

MEMO

OFFICE OF ENERGY RESOURCES



TO: Energy Efficiency Council
FROM: The Office of Energy Resources
DATE: July 17, 2025
RE: Council Budget Allocation

SUMMARY

The Office of Energy Resources provides the following write-ups and cost estimates for items included in the Energy Efficiency and Resource Management Council's (herein "the Council" or "Energy Efficiency Council") 2026 budget proposal. The table below summarizes the Energy Efficiency Council's (EEC) proposed budget for each category, with a full description of what each item is, how its costs were estimated, and why it is within the Council's statutory authority included in the remainder of the memo. This initial Council budget proposal total is \$891,900, a 9% decrease from the 2025 approved budget. OER reserves the right to make additional suggestions and recommendations regarding the 2026 Council budget as the process develops.

Budget Category	Page	2026 Proposed Budget
Consultant Services	2	\$700,000
Legal Services	3	\$70,000
Annual Report and Misc. Printing & Distribution	4	\$500
Council Travel and Education & Advancement	5	\$900
Public Education	6	\$100,000
Energy Expo Sponsorship	8	\$20,000
EEC Website	9	\$500

Please refer to the following related materials:

- July Council Meeting Budget Presentation, which includes historical comparisons of budgets versus actual spend
- July 2025 Council Budget Tracker

CONSULTANT SERVICES

DESCRIPTION

The Council is comprised of fifteen appointed members that represent the interests of various constituencies in the State of Rhode Island including homeowners, renters, large and small businesses, municipalities, and nonprofits. To fulfill its legislated obligations and responsibilities, the Council issues competitive procurements for consultant services. Such consultants provide the Council with relevant subject-matter expertise, technical analysis, regulatory support, and administrative assistance.

The incumbent EEC Consultants organize their work to support the Council in its legislated responsibilities within the following task areas:

- Energy Efficiency Program Planning and Implementation Oversight
- System Reliability Procurement
- Regulatory Proceedings
- Council Sponsored Meetings and Materials
- Research, Analysis, and Other Council Support

ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET PROPOSAL

In determining the proposed budget for consultant services, OER reviewed annual spending over the past couple of years, forecasted spending through the end of the current year, and considered factors that went into previously approved consultant services budgets and scopes of work. The Council approved a budget of \$717,025 for work in 2025. From 2022 through 2024, the Council's Consultant service expenses did not exceed \$700,000, and at the current pace of spending in 2025, are not currently expected to exceed that amount. OER proposes that the Consultant Team could support the Council's typical work within a calendar year with a budget of \$700,000.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The following statute(s) related to the Council's purposes, powers, and/or duties are included as reference for why the Council feels this budget item is within its purview.

- According to [§ 42-140.1-6](#) (b), the Council has the powers *"To adopt [and] amend bylaws, to establish committees, to elect and/or appoint officers and agents, and to engage consultants and professional services as necessary and appropriate to fulfill its purposes."*

LEGAL SERVICES

DESCRIPTION

In order to fulfil the Council's statutory responsibilities, legal representation is required in order to fully participate in all relevant Public Utilities Commission docket proceedings. Legal services are also required to advise the Council on Council Business, procurements, and other matters as deemed appropriate to fulfill the Council's statutory obligations.

BUDGET PROPOSAL

The Council's budget request is based on Council legal spend actuals for the previous three calendar years. The Council's 2022's legal budget expense was \$66,849.67. 2023's legal budget expense was \$62,209.42 and 2024's legal budget expense was \$55,081.69. Legal expenses and services can vary year-to-year based on several factors and Council activities, and the number and length of docket hearings and proceedings in a year.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The following statute(s) related to the Council's purposes, powers, and/or duties are included as reference for why the Council feels this budget item is within its purview.

