
Regional Homeowners' Hub: Need, Modalities and Next Steps

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| Prepared by | Electrify DC (DBA Electrify DMV) |
| Prepared for | Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) and its 24 Member Governments |
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| Based on | Working group meetings held from January to April 2026 attended by 16 MWCOG jurisdictions |

About Electrify DC/Electrify DMV

[Electrify DC](#) (doing business as Electrify DMV) works to make it easier, faster and more affordable to decarbonize all DC region homes. It has established itself as a local and trusted leader in residential decarbonization and was awarded the 2025 District Sustainability Award. Since its incorporation in May 2023, Electrify DC has worked with 15 local jurisdictions and 70 community-based organizations and groups across the region to understand challenges to electrification and has engaged them in the design of several of its programs including the [Healthy Homes Fair](#), which this year attracted over 2,000 DC region homeowners and renters. Electrify DC works on implementation, empowering residents to take the next step in decarbonizing their homes.

Through the [Electrify DMV Network](#), Electrify DC convenes a cross-sector group of over 100 stakeholders critical to residential decarbonization. In partnership with manufacturers and service providers, Electrify DC educates the general public and contractors about products, technologies and services that accelerate residential decarbonization. Because it views personalized coaching as key to decarbonizing homes, Electrify DC provides fiscal sponsorship to the Go Electric DMV electrification coaches group which operates as a program of Electrify DC.

Electrify DC was awarded grants by the District Department of Energy and Environment, the Maryland Energy Administration, Green and Healthy Homes Initiative Thriving Communities and Oak Hill Fund to study the District's electrical grid hosting capacity, to educate low-income tenants of multifamily buildings about the benefits of energy efficiency upgrades, and to provide general education and coaching on residential electrification. Electrify DC staff is a multidisciplinary team with expertise in electrical engineering, mechanical contracting, digital production development, public engagement, consumer-facing communication, decarbonization policy, and community health. Electrify DC's executive director, Vanessa Bertelli, serves on the District's Green Buildings Advisory Council.

| | |
|--|----------|
| About Electrify DC/Electrify DMV | 1 |
| Summary | 2 |
| Background and Context | 2 |
| MWCOG-funded Engagement | 3 |
| 1. Interested partner jurisdictions | 3 |
| 2. Key legal, technical, and policy considerations | 4 |
| 3. Proposed content modules ranked + preliminary cost estimates for development and maintenance | 5 |
| 4. Consensus on core functionality and content | 7 |
| 5. Budget and funding mechanisms for development, maintenance, and promotion | 8 |
| Next Steps | 9 |

Summary

15 jurisdictions have expressed the need for a one-stop shop resource to accelerate residential decarbonization across the Washington metropolitan region by putting homeowners and renters at the center of the experience.

The Homeowners Hub would centralize localized, easily digestible content, vetted contractors, individualized guidance, real cost data, and success stories, while remaining deeply integrated with the programs, incentives, and resources of participating jurisdictions.

A regional approach **creates economies of scale** that maximize jurisdictions' budgets, **enables consistent tracking of GHG reductions**, and **builds constituent momentum** that no single jurisdiction could achieve alone.

By demystifying the electrification journey and simplifying the homeowner experience, the Hub can translate regional climate commitments into action at the household level.

Among the many needs, the greatest is for a vetted contractor list.

Background and Context

With the rise in energy prices and the increasingly extreme temperatures, jurisdictions are looking for ways to provide not only robust rebates, programs, and incentives but also clearly accessible, user friendly, and adequately advertised information to homeowners and renters about their options. Doing so tackles the problem of decarbonizing the region's 2.4 million homes which account for 1/4 of total final emissions.

Across the Washington metropolitan region, homeowners seeking to decarbonize face a fragmented and confusing information landscape. Relevant rebates, programs, contractor referrals, and educational resources are scattered across dozens of state, county, and municipal websites, with no single, user-friendly entry point. Shrinking government budgets have further reduced the availability and visibility of even the best existing tools.

Since April 2024, Electrify DC has convened the Electrify DMV Network, a cross-sector taskforce on residential decarbonization which today includes nearly 100 stakeholders and representatives from

15 local jurisdictions. Through this network, in May of 2024 three priority initiatives were identified to accelerate residential electrification. The Homeowners' Hub ("the Hub") is one of the three.

