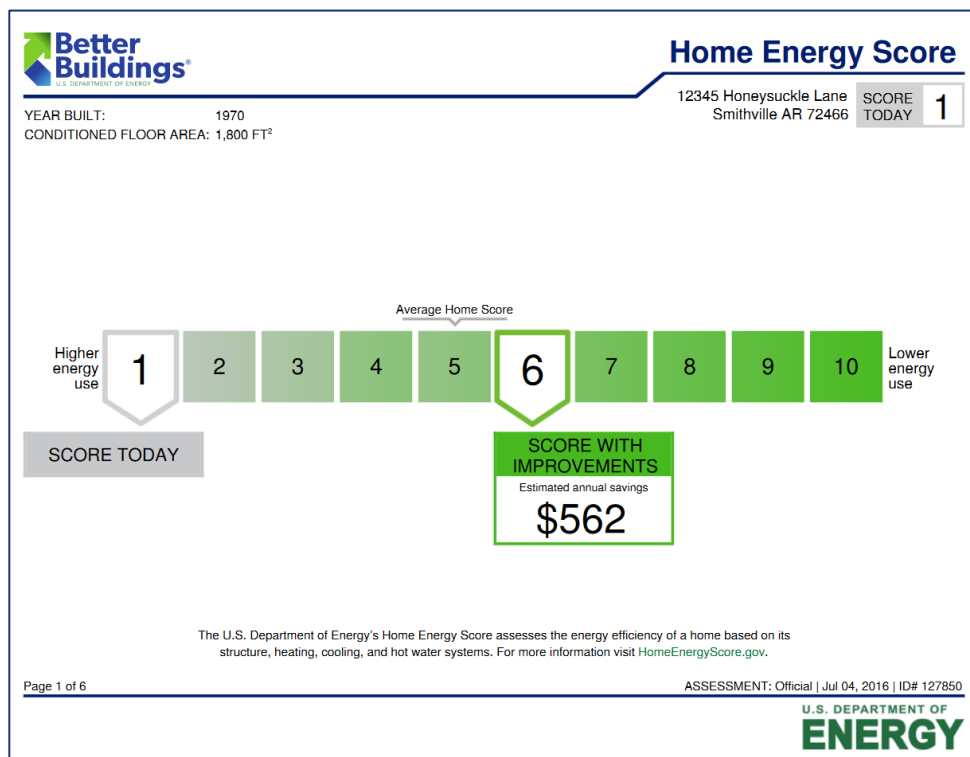
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1. Background

1.1 Purpose, Goal, Audience

Like a miles-per-gallon rating for a car, the Home Energy Score is an easy-to-produce rating designed to help homeowners and homebuyers gain useful information about a home's energy performance. Based on an in-home assessment that can be completed in less than an hour, the Home Energy Score not only lets a homeowner understand how efficient the home is and how it compares to others, but also provides recommendations on how to cost-effectively improve the home's energy efficiency. The Home Energy Score uses a simple 1-to-10 scale where a 10 represents the most energy efficient homes (Figure 1).

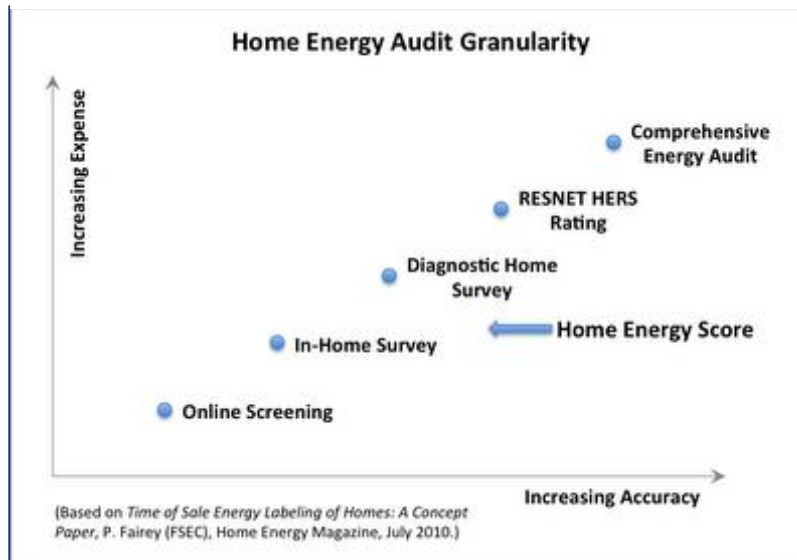
Figure 1. Home Energy Score Label Example



The mission of the Home Energy Score program is to build market value for home energy efficiency among single-family and townhomes. Home Energy Score accomplishes this by valuing, understanding, and allowing for financing of home energy efficiency with nationwide household recognition.

The Scoring Tool is designed to support the existing marketplace for energy analysis tools and services by providing a substantially lower-cost entry-level assessment, which can help the qualified Assessor establish the potential for energy savings, as well as the value of pursuing a more comprehensive assessment and retrofit recommendation report (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Home Energy Audit Granularity



1.2 Historical Context

In 2009 the Vice President and the White House Council on Environmental Quality called upon the Department of Energy (DOE) to create a home energy rating system. The White House's 2009 report, [Recovery through Retrofit](#), identified the lack of straightforward and reliable information about homes' energy use as a key barrier to homeowner investment in home energy upgrades or improvements.

To address this barrier, DOE developed a voluntary program to help homeowners understand their home's energy use and prioritize cost-effective energy improvements. The goal was to allow homeowners to easily and affordably find out how their home's energy performance compares with other homes in the same area, much like the vehicle mile-per-gallon rating. According to guiding principles, the system must be:

- a.) Credible, reliable and replicable
- b.) Transparent and easy to understand
- c.) Affordable
- d.) Subject to effective quality control

DOE sought to utilize an online tool (the Home Energy Simulation Training), developed by DOE's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, to train candidate Assessors to collect and input the data into the online Scoring Tool. The result would be a report or label that provides the following information:

- A Home Energy Score on a scale of 1 to 10 (where a "10" is a home that uses less energy than 90% of homes in the U.S.), presented with clear and simple graphics to help homeowners understand their home's energy performance and how it compares to other homes;
- An estimate of how much money could be saved on energy bills by making the recommended energy improvements; and
- An individualized list of recommended energy retrofit improvements that are estimated to payback in ten years or less.

After a year of industry research, analysis and development, DOE launched a pilot program to test the Home Energy Score. Building on the results of the pilots and other research, including industry factors and

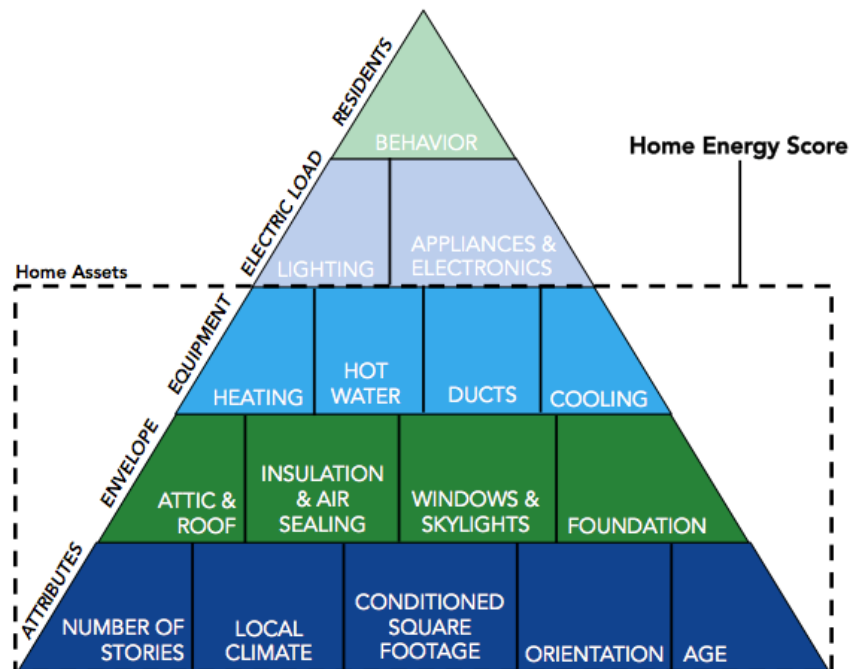
homeowner motivations, DOE officially launched the Home Energy Score nationwide in 2012. It became the first national asset rating method that allows all US regions to opt into a simplified and standardized energy assessment process that complements existing advanced home energy audit methods.

1.3 Asset vs. Operational Ratings

1.3.1 What is an asset rating?

The Home Energy Score is an asset rating. An asset rating seeks to quantify the energy efficiency of a building based solely upon the inherent components of the house. The Scoring Tool captures data on insulation levels and the heating equipment efficiencies, but does not take into account thermostat settings, appliances, or plug loads because the energy used to operate these components can vary widely depending on occupant behavior. The way the Scoring Tool defines “home assets” for Home Energy Score is displayed in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Home Energy Use Pyramid



An asset score allows homes to be compared an “apples to apples” basis because it compares houses to one another based on their assets and not how occupants operate the houses. The Home Energy Scoring Tool assesses the effect of changes in a home’s assets, while the occupant-dependent factors and behaviors are assumed to be somewhat constant.

1.3.2 What is an operational rating?

An operational rating normalizes the measured energy use of a building (e.g. energy bills) so that it can be compared to the measured energy use of a similar building type, such as a single-family home, school or office. Differences within building type, such as size, number of occupants, climate or hours of operation, may be used to normalize the measured energy use to facilitate an equitable comparison. Operational ratings can be used to prioritize a group of buildings for efficiency improvement based on the poorest measured energy performance. Home Energy Score is not an operational rating, but can be paired with operational assessments to further refine recommendations for each home.

2. Scoring Methodology

2.1 How are homes scored?

A qualified Assessor inspects each home on-site and enters 50 data points into the online Home Energy Scoring Tool. The data collection sheet with the list of data elements and possible values can be found [here](#). After entering all necessary data, the Scoring Tool will provide a summary of inputs for review and prompts the assessor to create the label (Figure 1). After creating the label, data inputs are locked and cannot be changed. The Home Energy Score label can be immediately printed or emailed to the customer. DOE approved, third-party software allows Assessors to submit appropriate fields through an application programming interface (API) and receive the Score and calculated results.

2.1.1 Scale

When developing the scoring system, DOE considered many factors and data sources to fairly compare the energy performance of existing homes. DOE sought to develop a simple system that allows consumers to understand how a home compares to other homes regardless of location and weather patterns. The current methodology is applicable to single-family homes and townhomes or duplexes in the continental U.S. and Alaska. The Scoring Tool scores a home on a 10-point scale, where a 10 corresponds to lowest energy use and a 1 corresponds to highest energy use. Each point on the scale corresponds to a small range of energy use estimates within the full 10-point range.

2.1.2 Compensating for differences in home size and location?

2.1.2.1 Home Size – A home's energy use depends on a variety of factors, one of which is its size. Larger homes have more surface area, which translates into greater energy requirements for heating and cooling. A home's Score is based on estimated annual energy use, not energy per square foot; so, given all other things as equal, a larger home will score lower than a smaller home.

2.1.2.2 Climate of Location – Home Energy Score uses [TMY3](#) climate data. It maps the zip code for the house address to the nearest weather station. Each weather station has its own definition of Score bin ranges based on local weather.

