



BUILD

Building Initiative for Low-Emissions Development Program

Case Study Fair Haven Commons



Project At-a-Glance

Name

Fair Haven Commons

Location

Fairfield, CA

Developer

MidPen Housing

Property Size

- 7 buildings
- 72 units

Estimated Avoided Greenhouse Gas Emissions

*(compared to baseline
energy code compliance
of a mixed fuel building)*
1,459 MT CO2

BUILD Incentive

\$351,830

BUILD Incentives Cut Costs, Boost Support for Low-Income Residents

Affordable housing developers excel at balancing competing priorities and weaving together funding sources to build new properties. However, there's one factor that remains beyond their control: the weather.

Fair Haven Commons in Fairfield was ready to break ground in October 2021 when northern California was hit with record-breaking rain and high winds. Facing expensive construction delays, developer MidPen Housing learned about one final funding source that would help them weather the storm and round out their financing: the California Energy Commission's Building Initiative for Low-Emissions Development (BUILD) program.

MidPen Housing leveraged over \$350,000 in BUILD incentives to offset construction costs to build an all-electric affordable housing property with low energy use. Each building features verified high quality insulation installation to ensure minimal air leakage, heat pump water heaters to minimize energy use, and heat pump space conditioning systems for highly efficient heating and cooling.



The BUILD program is a perfect bridge. We want low-energy buildings. We want to reduce our residents' bills, especially for very low-income households. Here's a funding source that helps pay for the way to do that.

— Lauren Fuhry, MidPen Housing





I think it's such a well-designed program. It took us four years to fully assemble our financing, and every dollar matters.

Lauren Fuhry, MidPen Housing

With these energy-efficient and sustainable design choices, Fair Haven Commons was eligible for BUILD incentives based on avoided greenhouse gas emissions due to the all-electric design, efficiency measures that exceeded energy code requirements, and a bonus kicker incentive for installing smart grid ready heat pump water heaters.

Fair Haven Commons is designed to reduce utility bill costs for residents and reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the same time. Out of 72 units, Fair Haven Commons set aside 44 units for homeless households, including 34 for those with family members diagnosed with mental illness and 10 for chronically homeless individuals. Utility costs can be especially burdensome for individuals transitioning out of homelessness, and living in low energy use homes helps reduce utility bills for these residents.

Along the way, BUILD's technical assistance (TA) team provided no-cost technical support for MidPen Housing. The BUILD TA team directly coordinated with a heat pump water heater manufacturer representative on MidPen Housing's behalf to help select a water heater that meets BUILD's NEEA Tier 3 requirements. In addition, the BUILD TA team helped the project team size their solar PV system to ensure compliance with the state energy code.

BUILD Incentive Breakdown

BASE INCENTIVE		INCREASED BUILDING EFFICIENCY INCENTIVE		KICKER INCENTIVE		TOTAL INCENTIVE
\$218,970	+	\$96,860	+	\$36,000	=	\$351,830
Based on avoided greenhouse gas emissions		Based on percentage above code compliance		Incentive for advanced heat pump water heaters		



Contact Us for More Information

BUILD TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TEAM



The Building Initiative for Low-Emissions Development (BUILD) Program provides incentives and technical assistance to support the adoption of advanced building design in new, low-income all-electric homes and multifamily buildings.

Learn more at www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/building-initiative-low-emissions-development-program-build or email BUILD@energy.ca.gov.

BUILD is administered by the California Energy Commission in collaboration with the California Public Utilities Commission. It is authorized by Senate Bill 1477 (2018, Stern) and funded by the four California gas corporations apportioned according to each gas corporation's percentage share of allocated Cap-and-Trade Program allowances. Reservations are approved on a first come, first served basis, and regional funding availability is based on the utilities' contribution to the program.