

Measuring Success of HELP Enhancements

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Introduction

This appendix provides a summary of the performance of the Home Energy Loan Program (HELP) enhancements. It outlines how we are measuring success through key performance indicators (KPIs), tracks performance to the end of 2024, and provides an evaluation of each enhancement.

The HELP enhancements were launched throughout 2023 and 2024 and are a suite of home renovation education tools and services for homeowners that have been developed and implemented using grant funding from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

Using a variety of KPIs, the programs have been evaluated and given an overall rating of *exceeding, on-track, not meeting, concluded or extended*, as seen in Table 1, below.

Table 1: Evaluation Summary of HELP Enhancements

Program	Status
Residential Solar Potential Map	<i>Exceeding</i>
Energy Coaching Service	<i>Concluded</i>
Home Energy Map	<i>On-track</i>
Real Estate Agent Training	<i>Not Meeting</i>
Renovation Education Events Team	<i>Extending</i>
Canadian Home Builders Association Partnership	<i>On-track</i>

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Performance Tracking

Each enhancement has its own set of objectives, typically established through the contract with the vendor, with key performance indicators used to monitor the objective, track overall program success, and look for ways to improve the program.

Residential Solar Potential Map

The Solar Map is a self-service tool that helps residents explore the financial and environmental benefits of using rooftop solar on their home. It was launched in 2023 and will be available to residents until October of 2026.

The Solar Map continues to be a success and resonates well with residents, meeting or exceeding KPIs. Administration will continue educating homeowners about the tool through our Renovation Resources webpage and Energy and Water conservation booth. Table 2 provides a performance evaluation of the tool to the end of 2024.

Table 2: Residential Solar Potential Map Evaluation

Objective	KPI	2024 Performance	Status
Drive user uptake for the map	12,000+ total Saskatoon residents engaged in solar map over 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 18,347 unique users visited the site from March 2023-December 2024 - 5060 in 2024 	Exceeding
Drive user uptake on the calls to action links	6,400+ clicks to call to action links on the map over 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4,608 clicks to calls to action from March-December 2024 - Most popular link clicked was NRCan, followed by contractor quote template 	On-track
To increase fact-based understanding of solar power and decrease myth-based objections, leading to broader community understanding of the technology	TBD	Not being measured	NA

Energy Coaching Service

The Energy Coaches provided free telephone, email or in-person energy coaching to help residents determine which energy efficiency home upgrades will benefit them the most, how to reduce their energy consumption through day-to-day behaviours, and how to apply for various financial incentives that would help them pay for their upgrades.

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The service launched in March 2023 and ended in August of 2024 due to underperformance.

The Energy Coaching program did not meet performance expectations in 2023 and continued to underperform in 2024. After several mitigation attempts, it was concluded that cancelling the program was the best course of action. Table 3 provides an evaluation of the contract.

Table 3: Energy Coaching Service Evaluation

Objective	KPI	2024 Performance	Status
Drive residents to use Coaching Service	Based on vendor proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 120 virtual home walkthroughs per year - 108 in-person home walkthroughs a year. - 26,400 call minutes per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 37 walkthroughs (virtual/in-person) - 366 calls (1066 min) - Total Emails: 189 	Not meeting
Vendor provides a high quality of service	Participant satisfaction with coaching (measured through surveys) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Calls/emails returned by the next business day - Wait times – no target set 	In-house conducted performance audits revealed many flaws and misinformation being provided by the Energy Coaches	Not meeting

Home Energy Map

The Home Energy Map is a self-service tool that provides homeowners with a digital energy score for their home, as well as home upgrade suggestions based on the age and building type of the home. The tool allows homeowners to add actual upgrades completed on the home to the website to improve the home's digital energy score. This tool was launched in October 2023 and will be available to homeowners until October 2025 as capital funding is available until 2026. A funding request will be brought forward as an operating option in the 2026/2027 Budget and Business Plan.

The Home Energy Map has been meeting expectations, despite minimal marketing, and is a stepping stone for the future possibility of a residential home labelling program at point of sale, energy disclosure regulations, and remote auditing which could be used to monitor and verify future city programming. Table 4, below, provides an evaluation summary of the map.

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Table 4: Home Energy Map Evaluation

Objective	KPI	204 Performance	Status
Drive user uptake for the map	Number and types of Saskatoon data requests per month	Total unique views: 22,965	On-track
Maximize the number of users who have viewed retrofit roadmaps	Total number of users for payback/cost tool per month	Homes claimed (user accounts created) on the map: 892	On-track

Real Estate Agent Training

This Training Program is a collaboration with the Saskatchewan Realtors Association (SRA) and includes workshops offered to real estate agents across Saskatoon and Saskatchewan helping to build knowledge about the benefits of energy-efficient features and help increase demand for energy-efficient homes. Workshops were offered between November 2023 and early 2025. On-demand training will continue to be offered through the SRA and City websites.

The Real Estate Agent Training program reached over 100 real estate agents out of approximately 800 Saskatoon realtors and heard positive feedback on the content. However, it is not meeting the KPI's set for the program. Increased communications and format changes to the program were implemented in 2025 to accommodate real estate agents' schedules. See Table 5 for a program evaluation.

