

# BEND HOME ENERGY SCORE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS –

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*As part of the 2019 Bend Community Climate Action Plan to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions, the City of Bend is developing a Home Energy Score Program. Below are frequently asked questions about the program.*

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## ***What is the Home Energy Score Program?***

A Home Energy Score is a rating that assesses a home's energy efficiency. Like a miles-per-gallon rating for a vehicle, a home energy score provides information about how efficiently the home uses energy, which can inform a buyer's purchase decision. The Home Energy Score Program will require that homes listed for sale in Bend obtain a Home Energy Score prior to listing. The homeowner or its realtor must then share the scorecard with prospective buyers looking at the home. The home energy score tool was created by the U.S. Department of Energy and is used across the country.

## ***Why are we considering this and what are the benefits?***

Home Energy Score reports provide transparency to homebuyers about the efficiency of a home and how much its energy costs will be, compared to other homes on the market. It allows homeowners to consider the energy cost of a home when deciding which home to purchase, and provides information about the physical assets of the potential home that they may not otherwise see, like insulation and heating and cooling systems.

Further, Home Energy Scores can motivate home sellers and buyers to voluntarily invest in energy efficiency upgrades. By providing information about cost-effective upgrades in an understandable format, more homeowners may improve the efficiency of their homes, resulting in reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

## ***How did we get here?***

Creating a Home Energy Score program is part of the [Bend Community Climate Action Plan](#) adopted in 2019. The plan is a roadmap to achieve the City's climate action goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030 and 70% by 2050. Of all of the actions in the Community Climate Action Plan, the [City's Environment and Climate Committee](#) prioritized the Home Energy Score Program for implementation during the 2021-2023 biennium. In March 2022, the City Council Stewardship Subcommittee confirmed that the City Council supported developing a Home Energy Score Program this year, and that the program should include a requirement to obtain a home energy score, as opposed to creating a voluntary home energy score program.

## ***How do you get a Home Energy Score and what is the cost?***

A Home Energy Score will be able to be obtained by hiring a licensed Home Energy Assessor who is authorized to do the Home Energy Score assessment. The cost of the Score is



determined by the market. In other Oregon cities with similar program, they cost between \$150-300. Homeowners planning on selling their home pay for the score directly to the licensed home energy assessor performing the service. The City will also offer a program to cover the cost of the assessment for low income sellers who qualify.

### ***Can't I just request utility bills to see the energy use of potential homes?***

The Home Energy Score shows how efficiently a home actually uses energy, whereas energy bills provide more information about how much energy the previous owner used, which varies dramatically based on behavior. The Home Energy Score takes out the factor of occupant behavior, which is much more helpful when comparing homes side by side. Just like purchasing a used car, knowing how much gas the previous owner purchased each week is less helpful than knowing the miles-per-gallon rating of the car.

### ***What is the process to move this program forward?***

The Council will hold a work session to discuss the Home Energy Score Program on November 2, 2022. The anticipate date for the Council voting on the Home Energy Score Program is in December.

### ***How can I provide input?***

Staff are available for meetings and presentations about the program for interested groups to provide information and solicit feedback. Groups interested in inviting staff to their meetings can contact Cassie Lacy at [clacy@bendoregon.gov](mailto:clacy@bendoregon.gov)

Additionally, members of the public are invited to listen and share public comments during Environment and Climate Committee meetings. The Environment and Climate Committee is expected to make a decision about whether to recommend the program in the Fall.

Last, members of the public may provide public comment at City Council meetings. The Council expects to hold a work session on the Home Energy Score in the late Fall. Watch [www.bendoregon.gov/councilagenda](http://www.bendoregon.gov/councilagenda) for upcoming agendas.