2.1.3 The Home Energy Score Scale: Bin Definitions

The Home Energy Score's scale is based on [RECS 2009](#) data, which is a survey of residential energy consumption by the Energy Information Administration (EIA). The scale was designed to reflect existing housing stock and also allow for mobility on the scale to encourage home energy retrofits. Seventy-five percent of U.S. homes score between 2 and 9 on the scale, and a home that uses an average amount of energy – in the 50th percentile range of energy use – scores a 5. An example of the MBtu cutoffs between Score bin values is included below, although [actual values](#) vary by geographic region and local weather patterns.

Example Scoring Bin Format											
Weather Station #	Weather Station Name	1 greater than	2 up to	3 up to	4 up to	5 up to	6 up to	7 up to	8 up to	9 up to	10 less than
#	Name	148	147	132	118	103	90	80	70	60	50
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
1000+											
#	locations	x MBtus	x MBtus	x MBtus	x MBtus	x MBtus	x MBtus	x MBtus	x MBtus	x MBtus	x MBtus

2.1.4 Site to Source Conversion Factors

Home Energy Score is based on the source energy for heating, cooling and hot water. Source energy accounts for the inefficiencies related to processing and transporting energy. For example, there are significant losses associated with generating and providing electricity that do not exist with on-site energy generation. The conversion from the site energy value (as calculated by the energy model) and the source energy value is based on national averages conversion factors. These factors reflect updated technical guidance from [DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy as of October 2016](#) updated using 2019 values.

Fuel	Conversion Factor
Electricity	2.56
Natural Gas	1.05
LPG	1.01
Fuel Oil	1.01
Wood	1.01

2.1.5 Accounting for Residential Solar Installations

Given that a photo-voltaic system (PV) is one of many energy-related home assets, a home's PV system is credited to the home's Score. With the release of v. 2017 (Feb 2017), the Home Energy Scoring Tool accounts for PV in three metrics: the Score, estimated electricity usage, and estimated energy costs.

2.1.5.1 The Score - Home Energy Score Assessors collect PV data consistent with NREL's PV Watts tool to estimate the system's annual energy production. To generate a Home Energy Score, the Scoring Tool will subtract the estimated PV annual production (in MBtu) from the estimated energy required to meet the home's heating, cooling, and hot water needs (i.e., asset loads). This new MBtu value is used to determine the home's Score – one that reflects all of the home's major energy-related assets, including PV.

2.1.5.2 Estimated Electricity Use - The Home Energy Score Report includes a number of additional metrics and values that reflect how much energy is used by and generated at the home. These metrics and values do not include transmission, distribution, and generation losses. The user can distinguish site from source numbers because all MBtu numbers are source; all energy specific units are site energy. For example, the kWh value shown on the Home Energy Score Report is the estimated amount of electricity required on site to meet all of the home's electricity needs, including plug load. If a home has PV, the total kWh generated by the system is subtracted from the total kWh required to meet the home's electricity needs.

2.1.5.3 Estimated Electricity Cost - When a home has PV, Home Energy Score estimates the home's total electricity costs by offsetting the contribution of the PV system from the home's modeled electricity use using the state average utility rate.

2.1.6 Cost savings: What utility rates are assumed?

The Scoring Tool uses the most recent [state average utility rates](#) as provided by the DOE's [EIA](#) to determine the estimated cost savings displayed on the first and last pages. The total energy cost for a home with PV will reflect the offset provided by all of the electricity generated by the PV system.

2.1.7 Carbon Savings: Carbon Conversion Factors

To calculate the home's carbon footprint (measured in lbs CO₂), the Scoring Tool multiplies the annual energy for each fuel type by the emissions factor for the respective fuel (see [Carbon Emissions Factors Table 33 and 34](#)). Natural gas, fuel oil and LPG emission factors are derived from [DOE EIA](#). The U.S. EPA's Emissions & Generation Resource Integrated Database ([eGRID](#)) provides electricity grid emission factors. [eGRID](#) contains emissions and resource mix data for virtually every power plant and company that generates electricity in the United States (US EPA, 2009).

2.2 How are recommendations generated by the Home Energy Score?

In keeping with the asset-based methodology, a consistent set of upgrade recommendations are considered for each home's assets, based on the home's location. Variations occur as a function of home characteristics, cost-effectiveness, etc. Upgrades considered in the Scoring Tool include improvements to the house envelope and major equipment (the "assets"), but not to upgrades of lighting, appliances or behavioral changes (e.g. change thermostat settings). Unlike other rating tools, the Scoring Tool applies a fixed, standardized retrofit cost (from the [NREL National Residential Efficiency Measures Database](#)) and generates recommendations that provide the highest performance level with a payback time of 10 years or fewer. Recommendations considered during the improvements analysis are as follows:

Category	Measure
Basement wall insulation	R11
	R19
Central air conditioner	Energy Star (SEER 14)
Attic insulation	R19
	R30
	R38
	R49
	R60
Cool roof	High Slope - 15% reflectivity
Foundation wall insulation	R11
	R19
Duct insulation	R6
Duct sealing	Reduce leakage to 3% of total airflow
Floor insulation	R11
	R19
	R25
	R38
Gas boiler	Energy Star (85% AFUE)
Gas Furnace	Energy Star (90% AFUE)
Heat pump	Energy Star (SEER 14.5, HSPF 8.2)
Envelope/Air sealing	75% of existing leakage (25% reduction)
Oil boiler	Energy Star (85% AFUE)
Oil furnace	Energy Star (85% AFUE)
Propane furnace	Energy Star (90% AFUE)
Propane Boiler	Energy Star (85% AFUE)
Room air conditioner	Energy Star v 3.0 (EER 11.3)
Roof EPS insulation	Add R5 exterior foam sheathing
Skylights	Energy Star (Double-pane solar-control low-E argon gas wood frame)
Wall insulation	R13
	Add R5 exterior foam sheathing (only available for wood frame construction w/ wood, aluminum or vinyl siding)
Water heater, electric	Energy Star (heat pump, EF 2.76)
Water heater, natural gas storage	Energy Star (0.67 energy factor)
	Premium Efficiency (energy factor 0.81, 88% recovery efficiency)
Water heater, propane storage	Energy Star (0.67 energy factor)
Windows	Energy Star (Double-pane solar-control low-E argon gas wood frame)

These recommendations are provided in two categories:

“Repair Now” improvements can help the homeowner save energy immediately. These include:

- Attic insulation
- Basement wall insulation
- Basement/crawlspace floor insulation
- Crawlspace wall insulation
- Air tightness
- Exterior wall insulation
- Duct sealing
- Duct insulation

Repair Now energy savings are achieved by moving between the baseline home and the upgrade recommendation. The cost used for the cost-benefit analysis is the full cost of installation.

“Replace Later” improvements are recommendations that should be implemented when it is time to replace specific equipment or building materials. These include:

- Central air conditioner
- Boiler, furnace or heat pump
- Room air conditioner
- Roof - reflectance
- Roof - insulated sheathing
- Skylights
- Siding - insulated sheathing
- Water heater
- Windows

Replace Later improvements are recommended at the time of product replacement because the incremental cost between the minimum efficiency equipment and the cost of the high efficiency equipment is used in the payback analysis.

The Home Energy Scoring Tool does not include PV as an automatic recommendation for homes to improve their Scores. If an Assessor believes a home is a good candidate to improve their Score by adding a PV system, they can utilize the Tool’s “Alternative EEM” feature to showcase the home’s Score with Improvements with PV included.

It is important to note that the sum of the savings from each measure recommended does not equal the total savings for the package of selected upgrades (the number shown on the label). This difference is due to interactive effects of some energy improvements. For example, insulation will reduce heat and cooling energy use. This will reduce the potential savings available to the heating/cooling system upgrade. This difference will be reflected in the total savings number on the Home Energy Score label.

Building Simulation Model

2.3 What models are used in the Home Energy Scoring Tool?

- 2.3.1 Heating and Cooling** – EnergyPlus™ is a free, open-source, cross-platform, whole building energy simulation program that engineers, architects, and researchers use to model energy consumption for heating, cooling, ventilation, lighting and plug and process loads, and water use in buildings. EnergyPlus™ uses a description of the building layout, constructions, operating schedules, conditioning systems (lighting, HVAC, etc.) with weather data, to perform an hourly simulation of the building and to estimate utility use. The EnergyPlus™ documentation is [here](#).
- 2.3.2 Water Heater Model** – Total hot water used is the sum of clothes washer, dishwasher and fixture related usage. These are determined based on the estimated number or occupants in the house. e+ calculates the domestic hot water use using the [ANSI/RESNET/ICC 301-2019](#) standard
- 2.3.3 Infiltration Model** – EnergyPlus™ uses the AIM-2 “ASHRAE Enhanced” model to calculate the effects of infiltration on energy use. (See page 436, 8.3.4 in the EnergyPlus™ [Engineering Reference](#)).
- 2.3.4 Weather** – Home Energy Score uses [TMY3](#) data to account for the local weather. The house zip code is mapped to the closest TMY3 weather station to calculate energy use.
- 2.3.5 Model Defaults** – Home Energy Score is an asset rating; therefore, the influence of the occupants must be standardized so houses can be compared on an apples-to-apples basis. To do this, Home Energy Score assumes the following default characteristics for each house.
- 2.3.5.1** Occupancy is determined based on the number of bedrooms using this equation ($\# \text{bedrooms} + 1$, from the [ANSI/RESNET/ICC 301-2019](#) standard). Using this method, the number of bedrooms directly affects the household’s amount of estimated domestic hot water consumption. Further, occupancy is used to determine miscellaneous electric loads such as television.
 - 2.3.5.2** Stove, oven and clothes dryer are assumed to be electric.
 - 2.3.5.3** Appliance, lighting and miscellaneous plug loads are calculated in EnergyPlus™ using the [ANSI/RESNET/ICC 301-2019](#) standard.
 - 2.3.5.4** The building length and width are fixed to a 5:3 aspect ratio.
 - 2.3.5.5** The thermostat schedule is defined based on the [ANSI/RESNET/ICC 301-2019](#) standard where heating is 68° F and cooling is 78° F with a 2° offset for eight hours per day.
 - 2.3.5.6** To calculate estimated energy savings in dollars, the Tool uses state average utility rates as provided by DOE’s [Energy Information Administration](#).

2.4 User Inputs

2.4.1 About This House

- 1) Address
- 2) Assessment Date
- 3) Year Built
- 4) Number of Bedrooms
- 5) Stories Above Grade
- 6) Floor to Ceiling Height
- 7) House Orientation
- 8) Blower Door Test Reading (Y/N)
 - a. If so, CFM₅₀ reading
- 9) Professional Whole Home Air Sealing (Y/N)

2.4.2 Roof, Attic, Foundation

- 10) Attic Area
- 11) Roof Type and Finish (may describe 2)
- 12) Roof Insulation R-value
- 13) Roof Color
- 14) Attic Type
- 15) Attic Insulation R-value
- 16) Foundation Type (may describe 2)
- 17) Insulation R-value Above Basement or Crawlspace
- 18) Foundation Insulation R-value

2.4.3 Walls

- 19) Townhouse or Duplex (Y/N)
 - a. If Yes, Relative Position (L, M, R)
- 20) Wall Construction (may describe 4)
- 21) Exterior Cladding
- 22) Cavity R-value

2.4.4 Windows and Skylights

- 23) Skylights (Y/N)
 - a. If Yes, same info as follows for windows
- 24) Window Area for Front, Back, Left, Right
- 25) Solar Shade Screen (Y/N)
- 26) # Panes
- 27) Frame Type
- 28) Glazing Type
 - a. Or provide U-Factor and SHGC

2.4.5 Heating, Cooling and Hot Water

- 29) Heating System Type (may describe 2)
- 30) Heating System Efficiency (preferred) or Manufacture Date
- 31) Cooling System Type (may describe 2)
- 32) Cooling System Efficiency (preferred) or Manufacture Date
- 33) Duct Location (may describe 3)
- 34) % Ducts in Location
- 35) Ducts Sealed (Y/N)
- 36) Ducts Insulated (Y/N)
- 37) Water Heater Type
- 38) Water Heater Efficiency (preferred) or Manufacture Date

2.4.6 Photovoltaic System

- 39) Year Installed
- 40) Orientation
- 41) System Capacity (kW) or # of Panels

2.5 Access to the Scoring Tool through an application-programming interface (API)

A software provider interested in including the Home Energy Score as part of the report output provided by their software may use the API provided by PNNL. Full documentation can be found [here](#).