Table 5 - Real Estate Agent Training Evaluation

Objective	KPI	2024 Performance	Status
Maximize total number of attendees for each training event (virtual and in person)	300 real estate agents attend training in Saskatchewan over 2 years	37 attendees in 2024, for a total of 71 attendees in the program	Not meeting
Maximize number of workshops during contract	Number of training events per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2023: 1 Event - 2024: 4 Events - 2025: 3 Events 	On-track
Quality of program/value of training from attendee perspective	Attendee satisfaction with training sessions (measured through post-session surveys)	80% said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the training overall	Exceeding

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Renovation Education Events Team

The Education Team launched in March 2024. Throughout the summer and fall of 2024, the team attended various in-person events, connecting with the public and building awareness about energy efficiency behaviours at home, energy-efficient home renovations, and promoting related City services and tools. These tools included the Solar Potential Map, the Home Energy Map, Energy Coaching Services and Real Estate Agent Training program. Table 6, below, provides an evaluation of the service.

Table 6 - Renovation Education Events Team Evaluation

Objective	KPI	2024 Performance	Status
Maximize the number of events attended	Target to attend at least 10 events in one-year contract	Attended 20 event days; and 10 events	On-track
Resident interest in the topics/booth	The number of participants visiting the booth.	1970	On-track
Quality of program	Qualitative feedback including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inquiries that were unresolved, or required escalation to City staff - public response to the booth - interesting stories or feedback - complaints. 	Regular audits by staff, feedback from visitors at booth and Newsletter sign-ups have all resulted in positive feedback regarding the booths quality	On-track

This program was intended to be a one-year program; however, with the remaining budget in the current contract, it has been extended to December 2025. The booth will attend 10 separate events throughout the summer and will focus on water and energy conservation and home renovations including promotion of the City of Saskatoon's (City) programs, tools and resources. This will also be linked with the branding of our conservation characters, Wattie and Splash. The booth will include an interactive element with a relay game and an education kit containing tools residents may consider using in their homes to help them conserve both energy and water.

The booth will engage with residents and encourage discussion on energy and water conservation, inform them of practical behavior changes, and educate them on the various tools and resources the City provides. This will be achieved using interactive activities, informative discussions with participants, and instructional and insightful handouts.

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Canadian Home Builders Association Partnership - Towards Cost-Effective Net-Zero Energy Ready Residential Renovations

The City joined the Canadian Home Builders Association (CHBA)'s "Towards Cost-Effective Net-Zero Energy Ready Residential Renovations" program in 2022. The partnership exists to increase local capacity by training local contractors and renovators, along with Energy Advisors to renovate homes to Net Zero or Net Zero Ready. This four-year initiative, concluding in 2026, involves in-kind contributions of staff time from the City.

The City's role in this project is to identify HELP participants that are interested in a Net Zero or Net Zero Ready renovations and connect them with the CHBA project. HELP also provides participants with a \$10,000 rebate if they complete the CHBA project meeting all requirements. Table 7 provides an evaluation of the program.

Table 7 - CHBA Program Evaluation

Objective	KPI	2024 Performance	Evaluation
Increase the number of single-family net zero renovations	5-10 single-family homes in Saskatoon to net zero/net zero ready through CHBA Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 9 homes enrolled to date. - 4 planning to complete a Net Zero renovation - 5 participating in a Roadmap Only 	On-track

In November, the CHBA introduced a new program option for homeowners in municipalities with low program uptake. As the program was nearing its end, with all applications needing to be submitted and approved by the end of 2024, the CHBA launched the "Roadmap Only Option". This option allowed participants to enroll in the program and participate in the Integrated Design Plan for their home, identifying the necessary steps to achieve a net zero or net zero ready renovation without undergoing the construction process. Five participants enrolled in this option to receive a roadmap. The other four participants, who plan to proceed with renovations, will be tracked and followed up with throughout 2025. The deadline to complete their renovation projects is December 31, 2025. Enrollments for this program closed on December 31, 2024, and no additional homeowners are being accepted into the program.

Communications Campaign

A multi-faceted communications campaign took place in 2023, and again in 2024 to build awareness of energy efficiency options for residential homes, myth-bust common misconceptions about innovative technologies, and promote the new tools and services mentioned above. In alignment with this campaign, administration launched a new Home Renovation Resources webpage ([Saskatoon.ca/RenoResources](https://saskatoon.ca/RenoResources)) to compile all local financing and incentive programs, information and self-use tools available to residents.

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The success of the marketing campaigns is, in part, measured by how successful the HELP enhancements themselves are, as reported in the sections above. These goals and KPIs are reviewed quarterly by the project team to correlate marketing activities with spikes in traffic on the Solar Map and Energy Map and ensure that calls to action are effective.

A portion of the HELP 2024 communication plan budget was reallocated to focus on program process efficiencies since the performance of the program enhancements tools have continuously met or exceeded performance expectations.

The 2025 HELP communication plan will focus on marketing efforts on the following:

- Promotion of the expanded HELP program, to increase program uptake.
- Further development and promotion of the Home Renovation Resources webpage as a one stop resource hub for home energy retrofits.