RANK

89 /100

OVERALL SCORE

9 /100

Charleston

Charleston had a couple of achievements in transportation policies; however, the city has few other clean energy policies, leaving it substantial room to improve across all categories, particularly community-wide initiatives and energy and water utilities. The city can address community-wide energy waste and emissions by adopting energy reduction and renewable energy goals and tracking progress toward its existing greenhouse gas (GHG) goal. Charleston can work to make its private buildings more energy efficient and address emissions in government buildings. These could serve as stepping-stones to a clean energy future.

HOW DOES CHARLESTON STACK UP REGIONALLY?

- LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
- COMMUNITY-WIDE INITIATIVES
- BUILDINGS POLICIES
- ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES
- TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

1.5
2.5
10

COMMUNITY-WIDE INITIATIVES

0
3
15

BUILDINGS POLICIES

2
7
30

ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES
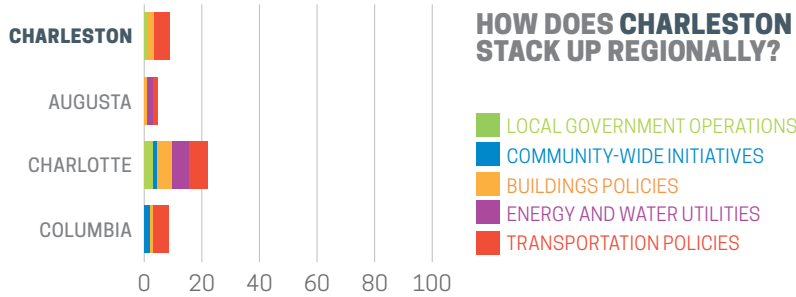
0
5.5
15

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

5.5
8.5
30

MEDIAN SCORE

MAXIMUM POINTS POSSIBLE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS (1.5 OF 10 POINTS)

Charleston has an energy reduction goal for local government operations, and has installed onsite renewable systems on municipal buildings. Otherwise, the city has few initiatives to reduce GHG emissions and energy use from local government operations. To set an aim for its efforts, Charleston can adopt a GHG emissions reduction goal for municipal operations. The city also can benchmark municipal building energy use, identify energy efficiency opportunities, and conduct retrofits. Charleston can integrate clean energy into its procurement and construction strategies by setting fleet efficiency requirements and converting streetlights to LEDs.

COMMUNITY-WIDE INITIATIVES (0 OF 15 POINTS)

Charleston's GHG emissions reduction goal sets the vision for a clean energy future. ACEEE was unable to project if the city will achieve its goal of reducing community-wide GHG emissions 80% below 2002 levels by 2050 because insufficient GHG emissions data were available for our analysis. To inspire future clean energy efforts, the city can adopt citywide energy efficiency and renewable energy goals, take an equity-driven approach to clean energy planning, and adopt a formal policy, rule, or agreement that supports the creation of clean, distributed energy systems within the community.

BUILDINGS POLICIES (2 OF 30 POINTS)

South Carolina requires residential and commercial buildings to comply with the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code. Charleston can do more to reduce GHG emissions in its buildings sector by adopting energy efficiency policies for existing buildings such as benchmarking requirements, offering incentives, and developing an equitable clean energy workforce.

ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES (0 OF 15 POINTS)

Compared to other utilities, Dominion Energy South Carolina reports low savings as a percentage of sales for electric efficiency programs. It does not report savings on natural gas efficiency programs. While Dominion does not offer a multifamily energy efficiency program, it does offer a program for low-income customers. The city can encourage utility-scale or distributed renewable energy generation from its electric utility. Additionally, Charleston can increase energy and water efficiency in water services and wastewater treatment plants.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES (5.5 OF 30 POINTS)

The city encourages mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development in the Place District. While the Charleston Green Plan includes sustainable transportation provisions, Charleston has not yet adopted quantitative goals to reduce vehicle miles traveled/GHG emissions from transportation or mode shift targets. Adopting and tracking progress toward these goals would help lay the groundwork for transportation action. The city also can improve the accessibility of and direct investment towards its transit system; ensuring continued financial support for service and operations will be crucial in a post-COVID world. Charleston can further promote sustainable transportation within the city by encouraging or requiring the creation of affordable housing units in transit-served areas.

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American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy