



Aurora Home Energy Retrofit Program Design Study

**Presentation for Environmental Advisory
Committee**

February 2026



Home Energy Retrofit Program

A program to increase the rate of energy and emissions reductions through retrofits of low-rise homes. The program aims to fill gaps of existing programs and meet needs of Aurora residents.



**Primary
Objective**



Reduce GHG
emissions



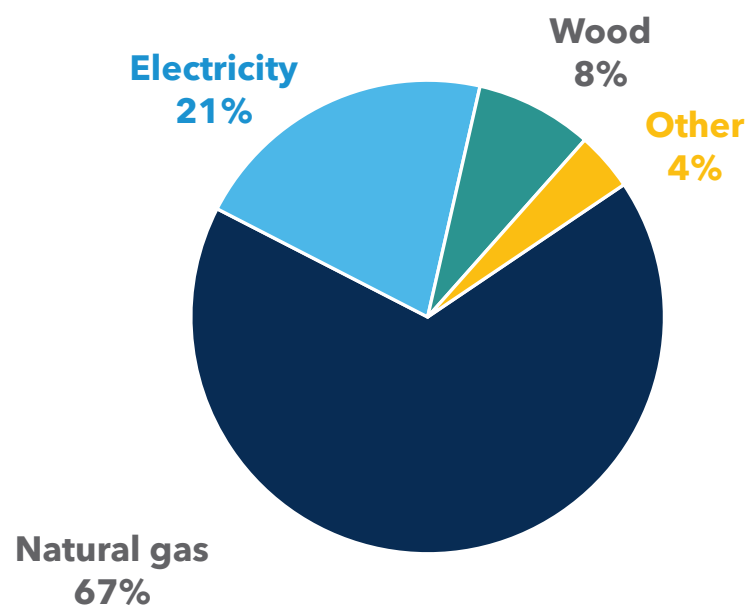
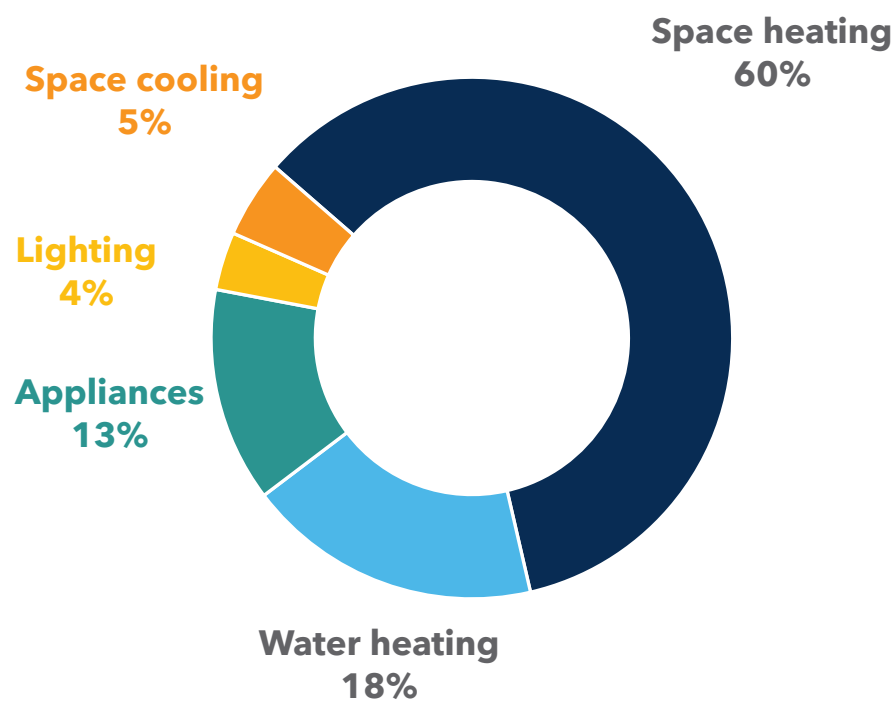
**Secondary
Objective**