In May 2025, Electrify DC was awarded a grant from the District Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) to develop a DC-specific version of the Hub. In collaboration with the user experience team at Rewiring America, leadership at Electrify Now, input from ACEEE's BEAR HUB, hands on support by developers at Civic Tech DC, design guidance from Small C, and user interface and experience experts on Electrify DC's board, a [first iteration of a homeowner centric platform for DC residents](#) was delivered in September 2025.

From June through September 2025, Electrify DC conducted an initial engagement phase with Fairfax County, Arlington County, Montgomery County, City of Rockville, and City of Takoma Park to understand how to best serve homeowners and renters from the DC region.

MWCOG-funded Engagement

In January of 2026, thanks to funding from MWCOG, Electrify DC was able to formalize this engagement and expand participation to 15 of its jurisdictions. Over the course of four months and five convenings (+ two BEEAC meetings), over 240 hours of brain power were contributed by professionals from jurisdictions across these MWCOG. Running notes of the Homeowners' Hub Working Group Meetings are [here](#).

This engagement produced the following outcomes:

1. A list of interested partner jurisdictions across the COG region.
2. Identification of key legal, technical, and policy considerations for expanding the Hub regionally.
3. Jurisdictional rankings of the Hub's proposed content modules by priority, along with preliminary cost estimates for development and maintenance.
4. A preliminary consensus on core functionality and content.
5. A defined budget range and candidate funding mechanisms for development, maintenance, paid advertising and organic promotion.
6. This memo to be presented at the BEEAC meeting of April 16th, 2026

This memo highlights some of the most broadly shared opinions about the desired governance, content, design, development, and ongoing maintenance and promotion of the regional Homeowners' Hub.

1. Interested partner jurisdictions

The following 27 individuals from 15 jurisdictions + MWCOG participated in one or more of the five convenings (apologies to anyone we inadvertently omitted):

- **Arlington County**
 - Allie Shepard, Energy Program Implementation Specialist
 - Rich Dooley, Director of Climate Policy in the Arlington County Climate Policy Office
- **City of Alexandria**
 - Samantha Heitsch, Sustainability Coordinator and program manager for the

- Eco-City Business Program
- Valerie Amor, Energy Manager for the Office of Climate Action
- **District of Columbia**
 - Kate Tanabe, Green Building Analyst at DOEE
 - Janani Shankaran, Branch Chief, Energy Policy, Innovation, and Transformation
 - Kalen Roach, DCSEU, Marketing and Communications Manager
- **City of Falls Church**
 - Kurt Lawrence, Environmental Planner
- **Fairfax County**
 - Maggie Beestra, Community Specialist
 - Maya Dhavale, Senior Community Specialist and Program Manager for Fairfax Energy Compass
- **City of Fairfax**
 - Stefanie Gupta, Sustainability Coordinator
- **City of Frederick:**
 - Jenny Willoughby, Sustainability Manager
- **City of Gaithersburg**
 - Hokuma Karimova, Sustainability Administrator
- **City of Greenbelt**
 - Luisa Robles, Sustainability Coordinator
- **Howard County**
 - Ella Schmit, Energy Project Coordinator
 - Leah Miller, Climate and Energy Manager
 - Susan Johnson, Energy Outreach Coordinator
- **Loudoun County**
 - Steven Swarr, Energy and Environmental Division Manager
- **Montgomery County:**
 - Jeremy Good, Residential Energy Performance Manager
 - Lindsey Robinett Shaw, Section Chief, Buildings & Transportation Programs
 - Larissa Johnson, Residential Energy Program Manager
- **Prince William County**
 - Kevin Milsted, Energy Coordinator at Prince William County
- **City of Rockville**
 - Amanda Campbell, Sustainability Coordinator
- **City of Takoma Park**
 - Dorothy Estrada, Sustainability Manager
- **Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments**
 - Jeff King, Director, Climate, Energy, and Air Programs
 - Leah Boggs, Senior Environmental Planner
 - Maddie Stoddard, Research Assistant Extern

2. Key legal, technical, and policy considerations

Many legal, technical, and policy considerations hamper the development of a Hub that meets the needs of homeowners and renters by the individual jurisdictions, including:

- Lack of flexibility in look and feel of government websites to cater more directly to homeowners and renters
- Conflict of interest policies that restrict the ability to showcase innovative products and their brands or highlight one contractor over another
- Liability that prevents the listing of service providers
- Language requirements that prevent the explanation of more complex technology

Overall, these considerations have resulted in government resources being streamlined and static and not able to point users to specific products or contractors. Similar considerations prevent jurisdictions from linking to other websites or resources, especially where jurisdictions have no guarantees on how the content is selected or updated.