- 2.5.1 Use** - The software provider must supply information to DOE about how the Home Energy Score will be used and by whom (e.g. Is the software being used for a single client or multiple clients?). DOE needs to be able to keep track of who is using what software to maintain/verify continued data compliance.
- 2.5.2 Access** - DOE will provide a user account, API evaluation keys, API documentation and implementation support. DOE will provide test scenarios for verification/certification.
- 2.5.3 Programming** - The software provider will build the API functionality within their tool, including HPXML data submissions. .
- 2.5.4 Testing** - When that is complete, the software provider will enter the test scenarios into their tool and provide access to their tool and those runs to DOE staff. DOE staff will verify that what the Home Energy Scoring Tool received through the API was as expected based on the inputs into the 3rd party tool. DOE staff will provide test results to the software provider and work with them to correct errors until the data transfers are as expected.
- 2.5.5 Certification** - When confirmed, DOE will provide the production API key to the 3rd party software provider and qualified assessors may begin using that tool.



Final Report: Results of Engagement and Research on a Home Energy Score Disclosure Policy



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Executive Summary

65% of homes in Eugene were built before 1990, prior to modern energy efficiency standards. This means that many homes in the region have inadequate insulation, inefficient heating systems, and outdated appliances. These conditions drive up energy costs, reduce indoor air quality and comfort and contribute to inefficient energy use—disproportionately impacting low-income households. Additionally, many residents are unaware of what can be done to improve their home's energy efficiency.

A Home Energy Score (HES) is an energy assessment tool developed by the United States Department of Energy (U.S. DOE) that provides information about a home's energy performance and identifies cost-effective opportunities for improvement.

City Council has directed staff to explore a policy requiring disclosure of a HES when a home is listed for sale. A HES disclosure requirement is intended to increase transparency about home energy features and costs to educate buyers about energy efficiency opportunities and connect them to available resources and incentives that can help finance energy improvements. Four Oregon cities—Portland, Hillsboro, Milwaukie and Bend—have already implemented a requirement to disclose a HES when a home is listed for sale, providing relevant lessons learned.

This report summarizes the community engagement and research completed in response to Council's direction. Staff engaged 632 community members throughout 2025 at community events, group meetings, one-on-one interviews, mock debates and an online survey. Staff also contracted with Earth Advantage, a national expert on HES policies, to summarize research on best practices and policy outcomes in jurisdictions which have implemented the policy.

Engagement results show that roughly two thirds of the community supports or strongly supports an HES disclosure requirement. Community members expressed a desire to know about the energy efficiency of a home, the energy costs and improvement opportunities at the point of purchase. Many housing and energy trades professionals view the policy as tool to educate clients about the benefits of making energy efficiency improvements. Concerns included potential negative impacts on the housing market, minimal climate benefits and questions about how the policy would be implemented.

Much of the community feedback about policy outcomes was examined in jurisdictions that have implemented an HES disclosure requirement. This research shows that HES disclosure is associated with modest price differences for higher-scoring homes, generally proportional to projected energy cost savings. Homes with HES ratings access energy efficiency incentives at higher rates to make energy improvements, which can reduce long-term costs. While HES disclosure alone is unlikely to deliver significant GHG reductions, it provides more granular data on the local housing stock and increases awareness of home energy use, creating a foundation for future climate initiatives.

Policy Context

Approximately 65% of homes in Eugene were built before 1990—prior to modern energy efficiency standards—resulting in widespread issues such as poor insulation, inefficient heating systems and outdated appliances. These conditions increase household energy costs, degrade indoor air quality and contribute to inefficient energy use, disproportionately impacting low-income households. While the average Eugene household spends about 2% of its income on home energy costs, many low-income households spend 6% or more of their income on energy costs, meaning that energy burden disproportionately impacts low-income households.

Community engagement conducted in 2024 revealed that many residents are unaware of how their homes use energy, which improvements to prioritize and what incentives and rebates are available. The lack of straightforward and reliable information about homes' energy use is a key barrier to homeowner investment in home energy upgrades and improvements. Key strategies for addressing this challenge are summarized in the [Final Report: Results of Engagement and Strategies for Building Decarbonization](#), and include priorities to expand awareness of available incentives and to increase education on how to improve energy efficiency.

Many cities, including four in Oregon (Hillsboro, Milwaukie, Bend and Portland), require HES disclosure when selling a home. This requirement is intended to help buyers understand a home's energy use and identify cost-effective energy improvements.

In Eugene, obtaining an HES is currently voluntary. In the past, a partnership between the University of Oregon (UO), Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) and the City through the Score program provided free HES assessments to renters and low-income homeowners, delivering roughly 800 scores to households. While it was a valuable service to those households, it shows that there is very little participation in HES when it is voluntary. In response, City Council has directed staff to explore a policy that would require HES disclosure at the time a home is listed for sale through the following motions:

- Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to direct the City Manager to complete a community engagement process and schedule a work session to share feedback from that process and develop a framework of a draft ordinance requiring sellers of residential, single-family homes to obtain and disclose an energy performance rating prior to publicly listing the home for sale and to include the rating in sale listings. Passed 8:0 (Nov 17, 2021)
- Councilor Yeh, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to direct the City Manager to bring back an implementation plan including potential funding sources for the mandatory HES Program. Passed 8:0 (Nov 17, 2021)

What is a Home Energy Score?

The HES is a standardized, energy assessment tool developed by the U.S. Department of Energy to help homeowners and homebuyers understand a home's energy performance and how it compares to other homes. An in-home assessment is conducted by a licensed energy assessor and can typically be completed in less than an hour.

During the assessment, the assessor collects information on the home's physical and mechanical systems that affect energy use. These include data related to the building envelope, insulation levels, heating and cooling systems, conditioned space, windows, doors and water heater. Using this information, the HES provides an estimate of overall energy efficiency, expected energy costs and

associated emissions. The goal is to give prospective buyers insight into how energy costs factor into overall homeownership expenses.

The HES uses a simple 1-to-10 scale, where a 10 represents the most energy-efficient homes, similar to a miles-per-gallon rating for a car. The score serves as a proxy for expected energy costs for a given home, normalized for local climate. Homes with a score of 10 are expected to use less energy and have lower energy costs than 90% of U.S. homes, while homes with a score of 1 are expected to use more energy and have higher energy costs than 85% of U.S. homes.

The HES report is designed to be clear, visual and easy to understand. It includes recommendations for cost-effective upgrades with a ten-year payback period that can improve the home's score. Typically, cities opt to include information on available rebates and incentives in the report. View a [sample HES report](#).

A HES is different from a home inspection and utility bills. The score is an objective rating of the home's energy efficiency based on mechanical and physical features in the home. A utility bill reflects *actual* energy use, which depends heavily on occupant behavior like appliance use or thermostat settings. A home inspection evaluates the home's overall condition and safety but doesn't specifically assess or recommend energy improvements.

Proposed HES Disclosure Policy

Under a HES disclosure policy, the seller of a home would:

1. Get a HES from a licensed home energy assessor before advertising a home for sale. The cost of obtaining an HES typically ranges from \$150 to \$300, and assessments can usually be scheduled within a week or less.
2. Include the HES report in the Regional Multiple Listing Service (RMLS) database and all other public online sale listings (e.g., Zillow, Redfin, etc.).
3. Allow prospective buyers to view the HES as they look at homes.

A HES disclosure requirement **does not require** sellers or buyers to make energy improvements—it simply provides information to support informed decision-making.

Goals of the Policy

There are three primary goals of an HES disclosure policy:

1. **Increase transparency about home energy features and costs:** Provide standardized, accessible information about a home's energy features and costs so buyers can understand and compare prospective homes before purchasing a home.
2. **Educate homeowners and buyers about energy efficiency opportunities:** Offer guidance on potential improvements to help residents prioritize actions that can increase efficiency and reduce energy costs.
3. **Connect homeowners to resources and incentives:** Link residents to available rebates and incentives to help finance energy improvements.

Engagement Overview

Staff used a variety of engagement tactics to engage 630 people from a wide range of perspectives:

Engagement Tactic and Audience	# of People
Policy Debate with the Youth Advisory Council	14
Policy Debate with UO, Summit for Sustainable Organizations	13
Intercept Survey at the Beat the Heat Workshop	30
Intercept Survey at Dino Day with Friends of Gilbert Park	27
Intercept Survey at the Tuesday Farmer's Market	50
Meeting with the Neighborhood Leaders Council	18
Intercept Survey at Sun Day	30
Interview with Owner of Design-Build Firm	1
Meeting with the Eugene Realtors Association	15
Meeting with Architects	4
Interview with Lead Partners of Contractor Firm	2
Meeting with the Sustainability Commission	9
Meeting with Environmental Advocates	16
Meeting with the Northwest EcoBuilding Guild	15
Meeting with the Chamber's Government Affairs Council	17
Online Survey	369
Total Number of People Engaged:	630

Mock Debates



Staff kicked off engagement by holding two “mock debates”—one with the Youth Advisory Council and another at the University of Oregon’s Summit for Sustainable Organizations, an event organized by University of Oregon Masters in Business Administration (MBA) students. After learning about the proposed HES disclosure policy, participants were assigned a character and asked to construct an argument based on the potential impacts of the policy. ++++++

- Engagement Summary: [Policy Debate with the Youth Advisory Council](#)
- Engagement Summary: [Policy Debate at the UO MBA Summit for Sustainable Organizations](#)

Intercept Surveys at Community Events



Staff reached 137 community members by attending local events throughout Eugene. Staff created an intercept survey and enticed people to participate by helping them make door snakes. Participants were provided with a brief overview of the HES disclosure policy and asked to place a dot on a poster on a scale of 1 to 5 for how supportive they were. This phase of engagement was successful at reaching a huge diversity of community members, including renters, homeowners, buyers and sellers at a variety of socioeconomic and income levels and throughout many different wards—many of whom do not typically participate in public policy initiatives.

- Engagement Summary: [Intercept Survey at Beat the Heat Workshop](#)
- Engagement Summary: [Intercept Survey at Dino Day with Friends of Gilbert Park](#)
- Engagement Summary: [Intercept Survey at Tuesday Farmer's Market](#)
- Engagement Summary: [Intercept Survey at Sun Day](#)

Group Meetings



Staff held six meetings with different groups, ranging in size from three people up to 20. Staff began by providing an in-depth presentation about the proposed HES disclosure policy, including background, goals and intended outcomes, policy requirements and next steps. Staff then prompted discussion to understand the wide range of perspectives. This format allowed for more in-depth discussion about the concerns and benefits.

- Engagement Summary: [Meeting with the Neighborhood Leaders' Council](#)
- Engagement Summary: [Meeting with the Eugene Realtors Association](#)
- Engagement Summary: [Meeting with Architects](#)
- Engagement Summary: [Meeting with Sustainability Commission](#)
- Engagement Summary: [Meeting with Environmental Organizations](#)
- Engagement Summary: [Meeting with the NW EcoBuilder's Guild](#)
- Engagement Summary: [Meeting with the Chamber's Lane Government Affairs Council](#)

Interviews

Staff conducted interviews with contractors and home builders to understand their perspective on the policy. These conversations provided insight into how they discuss energy efficiency with their clients, challenges and opportunities within the local home building workforce and how the policy would function in practice.