Protect vulnerable
residents from
energy poverty

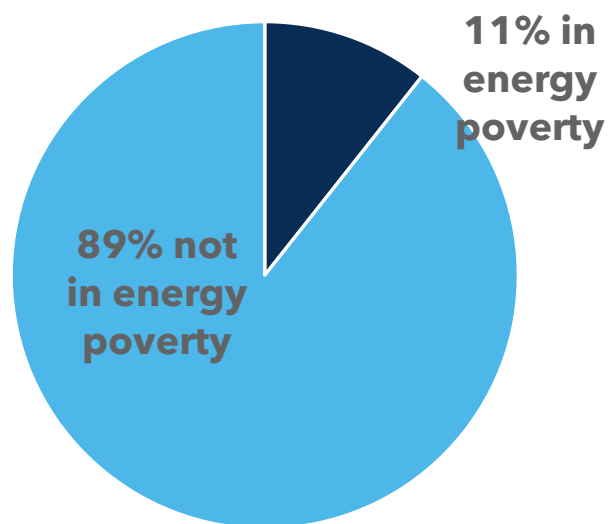
1. **Recap** the results of the Feasibility Study
2. **Share** the draft Program Design Study
3. **Seek feedback** on the Program Design Study from EAC.
4. **Ensure internal alignment** before taking the report to Council on March 10.

Energy Use in Homes in Aurora

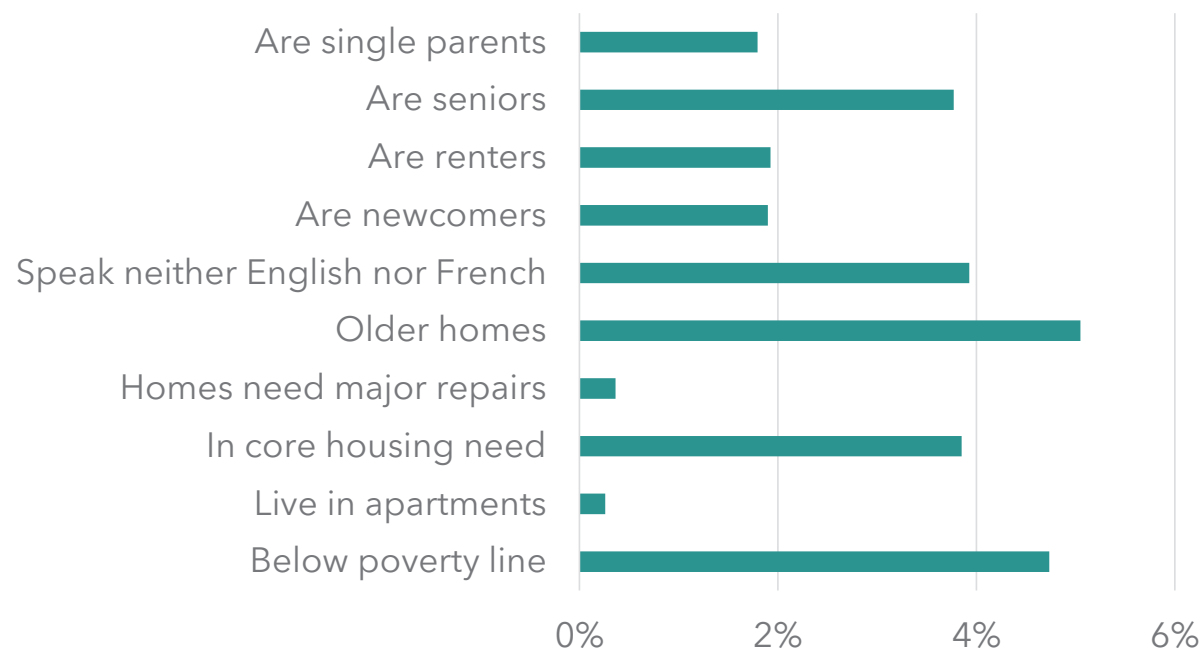


Most energy (and emissions) in homes is from space & water heating with natural gas

Energy Poverty in Aurora



Of the 11% in energy poverty:



Efficiency Canada, [Community Level Energy Poverty Map](#) | Tableau Public

Energy Poverty: Households spending >6% of their after-tax income on energy bills

Why are Home Energy Retrofits a Priority?

THE OPPORTUNITY



Almost all homes need retrofitting to meet GHG targets.

- **Homes account for 37% of all GHG emissions in the community.**

THE CHALLENGE



However, there is currently minimal home energy retrofit activity.

- **< 1% of Aurora homes** are completing energy retrofits annually, based on NRCAN data.
- Need to be **4% annually and GHG focused** (~800 units/yr).

Main barriers reported by homeowners are knowledge of solutions and upfront costs.