- According to [§ 42-140.1-5](#) (d), The Council shall have the power to *"Participate in proceedings of the public utilities commission that pertain to the purposes of the council, including but not limited to proceedings regarding least-cost procurement as provided for in § 39-1-27.7."*
- According to [§ 42-140.1-5](#) (g), The Council shall have the power to *"Consider such other matters as it may deem appropriate to the fulfillment of its purposes, and may advise the governor, the general assembly, other parties, and the public with regard to matters pertaining to its purposes and duties, which advice may include findings and recommendations."*
- According to [§ 42-140.1-6](#) (b), In order to effectuate its power and duties, the Council has the power to *"Adopt amend bylaws, to establish committees, to elect and/or appoint officers and agents, and to engage consultants and professional services as necessary and appropriate to fulfill its purposes."*

ANNUAL REPORT AND MISCELLANEOUS PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTION

DESCRIPTION

Starting in 2024, the Council decided not to print full copies of the Annual Report, opting to design and print executive summaries of the Council's Annual Report instead, which has reduced printing costs.

BUDGET PROPOSAL

Based on a price from the printer used in 2024, a \$500 allocation is recommended to cover the printing of around 300 pamphlets.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The following statute related to the Council's purposes, powers, and/or duties are included as reference for why the Council feels this budget item is within its purview.

- According to [§ 42-140.1-5](#) (c), the Council has the power to: *"Submit to the joint committee on energy an annual report on/or before April 15 of each year, commencing in 2008, regarding the activities of the council, its assessment of energy issues, the status of system reliability, energy efficiency and conservation procurement and its recommendations regarding any improvements which might be necessary or desirable."*

COUNCIL TRAVEL AND EDUCATION AND ADVANCEMENT

DESCRIPTION

This category combines two budget items:

- 1) **Council Travel** – This item covers stipends available to Councilors for travel to and from monthly meetings, which they are required to attend in person.
- 2) **Councilor Learning, Education, and Advancement Discussion (LEAD) Sessions** – Organized by the Consultant Team, LEAD Sessions are public meetings held outside of monthly Council meetings, where Councilors can dive deeper into learning and discussion on key topics that warrant additional attention. This item covers the logistical costs of organizing two LEAD Sessions per year, including space rental and catering service.

BUDGET PROPOSAL

The draft 2026 budget proposes to maintain the same level of funding for this category as in 2022-2025, which is an allocation of \$900 for both items. In these years, about \$350-\$400 has been spent from this category, which primarily consists of LEAD Session expenses. While Councilors do not typically take advantage of the travel stipends, it is advisable to reserve a small amount for this option in case that changes.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The following statutes related to the Council's purposes, powers, and/or duties are included as reference for why the Council feels this budget item is within its purview.

- In accordance with [§ 42-140.1-4](#) (e), *"the members of the council shall not be compensated for their service but shall be reimbursed for their actual expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties. The provisions of this subdivision shall not apply to the executive secretary/executive director."*
- In accordance with [§ 42-140.1-3](#) (b), the Council's purposes include: *"(1) Evaluate and make recommendations, including, but not limited to, plans and programs, with regard to the optimization of energy efficiency, energy conservation, energy resource development; and the development of a plan for least-cost procurement for Rhode Island; and (2) Provide consistent, comprehensive, informed and publicly accountable stake-holder involvement in energy efficiency, energy conservation, and energy resource management; and (3) Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of programs to achieve energy efficiency, energy conservation, and diversification of energy resources."*

PUBLIC EDUCATION - URI COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PROPOSAL

DESCRIPTION

The Council is currently contracted with the University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension (URI) for the implementation of 2025 public events to promote energy efficiency, including the [Plugged Into Energy Research \(PIER\) Lecture Series](#) and an [Efficient Housing for All Community of Practice](#). URI's work is guided and overseen by the EEC Education Committee.

Despite increased attention and conversation around energy equity, Rhode Island's income eligible efficiency programs continue to suffer from nonparticipation due to a plethora of factors, such as pre-weatherization barriers and access issues.