- Engagement Summary: [Interview with Owner of Design-Build Firm](#)
- Engagement Summary: [Interview with Lead Partners of Contractor Firm](#)

Online Survey

The online survey was open for five months and was advertised through the City's newsletter channels, KVAL media coverage and community networks. There were 368 responses. Respondent demographics include the following: 72% of respondents were between the ages of 35 and 74, 50% reported household incomes over \$75,000 and 90% identified as white.

- [Online Survey Results](#)

Meetings with Partners

The City met regularly with partners, including other jurisdictions where the policy is implemented, regional partners such as EWEB and UO and state and national partners including Earth Advantage and Oregon Department of Energy. These conversations were not documented through formal engagement summaries, but are reflected throughout research and engagement analysis, as they helped to inform policy development work. Earth Advantage was formally contracted to summarize existing policy research. Their [policy memo](#) includes analysis of other jurisdictions with HES disclosure requirements, observed impacts and best practices for policy implementation in Eugene.

The following sections summarize engagement results and research findings related to a potential Home Energy Score (HES) disclosure requirement in Eugene. Eugene has the advantage of considering a policy that has been implemented in many other jurisdictions for over a decade, allowing the opportunity to observe outcomes and learn from best practices in determining the pathway forward.

Primary Themes from Engagement

In summary, the results of the survey show that 65.4% support or strongly support the policy, 28.6% oppose or strongly oppose the policy and 6% have no opinion or are unsure. This shows that while there

are mixed views across stakeholder groups, approximately two-thirds of participants are in favor of Eugene adopting a HES disclosure requirement.

The following sections outline the primary themes heard consistently throughout engagement. Within each theme, a summary of community feedback is presented first, followed by relevant research and evidence from jurisdictions with existing HES disclosure requirements. This serves to highlight how community perceptions align or diverge from documented outcomes. Each theme concludes with key takeaways that synthesize the most relevant findings from engagement and research to help Council determine whether to proceed with HES disclosure.

Theme #1: Transparency of home energy information

What we heard:

- Many reported limited understanding of home energy features and energy costs when they bought a home.
- 75% of survey respondents said it is important or extremely important to understand a home's energy features and costs before purchasing.
- 61% identified increased awareness of a home's energy features and costs as the primary benefit of an HES disclosure requirement.
- Buyers shared that while other factors (e.g., location, school district, home layout, etc.) often drive purchase decisions, a HES would help them better anticipate future costs and avoid unexpected expenses.
- Realtors reported that buyers rarely ask about energy efficiency during the home buying process

"I just bought a house, and it would have been helpful to know these things before. Now I'm paying to fix things like my water heater and adding insulation which has cost me thousands of dollars."

-Community Member

"I would definitely support something like this. We need to be able to know how much things are going to cost. Energy costs can sometimes come as a surprise—and it is a significant part of our overall monthly costs."

-Community Member

What the research shows:

Many of the comments heard throughout engagement about buyer interest in energy were examined in jurisdictions with existing HES disclosure requirements. Relevant research findings include:

- Research confirms that buyers often lack critical information about home energy performance during the purchase decision.
- Required HES disclosure increases awareness and demand for energy efficiency, and allows a consistent way for buyers to compare across listings.
- Research shows voluntary programs result in incomplete information, as higher-performing homes are more likely to be rated.

Key takeaway for decision-making:

Buyers are often buying a home without knowing about the energy costs or features of the home. HES disclosure primarily functions to close this information gap, by improving a buyer's understanding of home energy performance and costs.

Theme #2: Impact on completing energy efficiency upgrades

What we heard:

- Many participants shared that increasing transparency of home energy use would create market value for energy efficiency upgrades and encourage homeowners to make improvements.
- Some viewed this as putting negative pressure on sellers to make costly upgrades, while others viewed this as a market mechanism to encourage voluntary upgrades.
- Many shared that the cost of upgrades is so high, and that the return on investment in energy cost savings is not always worth it.

"If this information was valued as part of the real estate transaction, this could help the customer see value in making upgrades."

-Design-builder

"It's not about the \$125 cost to get the score, it is about the costly improvements that sellers will be pressured to make."

-Realtor

What the research shows:

Many of the comments heard throughout engagement about the impact of HES disclosure on completing energy improvements were examined in other jurisdictions. Relevant research findings include:

- Analysis of utility data shows that HES recipients are more likely to pursue energy efficiency incentives. In Portland, 8.8% of homes that received a HES also received an incentive for an energy efficiency improvement. Data from Eugene's Score program shows that 23% of homes that got a HES completed an energy efficiency project¹. In both data sets, most of the home upgrades that occurred were significant projects, such as attic insulation and heat pump systems.
- Additional research in Portland shows that homes scored a second time improve by an average of 1.1 points, suggesting that energy-efficiency improvements were made since the home was first scored.
- Property owners leverage additional financing when they take advantage of incentives: participants in Eugene's Score program have received \$190,940 in rebates and grants from EWEB, in addition to nearly \$100,000 in 0% interest loan dollars.
- The HES methodology is designed to identify improvements that have a ten year payback period.

Key takeaway for decision-making:

Households receiving a HES are more likely to pursue energy efficiency incentives and complete home energy improvement projects.

Theme #3: Impact on housing prices

What we heard:

- 25% were concerned that a disclosure requirement would affect housing prices.
- Some worried it would increase home sale prices.
- Others worried that low-scoring homes would be stigmatized, and therefore harder to sell—disproportionately impacting low-income residents and neighborhoods.

"The requirement would lower long-term costs for homeowners but would raise costs at the buying stage."

-Realtor

"I'm worried that Eugene's older housing stock will receive low scores, creating stigma and potential devaluation for low-income neighborhoods."

-Architect

What the research shows:

¹ [2023-2024 SCORE Annual Report](#)

The impact of HES disclosure on housing prices has been examined in jurisdictions with existing HES disclosure requirements. Relevant research findings include:

- Disclosure does not cause irrational home price inflation among high-scoring homes; however, studies show that buyers value energy information in proportion to projected energy cost savings. For example, a one-point increase on the Home Energy Score 1-to-10 scale is associated with a 0.5% sales premium—about \$2,370 for Eugene’s median home price—and an average \$200/year in energy cost savings.
- HES disclosure supports more accurate valuation of energy efficiency: price change reflects actual investments in energy performance, not market distortion, enabling sellers to recover costs and occupants to benefit from lower energy expenses over time.
- Low-scoring homes do not see reduced sale prices. There is no evidence that buyers avoid low-scoring homes.
- Analysis of scores by census tract shows no significant correlation among low-scoring homes and lower socioeconomic neighborhoods.

Key takeaway for decision-making:

HES disclosure has minimal impact on home sale prices and does not disadvantage low-scoring homes or lower-income neighborhoods.

Theme #4: Operational impacts on the real estate market

What we heard:

- Realtors expressed concern that adding a new requirement to the home selling process could further delay and complicate the process.
- Others felt the policy is not overly complex and that the market would be able to adapt.
- Several participants noted that an HES may be redundant to a home inspection, energy bills or energy efficiency standards already required by the building code.
- Some noted that the policy should be scaled overtime to avoid creating delays for sellers while the workforce of HES assessors ramps up.

“This requirement will make homes harder to sell, even if upgrades are not required.”

-Realtor

“I support the idea of having this kind of information available, it seems useful, but this feels like just one more thing I would need to do to sell a house and would not want it to delay a sale.”

- Community member

What the research shows:

The policy’s operational impacts on the real estate market were examined in other jurisdictions with existing HES disclosure requirements. Relevant research findings include:

- Research shows that HES disclosure has not slowed home sales; in fact, energy-efficient homes often spend less time on the market due to increased buyer demand.
- A HES provides different information that is found in a home inspection or energy bills.
- Jurisdictions with effective enforcement help create a stable and predictable environment for assessors, thereby ensuring a reliable pool of assessors who can respond quickly when a house is being listed. In discussions with realtors in Portland and energy assessors in Eugene area, HES assessments can take up to a week to schedule and complete.

Key takeaway for decision-making:

HES disclosure generally does not delay home sales or duplicate other steps in the process.

Theme #5: Impact on climate and emissions

What we heard:

- Several pointed out there is unlikely to be significant GHG reductions with a disclosure-only policy.
- Several groups believe the HES report should recommend that homes electrify and switch away from natural gas, in addition to recommending energy efficiency.
- It is worth noting that a small subset of participants (25%) believe the City should require sellers to make upgrades that would raise the score.

“The report should provide education about moving away from natural gas, since that is the largest source of fossil fuels in our community and a big health concern.”

-Environmental organization

“This being a policy that is fuel neutral does not help the City reach its greenhouse gas goals.”

-Business owner

What the research shows:

The policy’s climate benefits were researched in other jurisdictions with HES disclosure policies.

Relevant research findings include:

- In Eugene, GHG emissions from residential buildings come overwhelmingly from natural gas use in single-unit detached homes. Modest emissions reductions are observed in homes that make only energy efficiency upgrades. More significant GHG reductions can be achieved if these homes switch from natural gas to electricity.
- Eugene’s Score program has resulted in a reduction of 363,862 kWh per year from improvements in 187 homes. Since 2017, GHG savings from the energy efficiency improvements are 26.9 MTCO_{2e}, and the GHG savings from electrification from fossil fuels are 44.1 MTCO_{2e}, for a total of 70.9 MTCO_{2e}.
- Jurisdictions with policies that encourage fuel switching and electrification² or that require sellers to make upgrades³ are more likely to have significant climate impact.
- HES disclosure can provide a foundation for implementing other priority decarbonization strategies. More widespread uptake of HES expands availability of data on the local housing stock and increases community-wide education about energy efficiency can help inform strategies to expand incentives, address energy burden and scale clean energy supply.

Key takeaway for decision-making:

HES disclosure alone produces modest GHG reductions, with greater reductions observed when homes switch from natural gas to electricity. The policy can provide a foundation on which to develop future climate initiatives.

Theme #6: Implementation considerations

The following elements summarize community feedback and best practices related to program design and administration. These are lessons for staff to address if the policy is passed. Community feedback on these elements generally did not reflect opposition to the policy, but rather questions and concerns related to how the requirement would be implemented.

Enforcement

² Ashland, OR has implemented a [voluntary HES program](#), with recommendations that encourage fuel switching.

³ [Berkeley, CA](#) and [Boulder, CO](#) have HES policies that require small or large upgrades to a home.

- **What we heard:** There were many questions from the community about how the policy would be enforced. Some shared that without enforcement the policy would not be very effective. Some believed that there should be a penalty fine for non-compliance.
- **Best practice:** Research indicates that effective enforcement is critical to achieve high compliance rates. Enforcement tends to be most successful when the compliance window is shorter than the typical home sale timeline, the penalty fine is notably higher than the cost of getting an HES report, and compliance is monitored consistently.

Exemptions

- **What we heard:** There were comments that certain housing types would present complications, such as manufactured homes and condominiums where features like walls and roofs might be shared ownership. Several suggested creating exemptions for foreclosures and other distressed sale situations.
- **Best practice:** Exemptions are typically granted to avoid undue burden on distressed home sales, which include foreclosure, trustee sale, title change due to inheritance, marriage, divorce, or condemnation, financial distress resulting in a court appointed receiver, sale due to arrears for property taxes, participation in a property tax deferral program and other hardships. HES disclosure requirements typically do not apply to accessory dwelling units (ADUs), manufactured homes, mobile homes, residential retailers or stacked condominiums.