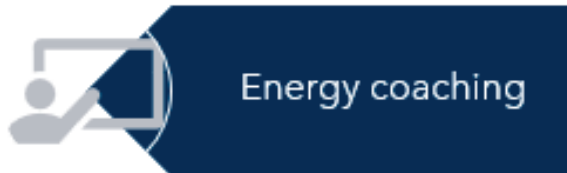
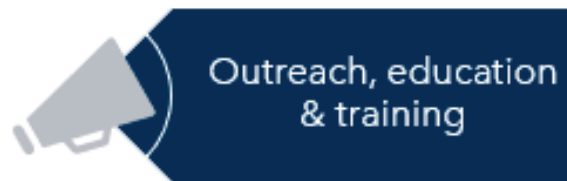
Feasibility Study Outcomes - Loans

PROGRAM MODEL	KEY FEATURES
A Turnkey Loan Program, with FCM funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Third-party agent delivers program
B Turnkey Loan Program without FCM funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Third-party agent delivers program
C Targeted Loan Program with grant funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Targeted loans for short-term• Delivered by Town

- A loan program was deemed most viable if done at the Regional level.
- FCM funding would make any a loan program more viable.

Feasibility Study Outcomes

- Market transformation activities will support retrofit activity regardless of a loan program.
- There are many new initiatives in development. The Town's program design should adjust based on which ones come to fruition and build collaborations for efficiencies.
- Continue with detailed Program Design.





Regional and Local Municipal Initiatives:

- York Region is launching York Greener Homes online platform with home energy ratings and energy coaching services (much like Durham region). This initiative covers some of the market transformation components identified in the feasibility study, but not all.
- Discussions started at Region regarding loan program.
- Markham and Richmond Hill are undertaking a feasibility study.



Financing for Retrofits: FCM is no longer offering municipalities funds for loan programs.

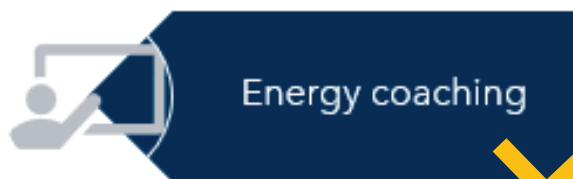
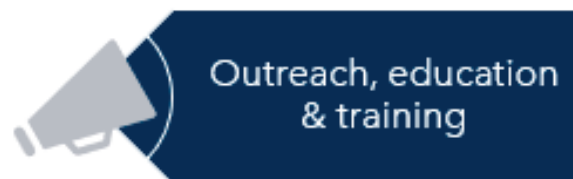


Federal/Provincial Retrofit Programs:

- The federal Greener Homes Loan Program ended. A low-to-moderate income program is expected imminently (which could include loans and/or incentives).
- Local utilities may release more support programs.

York Greener Homes Program

- York Region's initiative will cover some of the market support elements.
- Expected to launch in mid 2026 and run for 3 years.
- Program Design for the Town will leverage this program and focus on the other elements



Aurora Program Phases Rationale

1. Short Term Actions

Start off with low-no cost value adds that leverage regional and utility programs. Focus on outreach & education, data collection, and advocacy for growing support.

Assess impact.
Allocate resources.

2. Medium Term Initiatives

Make moderate investments to support vulnerable residents.

Align partners

3. Longer Term Initiatives

Collaborate with others to build out a package of initiatives that further support Aurora's GHG targets.

Aurora Program Offering – Immediate Term



Outreach and Education

- Engagement activities to promote York Greener Homes Program.
- Raise awareness of workforce training opportunities.



Energy Coaching

- Support the York Region Greener Homes Program development, launch and promotion activities



Performance Monitoring

- Collect data on the program implementation
- Follow announcements of federal and provincial support programs



Advocacy and Collaboration

- Continue dialogue with municipal partners like York Region and utility partners on complementary program opportunities and improvements

Aurora Short Term Actions to advocate regionally

Home Energy Ratings

- Make the ratings public for market alignment.
- Consult stakeholders prior.

Heat Pump Cost Reduction

- Use industry engagement and consumer education to reduce the high customer acquisition costs that drive up the cost of heat pumps.
- For efficiency and consistency, assign a liaison to represent York Region municipalities in collaborating with City of Toronto.

Workforce Training

- explore strategies to support work force training organized by the City of Toronto.

