

December 15, 2022

Mayor Bruce Harrell
City of Seattle

RE: Climate Action and the Inflation Reduction Act

Dear Mayor Harrell:

The recently passed Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provides substantial and wide-ranging funding opportunities to address the impacts of climate change and environmental justice. It is important to recognize that few, if any, of Seattle's goals concerning greenhouse gas emissions have been realized. This federal money presents a real opportunity to achieve our stated environmental justice and climate goals and Seattle should waste no time applying to funds and/or tax credits it may be eligible for and assisting local residents and businesses in doing the same.

The report "Climate Action and the Inflation Reduction Act" produced by the Climate Mayors and the C40 Cities (including Seattle) provides a very helpful overview of the IRA and a framework for going forward. This report summarizes 27 programs that cities are eligible for either directly, in partnership with other governmental agencies, or in support of individuals and businesses.

In order to be successful in applying for these funds, the City's strategy must be well coordinated with direct accountability, transparency and openness to pursuing partnerships. To do this we call on the Mayor and the City Council to immediately implement the following action items.

1. The Mayor should appoint someone to be in charge of and accountable for this effort. He/she should be at the executive level (e.g. Deputy Mayor, OSE Director).
2. Staff should be assigned full-time to support this point-person.
3. This staff should (1) create an array of informational material and (2) provide assistance for individuals and businesses seeking to avail themselves of tax credits and other IRA funding to help in pursuing projects that will help us achieve our climate goals.
4. An inter-departmental team should be established with representatives from all departments who are potentially eligible for these funds. All team members should be assigned support staff from their respective departments. Potential partners should be included in team meetings (or with sub-groups) as needed. To emphasize the importance and urgency of this effort, this team should meet weekly.
5. The City Council and the public should be provided briefings and status reports on the work of this team at least monthly.

The State of Washington also has a major role to play in the pursuit of these IRA funds. In addition, there will be major funding opportunities when the State implements the Climate Commitment Act. The City of Seattle should be advocating for the State to develop a similar inter-departmental team model. The City and State must work together if we are to be successful in meeting our greenhouse gas emissions reduction commitments. We look forward to supporting you in these efforts.

Sincerely,

46th District Democrats

Cc: Seattle City Council
Monisha Harrell, Deputy Mayor
Jessyn Farrell, Director OSE
Gail Tarleton, Director Intergovernmental Relations