

Expanding Access to Energy-Efficient Home Improvements

CLIENT

Sunrise Banks

CONSULTING TEAM

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PROJECT OBJECTIVE

Sunrise Banks, a mission-driven CDFI in the Twin Cities, sought strategies to expand access to energy-efficiency upgrades, and climate-resilient improvements for low-to-moderate income (LMI) households — a population with high needs but faces structural barriers to access.

APPROACH

01 Research

Analyzed residential energy-efficiency and electrification markets, including participation barriers, financing programs, public incentives, emerging technologies, contractor constraints, and lending risk data.

02 Stakeholder Interviews

Conducted 15 primary interviews with CDFIs, city/state agency representatives, community advocates, and Sunrise internal staff to understand real barriers, decision moments, and product design constraints.

03 Key Findings *a consistent pattern emerged*

MANY PROGRAMS, HIGH NEED and yet, LOW PARTICIPATION

The challenge is structural: access, complexity, & program design.

IMPACT & RECOMMENDATIONS

G-LOC *Green Line of Credit*

A single-application revolving, credit line for energy efficiency projects. Funds available at point-of-sale; rebates reduce the outstanding balance. Bridges upfront cost, timing gaps, and emergency decisions. Designed to serve households across a range of credit profiles.

Contractor Program

A focused financing & support platform providing working capital, inventory financing, training, and point-of-sale tools for energy efficiency contractors. Designed to strengthen local contractor capacity while improving customer access to solutions at the moment decisions are made.

Financial Partnership *Reduce risk - Expand capital - Build trust*

The project identified opportunities for shared-risk partnerships with local municipalities and organizations. Mechanisms include: Loan-Loss Reserves & Interest-Rate Buydowns.

The project also facilitated early conversations with the City of Minneapolis around potential partnership and pilot structure possibilities.

✓ Program uptake

✓ Broader Access

✓ Financial Risk Sharing

✓ Reduced Program Complexity