Aurora Outreach & Education

Via Town channels

- Aurora online, notice board & e-newsletters
- Digital street signs
- Posters in Town buildings
- Town social media
- Table at Home Show
- Information on building permit application webpage & heritage incentive webpage
- Workshops and information table at Library, Seniors Centre

Via paid channels

- Social media advertisements
- GoTrain info tables
- Targeted digital advertisements

With York Region

- Messaging through utilities
- Doors Open events
- Radio advertisements

Program Offering

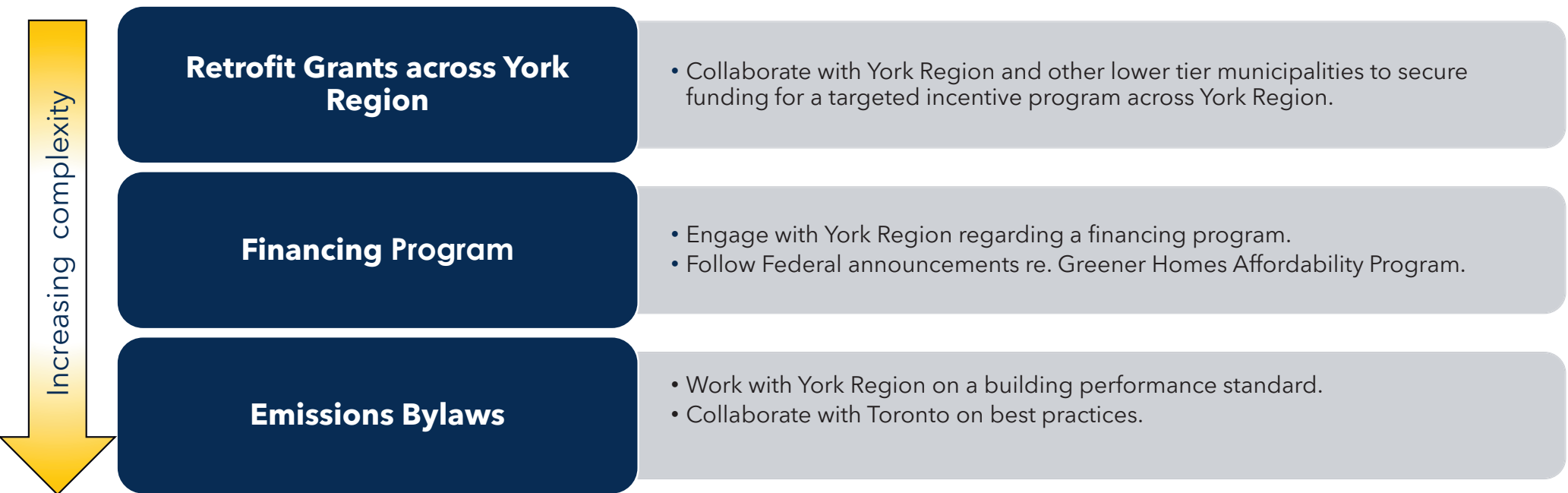
Aurora Mid Term Action



Aurora Retrofit Grant Program

- Program offers income-qualified homeowners rebates for measures such as heat pumps, insulation, etc.

Longer Term - Complementary Actions





Rationale:

Homeowners with **natural gas are not adequately supported** by existing programs.

Heat pumps are the best opportunity to reduce GHGs and improve resiliency.

Low-to-moderate income residents in Aurora qualify for free insulation and air sealing from the Province (for electric and oil-heated homes).

Aurora has an **existing Green Initiatives Reserve Fund** which grows by ~\$50k/yr.

Heritage Grant Program is a model.



Proposal:

Allocate **~\$50k/yr** for incentives **for low-income homeowners** (those who have completed the provincial program).

Offer eligible homeowners **rebates for:**

1. **Cold climate heat pumps**, (stackable with other programs).
2. **Attic insulation** (where Provincial rebates do not cover the full cost already)
3. **Other measures and planning support** - as determined based on assessed needs in the future (considering that Regional and Provincial program offers may evolve with time)



Do you think there would be uptake for such an incentive program?
How would you suggest participants be recruited?

Next Steps

- ▶ **Approve Program Design Study**
- ▶ **Implement the Short Term Program Elements**
- ▶ **Develop Aurora Retrofit Grant Program**
- ▶ **Explore Longer Term Program Components**



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