This results in residents not having access to a centralized source of practically usable resources to decarbonize.

3. Proposed content modules ranked + preliminary cost estimates for development and maintenance

During the initial engagement phase, participating jurisdictions conducted an asset mapping exercise listing all the resources currently available and the gaps. The group looked at national, regional and local resources, including Virginia Energy Connect, Fairfax County Energy Compass, EcoCity Homes Alexandria, and Electrify MC program.

Particular attention was given to existing vetted contractor lists. Overall, these do not meet the need as:

- lists are not localized to DMV or are not being effectively promoted to the DMV (for example, contractors lists that are national in scope)
- existing lists offer too few, highly specialized or not consumer-focussed contractors (for example, The Better HVAC Alliance lists only 6 contractors in the DMV of which at least half are consultants)
- existing lists include only HVAC contractors or home insulators but not the complete range of contractors needed for homeowners to carry out all the different projects needed to decarbonize.
- existing lists do not ask contractors to commit to electrify or keep up to date with training and decarbonization rebates and incentives) (for example, utilities contractor lists which include contractors who push gas)

Based on that analysis, Electrify DC prepared a list of possible content modules with very rough preliminary cost estimates for building and maintaining each module to aid participants in their prioritization of modules. Participating jurisdictions worked to finesse each of those modules and then were asked to rank content modules by priority for their jurisdiction.

Renters: The group went back and forth on whether the Hub should initially include resources for renters/tenants as renters/tenants have less decision making power on GHG reduction big ticket items. Ultimately, also due to the overwhelming feedback from Healthy Homes Fair participants to include more resources for renters in next year's edition, it was decided that resources for renters would be integrated, whenever possible, in every module of the Hub from the beginning. Although this makes the build slightly more expensive, it removes the additional cost of building ad hoc resources later. Including renters from the beginning recognizes this group is often severely impacted by rising energy costs and has access to fewer resources.

Detailed description of modules and ranking results are [here](#). The table below presents the top 9 ranked modules in priority order.

| # | Module | Notes |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | Vetted Contractor List (with guidance on how to select a contractor) | Most consistently, by far the top-ranked module across all jurisdictions. The vetted contractor list would build and improve on this initial version to include, among other features, contractor certifications and user reviews which are central to homeowner trust. Ongoing vetting of contractors requires systems to automatically and regularly verify licenses and certifications, cross check BBB, google and other consumer ratings, electrification pledges, and reviews by Hub users. |
| 2 | Incentives, Rebates and Programs by zip code/home address | High priority across jurisdictions. Jurisdictions favor a regularly updated resource list with links, deadlines, and sunset dates. Preference is to embed existing resources (Rewiring America calculator or DSIRE) as done by Electrify DC here . If existing resources do not cover all jurisdictions or are not maintained, access to APIs or scraping approval will be needed. |
| 3 | Information by Project (cost, savings, lifespan, difficulty) | Page with localized basic information for each project applicable to homeowners and renters (Home Energy Audit, Solar, Weatherization, Insulation, Heating and cooling, Electrical, Stove/Range, Dryer, Home battery, Lawn equipment, Water Heater, Electric Vehicle, Electric Vehicle Charger, Electric Bike, Shade Trees) with hyperlinks to deeper dives like these resources by project |
| 4 | Information on Products, Technologies and Services | Similar to this menu , but sortable by whether applicable to homeowners or renters. Images click through to a page for each product/technology/service. Initial products/technologies/services to include: induction, over the window heat pumps, air-to-water, heat pump water heater, heat pump washer/dryer, plug-in solar, and home audits. Additional items to be added each year as technologies evolve. |
| 5 | Gas vs. Electricity Cost Comparison | Comparison of average households before and after full electrification and solarization by zip code/home address + information on how to read utility bills. Must be updatable as commodity prices, incentives and regulation change. Section for renters about cost comparison for appliances/services they can access. |
| 6 | Events Calendar | Regional calendar for residential decarbonization related events, including open houses, workshops, fairs, and talks across all participating jurisdictions like this . With submission mechanism for easier upload and ideally ability to search events within a specified distance from zip code. |
| 7 | Coaching: One-on-One | At steady state, coaching of 500 homeowners and renters from across the region per year, based on the coaching by Electrify DC/Go Electric DMV of over 180 during a partial initial year with funds limited to DC and parts of Maryland. |
| 8 | Neighbors' Stories from Across the Region | Stories of homeowners and renters from across the region are redesigned with UX/UI tools to encourage social imitation. Five initial stories with two additional stories per month to ideally cover all 24 jurisdictions over the course of a year. |
| 9 | Coaching: Group | Based on a format developed for past group coaching sessions held for DC and MEA attended by up to 35 participants per session, including homeowners and renters even if originally intended for homeowners only. Ideally, 8 sessions per year open to residents from across the DC region. |

