

RANK

35 / 75

2019 CITY CLEAN ENERGY SCORECARD

Houston

Houston had its best performance in local government operations. The city's enrollment of municipal buildings in the Better Buildings Challenge, its green building requirements, and its benchmarking of municipal building energy use all contributed to its score in the policy area. The city did not perform as well as in the other categories. Houston can progress in all policy areas to improve its rank in the next edition of the Scorecard.

OVERALL SCORE

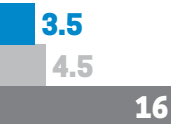
31.5 / 100



LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS



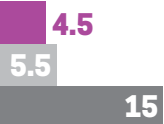
COMMUNITY-WIDE INITIATIVES



BUILDINGS POLICIES



ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES



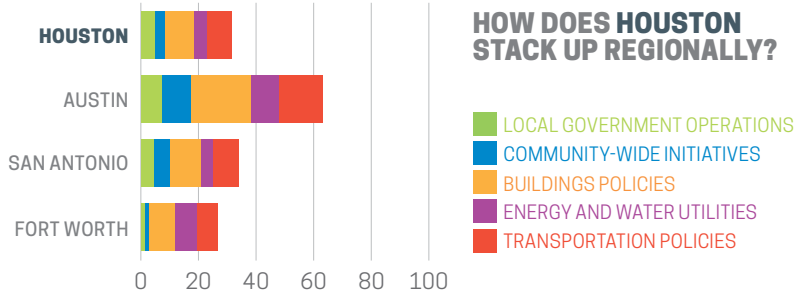
TRANSPORTATION POLICIES



MEDIAN SCORE

MAXIMUM POINTS POSSIBLE

HOW DOES HOUSTON STACK UP REGIONALLY?



LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS (5 OF 9 POINTS)

Houston has an energy-reduction goal for local government operations. Houston sets green building requirements for city buildings, benchmarks municipal buildings, and retrofits select buildings. The city has converted approximately 95% of streetlights to LEDs and allows telework or flexible scheduling for employees. Houston has not yet established renewable electricity and climate change mitigation goals for local government operations.

COMMUNITY-WIDE INITIATIVES (3.5 OF 16 POINTS)

Houston's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction and energy-savings goals provide the vision for its clean energy efforts. The city has not adopted a community-wide renewable energy goal. ACEEE does not currently project that the city will achieve its goal of reducing community-wide GHG emissions 80% by 2050. The city supports the development of on-site solar energy by fast-tracking permits. To better mitigate the urban heat island effect, the city adopted a goal to plant one million trees within three to five years.

BUILDINGS POLICIES (10 OF 30 POINTS)

Houston enforces the 2015 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) with local amendments for commercial and residential buildings, as well as ASHRAE 90.1-2013 with amendments for commercial buildings. The city encourages clean energy investments in existing buildings through incentive and financing programs. For example, Houston offers tax abatements and expedited permitting to commercial buildings that meet LEED standards. The city could further encourage clean energy investment in existing buildings by implementing policies that require energy saving actions, and helping to grow the clean energy workforce.

ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES (4.5 OF 15 POINTS)

Houston works to increase energy efficiency in water services and wastewater treatment plants, but more could be done. Compared to other utilities, CenterPoint Energy shows low savings for both electric and natural gas efficiency programs. The utility offers comprehensive programs for low-income and multifamily households. Based on available data, we did not find that Houston encouraged CenterPoint Energy to increase its utility-scale or distributed electricity generation from renewable sources; CenterPoint Energy does not offer incentives for the construction of new distributed solar or wind systems.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES (8.5 OF 30 POINTS)

The City Mobility Plan sets a multimodal transportation vision for the city, although Houston has not adopted quantitative vehicle miles traveled (VMT) or transportation-related GHG emissions reduction goals, or mode shift targets. Coupling VMT or GHG reduction goals with mode shift targets can help guide the city into a sustainable transportation future. Relative to other city systems, Houston's transit system is underfunded and somewhat accessible. Houston was one of only eight cities to offer incentives for EV charging systems solely powered by renewable energy. To better encourage efficient vehicle and EV charging infrastructure uptake, the city can offer incentives for efficient vehicles and charging infrastructure and increase the number of public EV charging stations.