



May 2019

## CLIMATE LEADERSHIP NEWSLETTER

### NOTES FROM MASSACHUSETTS CITIES AND TOWNS

Dear Supporter,

The Climate Leadership newsletter features stories of environmental and climate action in Massachusetts. It provides a platform to highlight work being done by municipalities, climate leaders, and local groups in communities across the Commonwealth. To share local climate actions in your community, email [Veena Dharmaraj](mailto:Veena.Dharmaraj@sierraclub.org).

## Clean Energy and Climate

### Achieving Community Efficiency (ACE) Project Gives Communities the Tools to Save Energy and Reduce Emissions



Is your community interested in increasing energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions in buildings? What about increasing the health and resiliency of buildings? Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnership (NEEP), in collaboration with

Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and other project partners, launched the ACE project in 2019. This project seeks to provide technical assistance to small, medium, and rural communities to build the capacities needed to take on these projects in municipalities across the region. This DOE grant funded project will engage stakeholders, develop resources, and provide direct technical assistance to communities on a variety of projects ranging from building energy benchmarking to high performance schools.

To learn more about this project, see two related blogs: [Top Seven Things to Know about ACE](#) and [Resources and Technical Assistance: NEEP's Dynamic Duo](#). Or if you want to get started today, email [John Balfe](#).

## Inter-Municipal Task Force to Explore Feasibility of New Community Choice Aggregation Model



Three western Mass municipalities—Northampton, Amherst and Pelham—have formed a Task Force (TF) to explore the feasibility of creating an inter-municipal entity to go beyond the [basic Community Choice Aggregation \(CCA\) model](#). The goals of this more ambitious approach- called CCA 3.0 - would be to lower GHG emissions, increase local control of electricity, add [local clean renewable power generation](#) and targeted energy efficiency to lower peak energy demand, and create equitable programs for the benefit of low-income consumers, while stabilizing power prices at levels similar to those of the prevailing market.

With funding from the Urban Sustainability Directors' Network, the task force has contracted with two experts to help explore the statutory limits and market considerations of this approach. Other cities are included as participants (Cambridge, Somerville, and Jersey City) and as observers (Boston, Cincinnati, Hanover, and Saratoga Springs). In addition, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and the UMass Clean Energy Extension are engaged in this process.

The aim is for the task force to make a recommendation by the end of the year about the feasibility of moving forward with an inter-municipal CCA 3.0 entity so that the municipal governments can consider authorizing it. For more information, contact [Adele Franks](#).

## MLP Solar Rebate Program Launched



The Department of Energy Resources (DOER) has awarded \$2.3 million to Energy New England (ENE) and the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Cooperative (MMWEC) to offer a rebate program for the installation of small scale solar photovoltaic systems in [36 Municipal Light Plant \(MLP\) service territories](#). Customers can apply for rebates up to \$1.20 per watt (capped at 50% of total project costs) for projects equal to 25 kW DC or less.

### **Sharon Adopts Net Zero Resolution, Ashland to Move Towards Net Zero by 2040**

Sharon recently adopted a resolution to reduce carbon emissions to zero by 2050. Going forward, the town will review projects based on their climate change impacts and develop systems for monitoring and reporting progress towards transitioning to 100% renewable energy.

Ashland approved the introduction of a net zero resolution to be voted on by residents at the Town Meeting in November. The Sustainability Committee will lead the development of the action plan that will identify specific strategies to eliminate and offset greenhouse emissions by 2040. The action plan is set to be developed by May 2020.

Sharon and Ashland join a growing list of communities including Framingham, Natick, Cambridge, Somerville, Newton, Northampton, and Lexington working on [net zero planning](#) to address the climate emergency.

### **Brayton Point to be Transformed into Clean Energy Center**

The site of the former coal burning





power plant at Brayton Point, Somerset, where two cooling towers were imploded last month will be converted into a clean energy center.

Developed by Anbaric Development Partners, the center will feature 400 megawatts of on-site battery storage and a 1200-megawatt converter to serve the offshore wind industry.

## MEMA Announces Funding for Natural Hazard Mitigation Programs

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is offering funding to communities through the [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program \(HMGP\)](#) to reduce, minimize, or eliminate potential damages to property and infrastructure from natural hazard events. [Eligible projects](#) include stormwater drainage and culvert improvements; floodplain and stream restoration; flood control; infrastructure protection; and emergency power generators for critical facilities. Applications should be submitted by June 4, 2019.

## Pollution and Toxics

### Plastic Bag Bans Gain Momentum in Massachusetts



As of May 2019, 116 towns and cities in Massachusetts, representing over 50% of the state's population regulate [single use plastic shopping bags](#). This month alone over 10 towns including Berlin, Becket, Canton, Halifax Malden, Norwell, Saugus, Sharon, and Winchester passed legislation to limit use of plastic bags. And with Eastham and Brewster passing plastic bag legislation this month, Cape Cod is now plastic bag free.

## Clean Transportation

Join the Electric Vehicle Fleet Commitment



Climate Mayors has launched the [Electric Vehicle \(EV\) Purchasing Collaborative](#) to make public fleet electrification more simple and affordable. With the leadership and support of more than 70 cities and counties, 1,400 EVs have been committed for procurement in public fleets by the end of 2020. At the U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting this June, Climate Mayors will make a major announcement to highlight these leaders, and ask other municipalities to “step up” near-term commitments for procuring public fleet EVs. Join an [upcoming webinar](#) to learn more about the Collaborative, how to get included in the announcement, and to hear from leading public fleets transitioning to EVs. Contact [Natalia Swalnick](#) for more information.

### **MBTA Announces \$40M Energy Efficiency Partnership**



The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) is partnering with the Department of Energy Resources, National Grid and Eversource on a \$40 million project over three years to implement energy efficiency measures across the transit system that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, lower operating costs and enhance rider experience.

The energy efficiency projects will include LED lighting and lighting controls, upgrading HVAC equipment and building automation controls. This initiative will save MBTA \$2.7 million in energy costs while reducing electricity use by 7 percent and carbon emissions by 10,000 metric tons.

### **Boston City Council Supports Rail Service to Springfield**

The Boston City Council unanimously passed a resolution in support of building a high-speed passenger rail between Boston and Springfield. Enhancing the rail system would benefit both cities. It would help address Boston's housing shortage, tackle traffic congestion, and worker shortages, while helping the job market and growing the housing stock in Gateway cities. Further, taking cars off the road would lower carbon emissions.

### **The Commonwealth Awards Grants to Increase Active Transportation**

The [Massachusetts Safe Routes to School \(SRTS\) Program](#) awarded 14 municipalities with funding for infrastructure projects with a focus on increasing student safety and the





number of students walking and biking to school. Grant recipients included Agawam, Dracut, Fairhaven, Gardner, Grafton, Leominster, Longmeadow, Nantucket, North Adams and Medway. Projects will include creating some form of pedestrian or bicycle improvements such as sidewalk reconstruction, sidewalk infill, intersection and crossing improvements, ADA accessibility improvements, signage and striping, traffic calming, shared use paths, or bicycle accommodations.

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