Subsidies

- **What we heard:** Many shared that an HES disclosure policy could be burdensome to low-income households looking to sell. 64% of survey respondents believed there should be a way to provide free scores to low-income sellers.
- **Best practice:** to support equitable access is for jurisdictions to establish a small fund for home sellers with incomes at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI) to receive no cost HES reports. Based on comparable jurisdictions, it is estimated Eugene should budget \$5,000/year for free home energy scores.

Trigger Event:

- **What we heard:** Some believed that triggering the policy at time-of-sale would allow the buyer to bear the cost and better align with other tasks such as the inspection. Others believed triggering the policy at time-of-listing would be more useful because buyers could compare prospective homes.
- **Best practice:** Best practice is to have the launch of a home's internet-based real estate listing (e.g., on the MLS) serve as the trigger point to comply with the policy. This supports more effective consumer education, helps prospective homebuyers make better decisions and eases compliance monitoring and enforcement.

Workforce Capacity

- **What we heard:** There were concerns that there are not enough assessors to serve this policy. Others, including folks in the building trades, shared that doing HES assessments would be a desirable job. It would be an easy additional service for existing businesses, such as home inspectors, to offer.
- **Best practice:** There are currently 2-4 assessors serving the Eugene area who can respond in under a week. It's estimated that 16-20 HES assessors would be needed in Eugene to meet peak demand for HES reports under a disclosure policy. Effective enforcement helps create a stable and predictable policy environment, thereby ensuring a reliable pool of assessors who

can respond quickly when a house is being listed. Some cities have offered training to ramp up the workforce as the policy gets implemented, with an emphasis on recruiting home inspectors and others for whom HES assessments can be an add-on service.

Additional Feedback

A range of additional comments also emerged during engagement. While these comments are not presented in a weighted manner, collectively they provide a more complete picture of community input. Relevant research is referenced if it is available, and the absence of research does not imply validation or dismissal of a concern.

- 1. Benefits for economic development, workforce development and local businesses:** Many in the building industry shared that this policy would lead to an increased demand for handyman and contractor services who install home energy improvements—and that the local workforce is well positioned to meet that demand.

Research suggests that an HES disclosure requirement can support workforce development and stimulate local economic activity. Implementation of the requirement is expected to increase demand for HES assessments, contributing to job growth among energy assessors. Expanding the assessor pool would support skills development and capacity building across the construction and energy efficiency workforce.

In addition, increased homeowner participation in energy efficiency upgrades may drive additional residential contracting activity. Data shows that property owners who participated in Eugene’s HES program have invested a total of \$1,260,653 in home energy improvement projects, with an additional \$290,940 invested from EWEB through the program.
- 2. Concern about HES methodology and adequacy:** Many participants expressed confusion about how the score is calculated and what the score means. Industry professionals noted that a blower door test—while more expensive—is essential to have a complete picture of a home’s energy performance.
- 3. View that HES tool is affordable and accessible:** Many participants highlighted the benefits of the tool’s affordability and simplicity, viewing it as an effective entry point for homeowner energy education and an accessible alternative to more in-depth assessments.

Research shows that HES has become the preferred assessment methodology in public policy spaces because it is a nationally standardized tool and is relatively accessible compared to other energy assessments.
- 4. Concern that HES disclosure could limit mortgage lending:** Some real estate professionals were concerned that lenders may consider utility cost projections in prequalification calculations, potentially reducing buyer purchasing power.

Available research shows energy data is not used punitively in underwriting. Research indicates that borrowers living in energy efficient homes experience lower mortgage delinquency and default rates.
- 5. Recognition that HES disclosure could help unlock additional financing tools:** Other professionals in the trades and construction industries noted that a HES should expand access

to financing for energy upgrades, such as a larger loan, because lenders would see these investments as reducing energy costs.

Research related to green financing shows that some mortgage loan products support borrowers in accessing higher debt-to-income ratios for higher scoring homes – or for improvement loans that increase a home’s score – under the premise that efficient homes have lower and more stable energy bills.

- 6. Opposition to additional requirements or regulations:** Several individuals viewed additional requirements or regulations as burdensome. They suggested this should be voluntary.

Research indicates that voluntary HES programs tend to have low participation, with more efficient homes being more likely to participate. Mandatory disclosures are more effective at providing buyers with consistent information and support more accurate valuation of energy features in property values.

- 7. Cost to Implement:** Some raised concerns about the potential staff capacity and budgetary resources required to implement and enforce the policy.

It is predicted that in Eugene it would take roughly 0.5 FTE for program management and general administration, with \$35,000 to launch the program and \$10,000 annually after that. In other jurisdictions, this has typically been absorbed within existing Sustainability Program budgets, or funded through general fund, permit fees, solid waste fund or stormwater fund.

- 8. Need for additional guidance to make energy improvements:** Participants continue to share a need for more tailored guidance to assist people in completing upgrades, navigating incentive programs, and working with contractors. Ideas included setting up a navigator program and including additional resources as part of the HES report.

- 9. Need for expanded incentives to help finance upgrades:** Participants continue to express a need for more financial support in making upgrades through expanded rebates and incentives. Many agreed that the HES report itself could be used to highlight existing incentives.

- 10. Feedback that the policy should be extended to rentals:** Although this engagement effort explicitly focused on HES in the home sale process, the topic of rentals arose frequently. In the survey, 54% said the policy should also apply to rental homes, with many pointing out that rental homes tend to have higher energy costs, and property owners are less likely to invest in upgrades than owner-occupied homes. Many viewed the HES disclosure for home sales as a good starting point and a policy that could be replicated for rentals.

Conclusion

A HES disclosure policy is meant to increase transparency about home energy features in the real estate process, increase education about improvement opportunities, and connect homeowners to existing resources to complete upgrades. Engagement results demonstrate strong support for a HES disclosure policy when a home is listed for sale. Research shows that the policy primarily serves to improve buyer and homeowner understanding of home energy use. If Council decides to proceed, best practices observed in other jurisdictions would help staff design and administer the program. This policy can provide a foundation for future work to advance Council’s housing and climate goals to decarbonize existing buildings and to preserve and improve the quality of existing housing stock.

POLICY MEMO

TO: Ian Penn and Danielle Klinkebiel, City of Eugene, Oregon
Public Works Administration & Sustainability Staff, City of Eugene, Oregon

FROM: Madeline Salzman, Associate Director of Market Solutions, Earth Advantage
MacKenzie Winchel, Senior Manager of Programs, Earth Advantage

DATE: January 11, 2025

**SUBJECT: RESULTS FROM RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS OF HOME ENERGY
SCORE POLICIES FOR THE CITY OF EUGENE, OREGON**

Dear Ian Penn, Danielle Klinkebiel, and other City of Eugene Public Works Administration Staff,

This policy memo is the deliverable associated with Contract 2026-00332 between the City of Eugene (henceforth, “Eugene”) and Earth Advantage. Our work has focused on (1) reviewing existing Home Energy Score (HES) policies in other jurisdictions, (2) identifying best practices from existing HES policies, (3) estimating needs to successfully implement such a policy in Eugene, and (4) summarizing observed impacts from existing HES policies. The overall goal of this work is to support Eugene residents and staff in researching, consolidating, and summarizing information about HES policies to support policy development in Eugene.

Most of this work was conducted through literature review of information published online about existing HES policies, as well as research about the existing housing market in Eugene as of December 2025. Earth Advantage staff reviewed more than two dozen research papers, draft analyses, policy memos, and annual program reports to inform the findings included in this memo. In addition, staff communicated with representatives from the Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) and Oregon Employment Department (OED) to better understand local energy efficiency programs and employment trends. Finally, Earth Advantage also utilized data and staff perspectives from HES policies in Portland, Hillsboro, Milwaukie, and Bend, Oregon to inform identification of existing policy impacts. Through this analysis, our summary findings include:

- Existing HES policies already cover more than 800,000 Oregonians and have generated more than 60,000 HES reports statewide, representing more than 5% of the state’s owner-occupied housing units ([Earth Advantage 2025](#), [OED 2025](#), [Salzman 2024](#)).
- Analyses consistently find that when HES reports are made available, homebuyers value gaining access to information about home energy features, costs, and opportunities for savings, which they use to make more informed home investment decisions.
- Analyses have found that higher HES ratings are associated with higher sales prices, lower

mortgage delinquency risk, and accessing energy efficiency incentives at higher rates ([Pigman et. al. 2022](#); [Breshears 2022](#); [Cassidy 2023](#); [Myers, Puller, and West 2022](#); [Nadel 2025](#); Earth Advantage internal analysis 2025).

- Analyses of HES data suggest that homes in less wealthy and more diverse zip codes in Portland, Oregon are more likely to receive more energy-saving recommendations in their HES reports but are not more likely to have lower ratings on the HES scale. We have only found weak correlations between HES rating and socioeconomic factors available by zip-code or Census-tract (Earth Advantage internal analysis 2025).
- To support equitable policy impacts, other jurisdictions have offered subsidized HES reports for low-income home sellers and have customized HES reports to offer information about locally available incentive programs that can make upgrades more affordable.
- Eugene can benefit from learning from HES policy experiences around the country to support an equitable policy design that results in high compliance rates and delivers real benefits to Eugene households. Elements of policy designs in Portland, Milwaukie, Hillsboro, and Bend, Oregon can all serve as models for Eugene.
- Based on analyzing needs in other Oregon cities with HES policies, a similar policy in Eugene could support 16-20 Home Energy Score Assessors delivering 1,600 - 2,000 HES reports each year. Best practices from other cities suggest Eugene could support the policy with 0.5 FTE to administer the program and establish a fund to provide free HES reports for low-income homeowners.

We hope this policy memo serves as a useful resource for the City of Eugene when considering potential next steps in a HES policy.

Best,

Maddy Salzman
Associate Director of Market Solutions
Earth Advantage

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Introduction

This policy memo provides results from research and analysis of Home Energy Score (HES) policies for City of Eugene, Oregon staff. The goal of this work is to support Eugene residents and staff in researching, consolidating, and summarizing information about HES policies to support policy development in Eugene. This memo provides (1) review of existing HES policies in other jurisdictions, (2) identification of best practices from existing HES policies, (3) estimation of needs to successfully implement such a policy in Eugene, and (4) summary impacts that have been observed from existing HES policies.

Key Terms

- **Disclosure policy.** An ordinance or other requirement establishing that information be communicated in standard format(s) to specific parties under certain conditions. In this document we explore disclosure policies with the following elements:
 - **Required information:** U.S. Department of Energy HES report
 - **Standard format:** Digital report included in real estate listings
 - **Specific parties:** The public (homeowners, buyers)
 - **Certain condition:** Covered building is listed publicly for sale

While there is no statewide disclosure requirement in the State of Oregon, Oregon Administrative Rules require that energy performance scores for residential buildings in the state must include a U.S. DOE HES ([Oregon Secretary of State n.d.](#)).

