

From: City of Minneapolis Community Environmental Advisory Commission
To: Minneapolis City Council
Date: April 11, 2018
Subject: Franchise Fee Funding and Revenue Use

Members of Minneapolis City Council,

The City of Minneapolis Community Environmental Advisory Committee (CEAC) would like to submit this letter in support of the planned use of increased franchise fee revenue in 2018 on energy efficiency and clean energy programs that were presented at the March 26 Public Health, Environment, Civil Rights and Engagement committee. CEAC also commends the City Council for increasing the franchise fee in 2017 to advance efforts for energy efficiency and renewable energy. While CEAC supports the identified city initiatives, we would like to stress the importance of allocating the full value of the franchise fee increase towards expenses that are in line with the intended purpose of the funding: expansion of existing and support of new energy efficiency and clean energy programs.

CEAC previously submitted a letter to the City Council insisting that increased franchise fee funds not be used to replace funding for existing programs. For example, the City's Office of Sustainability was previously funded and should have continued to be funded through City general funds. We believe that the programs and staff as they were funded before the franchise fee increase are essential to the long-term well-being of our communities. Permanent funding should have been secured before the franchise fee increase. These new funds should have increased funding to these efforts or worked to establish new programs to better serve our city, especially in neighborhoods that have been historically underserved and may be most susceptible to the negative consequences of coming climatic changes.

CEAC would like to again recommend that the city council provide more stable funding to these initiatives. There is broad support in our city for progressive climate policies and programs. More resources will be needed to match the amount of public support demonstrated. We believe that our citizens want Minneapolis to be a national leader in climate policy. The city's progressive goals will need to be generously funded to prevent them from becoming empty political gestures.

CEAC will continue to advocate to restore and stabilize previous funding for initiatives existing prior to the franchise fee increase.

With regard to the 2019 budgeting process, we encourage the City to set a goal of allocating the full value of the franchise fee increase for new energy efficiency and clean energy programs.

Sincerely,

Community Environmental Advisory Committee