One of the key takeaways was the unanimously shared unmet need for a vetted contractor list tool. Refer to legal, technical and policy considerations above.

4. Consensus on core functionality and content

While different jurisdictions have different needs mainly dictated by availability of incentives and status of development of similar initiatives already undertaken, **most jurisdictions see a clear need for a Homeowners Hub.**

Homeowners' Hub: one-stop shop resource designed to accelerate residential decarbonization across the Washington metropolitan region by putting homeowners and renters at the center of the experience. The Hub would centralize localized, easily digestible content, vetted contractors, individualized guidance, real cost data, and success stories, while remaining deeply integrated with the programs, incentives, and resources of participating jurisdictions.

Key advantages of the Hub for participating jurisdictions

A regional approach creates economies of scale that maximize jurisdictions' budgets, enables consistent tracking of GHG reductions, and builds constituent momentum that no single jurisdiction could achieve alone.

- **Economies of scale:** By pooling shrinking budgets for education and engagement, jurisdictions' dollars stretch further. Instead of each jurisdiction having to design, populate with content, maintain and promote webpages and resources, the shared participation in the Hub reduces overall cost and delivers a better experience for homeowners and renters.
- **Demonstrating impact:** The Hub can provide partner jurisdictions with data--actual outcomes of electrification in terms of how this helps achieve their respective goals of GHG emission reduction. Thus jurisdictions can have evidence based target achievements that they can demonstrate to their constituents. Among other metrics, the Hub could track views, clicks, homeowners referred to contractors, homeowners and renters coached and the specific upgrades made in their homes.
- **Accelerating action:** By providing homeowners, renters and, to a certain extent, contractors with consistent terminology and explainers across the region, the Hub reduces confusion and leads to faster action.

By demystifying the electrification journey and simplifying the homeowner experience, the Hub would translate regional climate commitments into action at the household level.

Design principles

Participating jurisdictions wish to establish a centralized, third-party-owned and operated resource with a distinct, consumer-facing entry point designed specifically for homeowners and renters across the region. While externally positioned as a unified and accessible platform, it would be deeply integrated with each jurisdiction's programs, incentives, resources, and priorities. Its core design principles are:

- User experience first: the homeowner is the ultimate decision-maker; the platform must serve them directly.

- Localization: content, incentives, and contractor information are jurisdiction-specific where relevant.
- Accessibility: incorporates plain-language content, multilingual access, and equitable usability.
- Trust: vetted contractors, verified information, and credible endorsements from participating jurisdictions.

5. Budget and funding mechanisms for development, maintenance, and promotion

The region's common workforce, climate, housing stock, and decarbonization pathways make a regional resource a cost-effective approach.

A regional resource requires a funding and governance model that takes into account how every jurisdiction benefits from the Hub and the stages of development of what each jurisdiction might already have invested in. The sustainability of a regional resources requires a funding and governance model that supports ongoing maintenance, promotion and advertising.

Total budget

Together with project management costs and indirect costs, the total cost of the Hub can be approximated at \$760,000 for development in the initial year and \$690,000 in subsequent years for maintenance (including regular update of content and functionality). This includes:

- Modules: based on the more granular definition of each module and the selection of the modules to be prioritized, Electrify DC's initial cost estimates to develop those 9 modules is \$470,000. The initial cost estimate to maintain and update content for those 9 modules is \$390,000/year which includes one-on-one coaching of 500 DC region residents per year. Estimates would be subject to further refinement during the design phase. Importantly, the vetted contractor list accounts for almost half of the development amount.
- Promotion: To make sure the valuable resources developed under the Hub are known to the public, Electrify DC prompted discussion on promotion, leveraging the existing communication networks of partner jurisdictions and their partners, and paid advertising. While some jurisdictions expressed a reluctance to pay for advertising, and would rather start small, others said paid advertising was an effective way to cast a wider net and reach those homeowners and renters who are not looped into the jurisdictions' communication channels but nonetheless need to decarbonize their homes. A budget to cover communications (including strategy, coordination of promotion of the platform through jurisdictions) and advertising was discussed based on jurisdictions' experiences adjusted for inflation. Based on Electrify DC's experience partnering with jurisdictions and agencies on promotion that leverages existing channels through the use of media kits, and of strategically placing paid advertising or devising promotional partnerships on events such as the Healthy Homes Fair, Electrify DC estimates effectively and comprehensively promoting the Hub would cost \$40,000 in strategy, coordination of promotion of platform through jurisdictions before launch and \$140,000 in subsequent years.

Funding mechanisms

The engagement phase identified the following candidate funding mechanisms for the Hub, which could be stacked:

- Shared cost agreement between participating jurisdictions, administered through MWCOG.
- Self-sustaining revenue model (e.g., contractor listing fees, contractor commission as in Quit Carbon model).
- Federal or state grant funding (the group has reached out to USDN for support)
- Utility partnerships (e.g., Pepco, NOVEC, Washington Gas) for co-funding or in-kind support.
- Sponsorship by manufacturers or service providers of the platform itself was an issue for many jurisdictions as it could introduce conflict of interests, but this funding stream might be explored for components of this platform as long as a conflict of interest is disclosed.

Because participants from the 15 jurisdictions were primarily energy and decarbonization experts, these conversations did not have the depth hoped for and several questions remain about the best mechanism to fund this tool.

To help jurisdictions better understand the potential impact of this tool on their residents and environment, Maddie Stoddart of MWCOG compiled a useful analysis of residential unit sizes and occupancy by jurisdiction that can be accessed [here](#).

Next Steps

The long-term value of the Hub depends on a durable governance structure and a sustainable funding model, so establishing those is the most urgent next step.

Once the governance and funding has been determined, work on the following workstreams could begin:

1. Platform design and architecture
2. Platform development
3. Content development and population
4. Jurisdiction integration and launch

Based on experience designing, developing and populating a basic version of the Hub for DC homeowners, Electrify DC estimates that once governance and funding have been addressed, the Hub could be delivered in 9 months.

| Possible deliverables | Workstream |
|--|------------------------------|
| Sustainability and reporting framework | |
| Platform Design Document (wireframes, data architecture, policy resolutions) | 1. Design & Architecture |
| Priority 1-4 modules developed and tested | 2. Development |
| Homeowner case management system | 2. Development |
| Priority 5-7 modules developed | 2 & 3. Development & Content |
| Vetted contractor database with vetting documentation | 3. Content |

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| Incentives/rebates database for all participating jurisdictions | 3. Content |
| Neighbors' stories collection (initial set of 5 stories) | 3. Content |
| Coaching program structure and partner contract(s) | 3. Content |
| Jurisdiction integration documentation and referral protocols | 4. Integration & Launch |
| Regional launch communications package | 4. Integration & Launch |
| Hub publicly live | 4. Integration & Launch |

| Entities that could support the Hub | Possible roles |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Electrify DC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Serve as lead project manager and primary implementer across workstreams. ● Convene and facilitate working group meetings and participatory design sessions. ● Lead platform design, content development, and coordination with technical partners. ● Lead communications and launch planning. ● Report to MWCOG and participating jurisdictions on progress, budget, and outcomes. |
| MWCOG | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitate access to and engagement with member jurisdictions. ● Provide administrative and convening support for inter-jurisdictional coordination. ● Support the development and execution of inter-jurisdictional cost-sharing or MOU agreements, including the decisionmaking processes to ensure the project can advance as per the projected timeline. ● Host or co-present the Hub to COG's BEEAC and other relevant committees. ● Provide input on governance structure and regional data standards. |
| Partner jurisdictions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Designate point of contact responsible for reviewing and approving jurisdiction-specific content. ● Provide input on incentive programs, contractor licensing standards, and local permitting resources. ● Review and sign off on jurisdiction-specific content prior to launch. ● Commit to referring residents to the Hub through their communications channels and websites. ● Participate in the governance framework and shared cost agreement. |

Other entities and potential partners like utilities, regulators and public counsels would be notified but not engaged.

Electrify DC remains at the disposal of MWCOG and its jurisdictions for any next steps.