- **Home Energy Score (HES).** A standard software system provided by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) that enables delivery of HES reports. HES reports include for each home a 1-to-10 score, documentation of various home features, and recommendations for home energy upgrades to improve the home's score. The HES 1-to-10 score is designed to serve as a proxy for overall energy costs that may be expected for a given housing unit ([DOE, 2021](#)). The intention is for the score – as well as estimated energy costs and emissions – to provide prospective home buyers with information to understand how energy costs contribute to overall homeownership costs. Homes that score a 10 are expected to use less energy and have lower energy costs than 90% of U.S. homes after normalizing for local climate, while homes that score a 1 are expected to use more energy and have higher energy costs than 85% of U.S. homes after normalizing for local climate.
- **Time of listing requirement.** A policy that stipulates something must take place when the home is listed publicly for sale (e.g., on the local multiple listing service (MLS) or other real estate listing websites). Time of listing requirements place stipulations on the listing, which can be viewed by any prospective homebuyer and tracked digitally.
- **Time of sale requirement.** A policy that stipulates something that must take place prior to completion of a home sale (e.g., prior to signing of final documents). Typically, these requirements take place during the escrow period after a buyer's offer has been accepted. Time of sale policies do not inherently place stipulations on home listing information, and often only require information be made available to the buyer under contract.

Policy Goals

The primary goal of any HES disclosure policy is to provide prospective home buyers with better transparency about home energy features, costs, and opportunities. Much like a miles-per-gallon rating or nutrition facts label, HES disclosure allows consumers to better understand the products they are purchasing and better compare their options with more complete, standardized information. Home features documented in HES reports impact overall household costs, comfort, health, and emissions. In most cases, however, home buyers, sellers, and real estate professionals lack access to clear and consistent information across listed homes. HES provides homeowners and buyers with energy information they would not otherwise have to better understand home features and total cost of homeownership. Jurisdictions with HES disclosure policies offer more transparency about home energy use and costs, which helps reduce uncertainty in the real estate market and support consumers in making investments more confidently.

Existing HES Disclosure Policies

Over the last decade, cities in Oregon have become national leaders in home energy labeling by enacting real estate disclosure policies. By the end of 2025, nearly 60,000 scores have been delivered throughout Oregon, representing more than 5% of the state's owner-occupied housing units ([Salzman 2024](#), [Earth Advantage 2025](#), [OED 2025](#)). Between the Cities of Bend, Hillsboro, Milwaukie, and Portland, more than 20% of Oregon residents live in a jurisdiction with a HES disclosure requirement in home real estate listings. Beyond Oregon, the Cities of Berkeley, California; Piedmont, California, and Ann Arbor, Michigan also have similar policies, meaning that more than 1.1 million Americans live in a jurisdiction with a HES real estate disclosure requirement ([Nadel 2025](#)). These existing policies serve as great examples for any other jurisdiction to review for best practices and lessons learned. The table below summarizes key features of the existing HES disclosure policies.

Table 1 on the next page identifies cities with existing HES disclosure policies and compares key factors between these program designs and contexts. In the following section, we identify best practices that have emerged through review of the above policies. These best practices were identified through discussions with city staff implementing HES policies and review of published literature about policy impacts.

Table 1. Key Features of Existing HES Disclosure Policies.

City	Population (est.)	Policy Type & Link	Scores / Yr (est.)	Compliance Window	Fines for Noncompliance	Compliance Rate (est.)
Portland, OR	635,000	Time of Listing Disclosure Policy	4,400	90 days	Up to \$500; not issued since April 2020	55%
Milwaukie, OR	21,000	Time of Listing Disclosure Policy	150	30 days	Up to \$1,000 if noncompliance continues for 120 days	Unknown
Hillsboro, OR	107,000	Time of Listing Disclosure Policy	1,000	Not explicit in ordinance	\$500 initial fine, \$500 for every 90-day period of noncompliance	75%
Bend, OR	100,000	Time of Listing Disclosure Policy	1,700	30 days	\$750 for initial 30 days, \$750 for every 45-day period of noncompliance	83%
Berkeley, CA	120,000	Time of Listing Disclosure Policy	400	Not explicit in ordinance	\$100 for first infraction, plus administrative late fees	88%
Piedmont, CA	11,000	Time of Sale Disclosure Policy	150	Required not less than 10 days before close of escrow	Not explicit in ordinance	Unknown
Ann Arbor, MI	122,000	Time of Listing Disclosure Policy	1,000	Not explicit in ordinance	\$500 for first offense, \$1,000 for second or subsequent offense	85%

Identified Best Practices

HES disclosure policy best practices are informed by years of learning from policies in other cities and tailored for housing and economic conditions in Eugene (summarized in Appendix A). The following components are likely to deliver best results in terms of overall policy clarity, compliance, and equity. In general, a policy like the ones adopted by Portland, Milwaukie, Hillsboro, and Bend will help to achieve similar outcomes and support consistency across Oregon markets.

- **Covered housing.** Across Oregon jurisdictions, best practice has been to apply HES disclosure requirements to all existing and new construction single-unit homes listed for sale

within city limits. In existing policies, the “covered housing” definition typically includes the following residential structures: single-unit detached homes, single-unit attached homes, rowhomes, townhomes, common-wall homes, duplexes, and condos in non-stacked configurations. These definitions typically do not include detached accessory dwelling units (ADUs), manufactured homes, mobile homes, residential trailers, or stacked condominiums.

This approach has been effective for building consumer understanding through consistent metrics that minimize ambiguity. If necessary, preconstruction HES reports can be delivered for home listings when the structure is still under construction. As of December 2025, HES can deliver reports for individual apartment units as well, which may spur some jurisdictions to consider expanding policies to cover multi-unit housing units within HES disclosure policies ([Pacific Northwest National Laboratory 2025](#)).

- **Exemptions.** To avoid undue burden on distressed home sales, best practice is to identify exemptions for home sellers that submit documentation for waiver approval from the city manager. Other jurisdictions exempt homes experiencing involuntary title change and sales where compliance may present undue hardship to the seller. Examples of these exemptions include:
 - Title changes due to inheritance, default, marriage, divorce, or condemnation
 - Trustee sale
 - Foreclosure sale
 - Sale due to arrears for property taxes
 - Financial distress resulting in a court appointed receiver
 - Home seller participation in a property tax deferral program
 - Other hardships as approved by the city manager

Jurisdictions with policies have adopted processes where sellers may submit documentation to the city that identify which exemptions they are seeking to obtain a compliance waiver. The city manager may oversee issuance of waivers.

- **Report Requirements.** Best practice established in Oregon is to adopt basic requirements that are consistent with [Oregon Administrative Rules](#) for voluntary building energy performance systems. These rules identify various elements that must be included in a home energy performance score system, including minimum standards for report contents, data types, assessor training, and quality assurance. Adopting these state rules in local jurisdictions supports alignment across the state, minimizes participant confusion, and eases implementation burdens.
- **Policy Triggers.** Across jurisdictions, best practice is to have the launch of a home’s internet-based real estate listing (e.g., on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS)) serve as the trigger point and location of proof for covered housing to comply with the policy. Using the real estate listing in this way supports more effective consumer education, helps prospective homebuyers make better decisions, and eases compliance monitoring and enforcement.
- **Assessor Workforce.** Oregon cities with HES disclosure policies have not reported challenges related to HES assessor shortages. When policies are enforced, scoring presents a relatively stable income stream for housing professionals interested in offering energy-

related services. Best practice includes offering free HES assessor training for some housing professionals within three months of policy launch, as well as additional training for HES assessors during the first year of implementation. In other cities, most HES assessors are home inspectors, appraisers, or other real estate professionals that offer HES reports as an additional service.

- **Policy Implementation & Administration.** After policy adoption, the most consistent administrative needs are for compliance monitoring and policy enforcement. Other cities in Oregon support a staff member and/or contracted support person to spend between 5-10 hours per week (0.13 - 0.25 FTE) conducting compliance monitoring through reviewing MLS listings and issuing warning letters and/or penalties. In addition, other Oregon jurisdictions have dedicated city staff personnel to:
 - Operate a “help desk” to answer questions from the public
 - Conduct outreach to real estate professionals, housing counselors, and community-based organizations (CBOs)
 - Analyze HES data to better understand housing stock conditions and opportunities for energy efficiency incentives
- **Compliance & Enforcement.** So far, Hillsboro and Bend have been able to sustain high compliance rates and represent current best practice for enforcement policy design. Key activities include reviewing the MLS to monitor compliance, issuing warning notices to noncompliant sellers that inform them of compliance pathways and risks of penalties, and issuing of penalty fines when violations persist. Most existing policies issue violation penalties to the home seller. Jurisdiction practices that are most successful:
 - Set a shorter amount of time for the compliance window than it takes for most homes to sell in the jurisdiction
 - Set the penalty fine notably higher than the cost of getting an HES report
 - Conduct consistent compliance monitoring throughout policy implementation
- **Equitable Access through Subsidized Scores.** To support equitable access to HES reports that does not overly burden low-income households, best practice is for jurisdictions to establish a small fund for home sellers with incomes at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI) to receive no cost HES reports. Many jurisdictions operationalized this by granting funds to a local CBO to generate these reports when a homeowner applies for a free HES report. So far, no existing city policies have reported exhausting their funds for free scores; some only report a handful of free scores funded annually. In addition, many jurisdictions include information about locally available rebates and incentives directly in their HES reports to help homeowners access energy upgrades more affordably. Including information about income-eligible incentives can help lower-income households overcome financial barriers to home improvements.
- **Policy Evaluation.** Best practice is to launch a policy with a plan to evaluate outcomes. HES disclosure policies provide a wealth of data to program managers to better understand overall housing and energy trends that impact affordability and environmental impacts. Jurisdictions that regularly monitor compliance collect feedback from the market, review HES

data for trends, and work with researchers to understand housing, economic, and energy impacts. Annual policy evaluation activities can include review of HES results by geography, including the following datapoints: score today, score with upgrades, estimated energy cost, estimated carbon emissions, upgrade recommendation rates, and HVAC equipment types and efficiencies. Staff can also evaluate how HES reports may influence uptake of residential energy incentives through analysis in coordination with local utilities and other incentive providers.

In the next section, we apply the above policy design best practices to estimate implementation needs for an HES disclosure policy in Eugene.

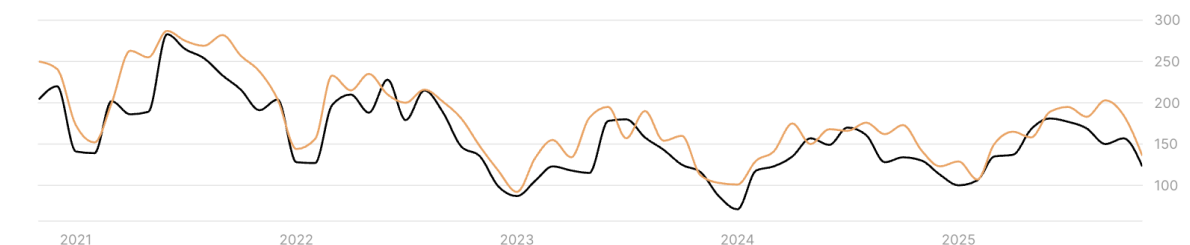
Implementation Estimates for Eugene

Implementing an HES disclosure policy requires investments to support assessor training, communication with the real estate community, subsidized scores for low-income households, and compliance monitoring that are rightsized to meet local market needs. We estimate the volume of score generation in Eugene based on the current housing market and then calculate the number of HES assessors and program costs based on estimated HES report demand.

Scores Per Year. The number of HES reports demanded by the real estate market per year depends on the housing market size as well as estimated compliance rates overall. Housing market trends available from Redfin show that over the last 5 years, Eugene has had a similar rate of home sales as Bend, despite a significantly larger population ([Redfin 2025](#)). Eugene's significantly larger renter population may play a role in reducing the frequency of home sales as compared to Bend ([US Census 2024](#)). The figure below shows the number of homes sold in Eugene (black) and Bend (orange) monthly between from 2021 through 2025.

Figure 1. Number of Homes Sold Monthly in Eugene versus Bend, 2021-2025.

