

# Beacon Communities Drives Down Operational Costs with Energy Efficiency Investments

## Case Study

Building Name & Location:  
Ohav Sholom Apartments  
—Albany, NY

Solutions Provider:  
L&S Energy Services

Project Size:  
1 Building, 211 Units

Projected Annual  
Energy Savings:  
22%

Projected Annual  
Energy Cost Savings:  
\$168,540

## Background

Beacon Communities LLC, a real estate development firm, refinanced and rehabilitated the Ohav Sholom Apartments in Albany, New York—an existing Housing and Urban Development (HUD)—financed housing project. Duncan Barrett, president of Beacon Communities New York, noted, “our income is constrained by both our tenants’ ability to pay rent and the regulatory environment that these projects end up in. Anything that we can do to drive down operating costs by making a front-end capital investment is both smart and ensures continued affordability of the property.”

Beacon has participated in multiple NYSERDA Multifamily Performance Program (MPP) projects, so at the start of this project Beacon immediately engaged NYSERDA and MPP. MPP provides dedicated support for affordable multifamily property owners and managers to make their properties more energy efficient.

## L&S Energy Made the Process of Weatherizing Through MPP Smooth

With MPP, property and building managers can access a network of NYSERDA-qualified Multifamily Building Solutions Providers, who will conduct an assessment of the property and create a customized plan to reach 20% or more in energy savings. Beacon has worked with L&S Energy on many MPP projects, including the Ohav Sholom Apartments. They brought L&S Energy into the project very early to reduce operating costs and ensure feasibility in obtaining financing.

One of the core goals of the project was to reduce electric costs by “buttoning the building up”—eliminating balconies that had leaky doors and air conditioning sleeves, sealing up the façade, and giving tenants 16 more square feet in the process. Barrett said, “L&S Energy frankly does all the work. We review and sign off on what they recommend, but [MPP] is not a burdensome program to participate in from my perspective. It has become quite user friendly.” In addition to energy-saving upgrades, NYSERDA financially supported the development of a solar thermal system in the building.

“Our Solutions Provider did everything regarding the paperwork and post construction reporting that was submitted to NYSERDA so that our staff didn’t have to become experts in that process. They also gave us really good energy conservation advice and options.”

—Duncan Barrett, President,  
Beacon Communities New York

## Upgrades Implemented:

- Roof and floor insulation
- Windows replaced
- Exterior doors replaced
- Thermostats replaced
- Condensing water heater
- Low-flow showerheads and aerators
- Domestic hot water recirculation controls
- Efficient central cooling system
- Efficient lighting in units, in common areas, and on building exterior
- Elevator motor and controls upgrade
- ENERGY STAR® refrigerators and freezers



## Results: A Smart Long-Term Investment in Comfort and Sustainability

The support from NYSERDA and L&S Energy helped Beacon reach 22% in annual energy savings and \$168,540 in annual cost savings—supporting their goal of lowering operating costs. Further, the addition of the solar thermal system—supported by NYSERDA incentives outside MPP—and other heating system improvements helped Beacon reduce water heating costs dramatically. Barrett said, “going above and beyond the energy code was a good long-term investment and prudent in order to meet our regulatory obligations to maintain the property as affordable housing.”

Barrett also emphasized that Beacon can now tout the property’s enhanced comfort and sustainable aspects to current and prospective tenants.



## The NYSERDA Multifamily Performance Program (MPP)

Through MPP, NYSERDA provides incentives from \$700 to \$3,500 per unit for affordable multifamily property owners and managers to make improvements that help lower your building’s ongoing operating costs. A NYSERDA-qualified solutions provider will conduct an assessment of your property and create a customized plan to reach 20% or more in energy savings.

## Ready to increase the value of your building and tenant comfort with MPP?

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