BUDGET PROPOSAL

The currently proposed budget for this item is set level with 2025 funding for these activities. The URI team is currently developing a program and budget proposal for 2026 for the Council's consideration.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The following statute(s) related to the Council's purposes, powers, and/or duties are included as reference for why the Council feels this budget item is within its purview.

- In accordance with [§ 42-140.1-3](#) (b)(4), one of the Council's purposes is to *"Promote public understanding of energy issues and of ways in which energy efficiency, energy conservation, and energy resource diversification and management can be effectuated."*

ENERGY EXPO SPONSORSHIP

DESCRIPTION

In order to promote public understanding of energy issues and of ways in which energy efficiency, energy conservation, and energy resource diversification and management can be effectuated, the Energy Efficiency Council has been a partner for the Rhode Island Builders Association's annual Home Show and Energy Expo since 2014. This event and trade show attracts over 15,000 attendees each year and provides an opportunity for the Council and related energy professionals to promote energy efficiency programs and opportunities directly to Rhode Island residents and industry professionals.

BUDGET PROPOSAL

The total cost of the Energy Expo at the 2025 Rhode Island Builders Association (RIBA) Rhode Island Home Show was \$80,000. In 2025, this cost was split between Rhode Island Energy, the Energy Efficiency Council, and the Office of Energy Resources. This included the following services as detailed by RIBA:

1. RIBA will recruit, manage and coordinate energy related exhibitors and label them as exhibiting firms on the main show floor.
2. The association management team will also coordinate needed assets and information to assist with the creation of the Expo.
3. Premier concourse space at the entrance of the convention center main floor.
4. Inclusion in verbal and visual assets associated with show's overall 100k plus media / marketing campaign – including but not limited to TV, Radio, print, web, social, press, etc.
5. Dedicated TV and Radio interviews
6. Dedicated Web pages
7. Complimentary tables on concourse for energy related groups and information
8. Floor stickers to call out each energy related vendors
9. Show signage
10. 4,000 advance tickets to the show
11. Coordinated and customized content for the show program
12. A major energy related project for RI's career and tech students involving energy training and housing will be created and coordinated. Schools will be engaged in a chosen energy project and will have it displayed and manned in the Energy concourse at the show.

For the 2025 Home Show, the Council chose to sponsor the event at \$20,000. This budget proposal maintains the same level of funding for 2026.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The following statute(s) related to the Council's purposes, powers, and/or duties are included as reference for why the Council feels this budget item is within its purview.

- In accordance with [§ 42-140.1-3](#) (b)(4), one of the Council's purposes is to *"Promote public understanding of energy issues and of ways in which energy efficiency, energy conservation, and energy resource diversification and management can be effectuated."*

EEC WEBSITE

DESCRIPTION

The Council maintains a [website](#) – with support from the Consultant Team and OER – that helps the public find information about the Council, energy efficiency programming and policies, and how to participate in public meetings and activities. The Council posts their meeting materials to this website for public access and the website serves as a repository for energy efficiency resources, studies and reports.

BUDGET PROPOSAL

The 2026 budget allocation proposal is based on actual expenses from previous years from WordPress for website hosting and management services. In 2023, the website costs were \$300. In 2024, the Council completed a website redesign and migration to a new domain. The allocation is to maintain the new website and ensure that the pre-existing domain name can still redirect users to the new page.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The following statute(s) related to the Council’s purposes, powers, and/or duties are included as reference for why the Council feels this budget item is within its purview.

- According to [§ 42-140.1-3 \(b\)](#), The Council has the power to “Provide consistent, comprehensive, informed and publicly accountable stake-holder involvement in energy efficiency, energy conservation, and energy resource management and promote public understanding of energy issues and of ways in which energy efficiency, energy conservation, and energy resource diversification and management can be effectuated.”
- According to [§ 42-140.1-6 \(b\)](#), The Council has the powers “To adopt amend bylaws, to establish committees, to elect and/or appoint officers and agents, and to engage consultants and professional services as necessary and appropriate to fulfill its purposes.”