Eugene home sales in black, Bend home sales in orange ([Redfin 2025](#)).



Based on Redfin calculations of home data from MLS and/or public records.

Location	Data Nov 2025	Growth % YoY
● Eugene, OR	123	-5.4%
● Bend, OR	136	-4.2%

In the City of Eugene, every year around 1,800 homes are sold, ranging from roughly 100 to 180 home sales per month. On average, homes in Eugene sell after about 50 days on the market, with more than 50% becoming under contract within 30 days ([Realtor.com 2025](#), [Romito 2025](#)). Eugene is currently characterized as a seller's market, with a median home selling price of about \$475,000 and an inventory of 2-3 months of homes listed for sale ([Redfin 2025](#), [Realtor.com 2025](#)).

Assuming Eugene's home sales rates continue along similar trends, based on scoring in Bend, we estimate a policy in Eugene would generate **between 1,600 and 2,000 Home Energy Scores each year** for an average of 130-160 new home listings each month. Eugene may expect to see the upper end of these ranges in cases where the number of homes listed for sale increases, and/or if the City of Eugene regularly checks compliance and quickly communicates with non-compliant listings.

Assessor Training. A HES disclosure policy would increase demand for HES assessor jobs and could increase employment among residential contractors and trades completing home energy upgrades. A full time HES assessor can generate as many as 70 scores in the busiest listing months, but most actively-scoring assessors in other jurisdictions generate on average 5 to 15 per month (Earth Advantage internal analysis 2025). This suggests that for many assessors, scoring is one of a few income streams for their business. Many HES assessors in other cities work as home inspectors, appraisers, or other real estate service providers beyond generating scores.

In Eugene's most active months for home listing, assessors would need to generate roughly 250 scores – enough work for 3.5 HES assessors working full-time on scoring that month. Assuming HES assessors in Eugene generate 15 scores per month in the busiest months, an **estimated 16-20 HES assessors are needed** to meet peak demand for HES reports. If Eugene launched a policy starting January 1, the City could offer free assessor training for 10-12 individuals prior to program launch and then continue to enroll some assessors to ramp up supply alongside growing home listing demand in the summer and fall.

Program Management Personnel. Based on best practices for program management and general administration identified in other Oregon cities, Eugene may plan to dedicate 0.5 FTE of either City staff personnel or contracted support to conduct the following activities:

- Review of MLS listings and issuance of noncompliance notices and/or penalties (~0.2 FTE).
- Respond to help desk requests regarding policy implementation (~0.1 FTE).
- Conduct outreach and engagement with real estate professionals, housing counselors, and other housing professionals to build general awareness of the policy (~0.15 FTE).
- Support analysis of HES data and provide summary information to policymakers or others as needed (~0.05 FTE).

During the program launch phase, additional staffing support may be needed to:

- Identify any local customizations to the standard state of Oregon HES report, like customizing report recommendations to align with EWEB incentives.

- Establish overall messaging for the City website and other public-facing materials.
- Recruit individuals to become HES assessors.
- Coordinate messaging about recommended incentive programs with EWEB, CBOs, etc.
- Determine if any additional program quality assurance practices are desired beyond the minimum requirements established by the U.S. DOE and State of Oregon. For example, HES programs in California fund quality assurance review of HES data beyond the minimum quality assurance requirement established by the U.S. DOE to rescore at least 5% of HES reports for quality assurance purposes ([Home Energy Score California 2025](#); [DOE 2025a](#)).

Non-personnel Implementation Costs. To meet the various needs of a new HES policy, the City of Eugene may consider the following cost estimates as benchmarks to inform annual budgets. These cost estimates exclude costs associated with 0.5 FTE to support the program and include the following assumptions:

- Fees that are generally aligned with those experienced by other cities in Oregon (e.g., cost of HES assessor training, and technical system maintenance). We also assume that fees will be issued to the market to support program implementation at the same level as other Oregon cities (e.g., \$35 fee per HES report to cover costs associated with federally required quality assurance).
- A higher estimated cost associated with subsidizing HES reports for lower-income or distressed households. We assume a rate of \$250 per HES report, roughly aligned with rates in other jurisdictions. The market price of HES reports is not set and typically ranges from \$150-\$250 for most market-rate homes.
- Need for subsidizing HES reports at an estimated rate of 1% of home listings per year. This amount is informed by reported demand in other Oregon cities with disclosure policies.

Table 2 below summarizes the above non-personnel cost estimates for one-time program start-up costs as well as ongoing costs for years two and beyond.

Table 2. Estimated Non-Personnel Costs for Launch and Policy Administration.

Item	Unit Cost	Units	Cost Estimate
Technical Start Up (One-Time)	\$10,000	1	\$10,000
Assessor Training (One-Time)	\$1,500 / assessor	10	\$15,000
Technical System Maintenance	\$5,000 / year	1	\$5,000 / year
Free Home Energy Score Fund	\$250 / HES report	20	\$5,000 / year
Estimated Year 1 Cost			\$35,000
Estimated Year 2+ Cost			\$10,000

Research Findings of Existing HES Policy Impacts

Over the last five years or so, analyses of HES disclosure policies have begun to document associated housing, economic, energy, and climate benefits. HES report data from Portland, OR has proven particularly fruitful for researchers, with about 30% of single-unit housing scored since policy launch in 2018. Most published literature exploring the impacts of home energy information disclosure policies – including HES time-of-listing policies – focus on identifying if homes with higher efficiency features and lower energy costs sell for more money (a price premium), at faster rates (fewer days on the market), or with lower mortgage delinquency risks. Highlights from various research papers, summary reports, prior policy memos, and analysis of existing HES data are summarized in the subsections below.

HES disclosure has not slowed home sales. Jurisdictions with policies that support a marketplace of HES assessors offering reports have not reported challenges with meeting real estate market demand for assessments. Ensuring the demand for HES reports is a stable environment for workers through consistent compliance monitoring and enforcement of the policy helps drive this outcome. Some studies have also suggested that energy efficient homes spend less time on the market due to increased buyer demand ([Zillow 2022](#); [Carroll, Denny, Lyons, & Petrov 2024](#); [Nadel 2025](#)).

Home buyers value homes with higher efficiency. When home energy information is available, homebuyers use it to make more informed home purchase decisions and value the information in alignment with estimated home energy savings. Studies have shown that a one-point increase on the Home Energy Score 1-to-10 scale is associated with a 0.5% sales premium – equivalent to \$2,370 for Eugene's median home price ([Pigman, Deason, Wallace, & Issler, 2022](#); [Breshears 2022](#); [Cassidy 2023](#); [Redfin 2025](#)). In Oregon, a 1-point score increase is also associated with an average \$200 in household energy cost savings each year (Earth Advantage internal analysis 2025). These results generally align with studies of similar policies in other regions ([Myers, Puller, and West 2022](#); [Ou, Bailey, McArthur, & Zhao 2025](#)). Studies have not suggested that homebuyers over-value this information by either wholly avoiding low-scoring homes or causing irrational home price inflation among high-scoring homes.

Borrowers living in efficient homes experience lower mortgage delinquency and default rates. Studies suggest that, particularly for higher debt-to-income (DTI) ratio borrowers, more efficient homes are less likely to experience 30- or 60-day mortgage delinquency than lower rated or not rated homes ([Pigman, Deason, Wallace, & Issler, 2022](#); [Argento, Bak, & Brown, n.d.](#)). Researchers hypothesize that increased transparency into energy costs for all homes, as well as lower energy bills associated with higher rated homes, may contribute to these findings. Some mortgage loan products have supported borrowers in accessing higher debt-to-income ratios for higher scoring homes – or for improvement loans that increase a home's score – under the premise that efficient homes have lower and more stable energy bills.

Disclosure requirements better help home energy features be properly valued than voluntary programs. By providing home buyers with comparable information across home listings through standardized disclosure, buyers are in the best position to make informed decisions and support valuation of home energy features, resulting in more differentiation of energy efficient properties from inefficient ones. Homebuyers express a higher willingness to pay for improved energy performance when home energy information is provided consistently across home listings, rather than when only high efficiency homes are promoted ([Nadel 2025](#); [Sussman, Kormos, and Cooper 2020](#); [Sussman et. al. 2022](#)). Disclosure policies also enable home appraisers to access HES reports across comparable homes to more easily and properly value these features.

Earth Advantage's Green Building Registry (GBR) collects green home verification data from more than 20 different programs around the country. Within the City of Eugene, GBR identifies 225 buildings with at least one green verification, representing about 0.3% of the local housing supply – a substantially lower rate than Oregon overall (about 3.7%) or GBR's national rate of green home verification data (about 2.6% of all US housing). The most common green verification programs among Eugene households are HERS ratings (100+ homes), EPS (50+ homes) and ENERGY STAR (50+ homes). GBR does not currently hold the roughly 800 scores delivered through the EWEB program.

HES recipients are more likely to obtain energy efficiency incentives. Analysis conducted on behalf of the City of Portland examined homes that complied with the HES requirement and then completed an upgrade associated with a program rebate during a five-month period in 2023. Out of 2,331 homes that received a HES report during this period, 8.8% (207 homes) also received an Energy Trust of Oregon incentive for a measure recommended in the HES report. The most common incentives were for attic insulation and heat pump systems. On average, these 207 homes received \$490 in incentives for upgrades that saved 477 kWh and 29 therms per year. By comparison, only 0.8% of homes that did not receive a HES report had obtained an efficiency measure incentive over a three-year period. Thus, incentives were obtained at an 11-times higher rate among homes that had received HES reports than those who had not. More research is needed to identify any causal relationship between these variables.

Similar findings have also been found in Eugene through the SCORE Program. EWEB, in partnership with the University of Oregon and City of Eugene, operates the SCORE program, which offers free HES assessments to renters and low-income EWEB customers. Since the program launched in 2017, student HES assessors have delivered over 800 HES reports to program participants, 585 of which were requested by renter tenants (EWEB 2024). In the 2023-24 SCORE Program Annual Report, EWEB reported since receiving an HES report, 187 homes, or 23.4%, had received 263 home improvement projects – 126 of which were conversions from electric resistance heating to ductless heat pump systems (EWEB 2024). Energy upgrades deployed through this program have resulted in more than 363,000 kWh and 17 Metric Tons of CO₂-equivalent saved annually (EWEB 2024).

Homes that have been rescored in Portland are, on average, 1.1 points higher than their first score. Earth Advantage identified 2,574 homes in Oregon that received at least two separate HES assessments (internal analysis 2025). Additional analysis is needed to identify why households received updated assessments, but it could possibly be due to the house being resold or the owner participating in a program that provided a new HES report. Within this sample, the average change in score was an increase of 1.1 points – a change associated with an average annual energy bill savings of more than \$200. In addition, 23% of the homes in this sample – about 600 homes – had increased their scores by 3 or more points.

Analyses in Portland show that HES score results do not correlate to neighborhood socioeconomic factors. In one analysis, researchers reviewed more than 38,000 scores on behalf of the City of Portland to identify any correlations that may exist between HES results and Census tracts that are coded as “DEI”¹ (memo to City of Portland 2024). This analysis showed that while homes in Portland’s “DEI” Census tracts have median home values more than \$150,000 less than those of “non-DEI” coded Census tracts, differences in resultant score were not significant: the average score in DEI Census tracts was 4.8, versus 4.5 in non-DEI Census tracts (memo to City of Portland 2024).

In addition, Earth Advantage analyzed 50,000 HES reports in Portland through a regression analysis comparing average score values with income and race statistics available for each of Portland’s 27 zip codes. There was no strong observable correlation between zip code demographics and HES data results, including score today, estimated energy cost, estimated carbon emissions, year built, or air conditioning SEER rating. Across 24 different variable correlations tested, the strongest observed relationships between variables are still weak, with R^2 values all below 0.3.

When reviewing over 1,200 HES reports in Portland delivered by CBOs that typically support low-income households, the average home scored 4.15, about 0.34 points lower than other homes in Portland. These CBO-served homes were slightly more likely to score a 1 out of 10 (19.2% versus 16.6%, respectively) and slightly less likely to score a 10 out of 10 (2.0% versus 3.6%, respectively), however the spread of scores across both groups reflect similar distributions. These slight distribution differences may be driven by lower-income households typically having less access to more efficient equipment and potentially more deferred maintenance issues. HES reports help lower-income homeowners and buyers understand energy costs, identify cost-effective upgrades, and link them to incentive programs that make energy upgrades more affordable.

Investment gaps in high-efficiency equipment suggest households can benefit from better energy information to improve energy literacy and understanding of upgrade benefits.

Preliminary analyses of HES data in Portland suggest that total home energy use, costs, and score are not cleanly determined by or correlated to income. For example, while households in higher

¹ For this analysis, DEI census tracts are defined based on having a racial/ethnic diversity index score of 5 or higher, as defined by the US Census.

income zip codes in Portland may have greater access to higher cost efficiency features, they are also more likely to have larger homes and be equipped with air conditioning – two features that contribute to higher estimated annual energy usage. While higher income households generally face fewer financial barriers to purchasing high-efficiency equipment, the available data does not show a strong relationship between neighborhood income levels and actual investment rates in high-efficiency equipment. HES reports can help these homeowners and buyers better understand the benefits of high-efficiency equipment and which upgrades make the most sense for their home.

Households across neighborhoods and demographic groups benefit from improved access to actionable home energy information. As more households feel the strain of rising housing and energy costs, access to better information about these costs and how to impact them can benefit everyone. HES disclosure can close information gaps felt across socioeconomic groups that lead to underinvestment in energy efficient features in higher income households as well as under-enrollment in income-eligible efficiency upgrade programs among lower income households. HES reports designed to include actionable recommendations for home energy upgrades as well as information about available incentives and programs can support greater and more equitable access to energy efficient housing.

Many factors contribute to a home's score. HES assessors collect about 60 data points per home to generate each HES report, and each of these data points influence the HES building energy model that estimates home energy use. Home size is one, often noted data point that contributes to a home's overall energy use, as more floor area requires more energy to heat and cool interior spaces. Other features that contribute to higher home energy use and therefore lower scores include: above-average ceiling height, large window areas, little insulation, poorly sealed construction, inefficient ducts, low efficiency HVAC, central air conditioning, and/or no solar PV. The complete HES report – with identified home features and recommendations for cost-effective upgrades – helps residents distinguish these factors beyond just the score result itself. Ensuring prospective buyers have access to the complete report and not just the score metric is important to properly inform consumers. Earth Advantage analyzed HES data in Portland, Oregon to better understand how floor area contributes to home score, which is shown below.

Table 3. Home Energy Scores in Portland, Oregon by Conditioned Floor Area

Conditioned Floor Area	Portland Sample Size	Average Floor Area	Initial Score Today			Score with Recommended Improvements Completed		
			Average Score	Score of 1 (%)	Score of 10 (%)	Average Score	Score of 1 (%)	Score of 10 (%)
501 - 1,500 ft ²	18,168	1,116 ft ²	5.2	9.1%	5.6%	8.1	0%	28%
1,501 - 2,500 ft ²	20,444	1,889 ft ²	4.5	15%	3.0%	6.7	0.4%	8.1%
2,501 - 5,000 ft ²	10,326	3,125 ft ²	3.3	31%	1.2%	4.9	5.9%	2.0%

HES disclosure policies support local jobs and small businesses. Few studies have analyzed the local economic impacts of home energy information disclosure policies. Potential economic impacts include job growth associated with conducting HES assessments (e.g., among construction and building inspectors or similar occupations), as well as increased residential contracting activity as more homeowners choose to complete home energy upgrades. In 2025, about 6,800 HES reports were generated in Oregon's mandatory markets, roughly translating to \$1.2 million² in revenue for HES assessor companies. Based on review of HES data in Oregon, a full-time HES assessor can complete an estimated 70 HES assessments in a month, suggesting that scoring in Oregon's mandatory markets generates enough activity to support more than 8 full-time equivalent (FTE) HES assessor jobs. Across these same four markets, more than 60 HES Assessors from 50 companies provide these scores, supporting greater attainment of home energy efficiency skills and industry-recognized credentials.

As the City of Eugene continues to consider policy design and implementation options, this policy memo can serve as a resource. Identifying and building upon these best practices will help more homeowners and buyers understand how their homes use energy, and how that energy use impacts their wallets, health, and overall comfort. When homeowners better understand these elements through increased transparency, they can make more informed decisions that help them save money, improve air quality, and live more comfortably.

² Based estimated HES prices in Oregon markets as reported to Earth Advantage by HES assessors.

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Appendix A. Policy Context in the City of Eugene, Oregon

The following sections provide supplemental data about Eugene's housing and demographics which helped inform the estimated needs identified in this report.

Housing Market. According to the U.S. Census's 1-year American Community Survey (ACS), Eugene, Oregon, is the third largest city in Oregon behind Portland and Salem, with an estimated population of 178,789 people in 2024 ([ACS 2024a](#)). This population occupies an estimated 82,143 households, with an additional 5,385 vacant housing units (coming to an average vacancy rate of 6.6%) ([ACS 2024b](#)). Driven in-part by the large student population at the University of Oregon, Eugene has a relatively low homeownership rate of 48% (compared to 63% homeownership statewide). About 60% of Eugene's occupied housing units are either single-unit attached or detached homes, while 27% of Eugene's housing units are in buildings with 5 or more housing units present ([ACS 2024b](#)). The first residential energy conservation requirement went into effect in Oregon in 1980; about 52% of Eugene's current housing stock was built in 1979 or earlier ([ACS 2024b](#)).

From 2021 through 2024, the City of Eugene permitted more than 4,200 new housing units ([City of Eugene 2025a](#), [City of Eugene 2025b](#)). About 14% of these units were single-unit detached dwellings, 7.6% were middle housing units (duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhouses/rowhouses or cottage clusters), and the remaining 78.4% were multi-unit dwellings ([City of Eugene 2025b](#)).

In Eugene, the median home has a selling price of about \$475,000, and as of December 2025, there are 783 homes listed for sale ([Realtor.com 2025](#)). A local blog reports that 341 of the homes listed for sale in October 2025 were single-unit detached homes³ ([Romito 2025](#)). On average, homes in Eugene sell after about 50 days on the market, with more than 50% becoming under contract within 30 days ([Realtor.com 2025](#), [Romito 2025](#)). Eugene is currently characterized as a seller's market, with more interested buyers than sellers, and nearly 25% of homes selling for above asking price in the last year ([Realtor.com 2025](#), [Romito 2025](#)). In recent months, 58% of homebuyers used conventional loans, 22% bought homes with cash, while FHA/VA/other loans – often issued to lower credit borrowers – made up the remaining 20% of buyers ([Romito 2025](#)). The primary multiple listing service (MLS) servicing Eugene is RMLS, which also services the Portland metropolitan area market and has IT systems established to upload HES report links directly into listings ([RMLS 2025](#)).

Home Energy Use. Across Eugene, the average household experiences a 2% energy burden, meaning that average households spend 2% of their incomes on home energy costs ([DOE 2025b](#)). This rate is in alignment with Oregon overall. The average annual energy cost is about \$1,580 across all Eugene households, however this average cost increases to about \$1,990 for households living in single-unit dwellings and to about \$1,830 for households with incomes at or below 100% the area median income (AMI) ([DOE 2025b](#)). Eugene households at or below 100% AMI experience an average

³ The blog states that its data excludes land without dwellings, condos, townhomes, and mobile homes.

energy burden of 5% ([DOE 2025b](#)). Roughly half of Eugene households are at or below the 100% AMI. For the average Eugene household living in a single-unit dwelling, estimated household energy bills come to about 50% the average property tax bills and about 124% the average home insurance bill ([Ownwell 2025](#), [US News & World Report 2025](#)). Compared to the rest of Oregon, more homes in Eugene use electricity for heating at 75% of households versus 53% statewide.

Local Residential Energy Efficiency Programs. Between 2017-2022, EWEB served more than 6,600 households with income-eligible energy services with funding made available through the Low-Income Household Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Oregon Energy Assistance Program (OEAP). The average household served through these programs had an income of \$15,574 and received a one-time payment of \$323 to support energy bills ([OHCS 2022](#)). Almost 80% of households served by EWEB in these programs were renters. In addition, EWEB in partnership with UO and the City has operated a voluntary Home Energy Scoring program, which delivered more than 800 HES reports to mostly rented households in Eugene. In 2023-2024, 187 of homes that received a HES report (23%) completed 263 home improvement projects, saving more than 363 MWh annually (EWEB 2025).

A report on the Energy Trust of Oregon's activity in Eugene from 2002 through 2024 shows that the Energy Trust has served 9,900 residential buildings with programs to improve energy efficiency of residential natural gas systems (Energy Trust 2025). Installed measures include water heaters, space heating systems, HVAC controls, and weatherization upgrades.

Economy & Employment in Relevant Industries. According to DOE's Low-income Energy Affordability Data (LEAD) Tool, the average household income in the City of Eugene is \$84,803, while the average income of households living in single-unit detached, attached, and 2-unit housing is higher at \$107,611 ([DOE 2025b](#)). In 2023, per capita personal income reached \$61,634 across Lane County, slightly below Oregon's statewide per capita personal income of \$67,838 ([OED 2025](#)). Since hitting an unemployment low of 3.7% in May 2023, unemployment in Lane County has since climbed to 4.9% as of August 2025 ([OED 2025](#)).

According to the Oregon Employment Department (OED), within the construction sector, Lane County is aligned with the rest of Oregon in projecting 11% employment growth in residential building construction ([OED 2025](#)). The table below shows that for specific employers in residential building and construction contracting, employment in the last ten years has significantly outpaced the overall economy in Lane County and statewide overall; yet employment has grown less rapidly in Lane County than other parts of Oregon.

Table 4. Employment in Lane County for Select Residential Building Construction and Related Industries.

Area	Employment in Select NAICS ⁵			Overall Area Employment Growth 2015-2024
	2015	2024	2015-2024 Growth	
Lane County	3,022	4,113	36%	7%
Multnomah County	9,627	13,939	45%	4%
Washington County	6,860	10,563	54%	12%
Deschutes County	2,521	4,077	62%	30%
Oregon Overall	39,887	61,612	54%	12%

⁵ 2361: Residential Building Construction; 23816: Roofing Contractors; 23821: Electrical and Other Wiring Contractors; 23822: Plumbing and HVAC Contractors; 23831: Drywall and Insulation Contractors. Jobs are reported by employers as covered by unemployment insurance.

Source: Oregon Employment Department, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Through 2033, Lane County is estimated to increase total employment by 7%, slightly below projections for the state of Oregon (8%), but with the construction industry projected at the highest growth of all industries at 14% ([OED 2025](#)). Within the construction sector, Lane County has projected 11% growth in residential building construction employment, 17% growth in building equipment contractor employment, and 18% growth in building finishing contractor employment, generally in alignment with state projections ([OED 2025](#)). Employment of construction and building inspectors is projected to grow by 5.7% through 2033 in Lane County, but by 7.4% across Oregon over the same period ([OED 2025](#)).