



January 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

Municipal Officials from 22 Communities Participate in Climate Leadership Forum



The Massachusetts Sierra Club hosted its [fifth Climate Leadership Forum](#) in North Andover in collaboration with Clean Water Action and the Merrimack Valley Interfaith Group. Senator Bruce Tarr, Representative Tram Nguyen and Representative Christina Minicucci joined municipal officials from 22 communities including Wakefield, Gloucester, Melrose, Carlisle, Chelsea and Concord to discuss clean energy solutions and opportunities. It was truly inspirational to host such an engaged group of change-makers! Reach out to [Jacob Stern](#), Clean Energy Organizer for more information.

Watertown Passes Resolution for 100% Renewable Energy

Watertown recently joined [nine other Massachusetts communities](#) in passing a [100% renewable resolution](#). Their



commitment includes using 100% renewable energy for municipal electricity by 2035, and using 100% renewable energy for municipal heating and municipal transportation by 2050.

The town will also undertake a public process to develop and adopt a Climate and Energy Master Plan to help refine these renewable energy goals; and to develop additional goals and objectives for Watertown to meet, including Massachusetts' target reduction of greenhouse gas emissions of at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

This resolution follows on the back of a [zoning ordinance](#) that will require developers to install solar panels on new commercial buildings equal to or greater than 10,000 square feet, or that contain 10 or more residential units. Interested in helping lead your community to commit to 100% renewable energy? Learn how by joining [Sierra Club's Ready for 100 Campaign](#). To sign up for a 'New Community Orientation Webinar' every 4th Wednesday, [click here](#).

Baker Administration Approves Air Permits for Weymouth Compressor Station

The Baker administration approved air quality permits for a compressor station in Weymouth in a decision seen as dangerous and prioritizing fossil fuel interests. In a letter to the Governor, over 14 legislators including Mayor Robert Hedlund, Weymouth and Mayor Joseph Sullivan, Braintree urged the Governor to reject the air quality permit because the compressor station would add toxins to an already overburdened, industrialized area.

The health impact assessment found that the proposed station would produce air toxins such as benzene and formaldehyde that have been linked to respiratory, cardiovascular and neurological diseases. Expanding our fracked gas infrastructure locks us into decades of further emissions and is bad for public health and our environment. Last week over 100 people stood in solidarity with [FRRACS](#) activists and Weymouth residents protesting the Governor's decision. Visit [No Compressor](#) to learn more.

Clean Transportation

\$13 million in Grant Programs Available to Reduce Vehicle Air Pollution



Massachusetts announced two grant programs that will utilize \$12.5 million in funding through the Volkswagen Settlement and \$500,000 from other clean air funds to reduce vehicle emissions and promote electrification of the state's transportation system.

Under the \$7.5 million Open Solicitation Grant Program, applicants may apply for up to \$500,000 in competitive funding for [eligible projects](#) including transitioning from fossil fuel powered vehicles to electric vehicles. **Applications deadlines is March 18, 2019.** Read [how you can apply here](#).

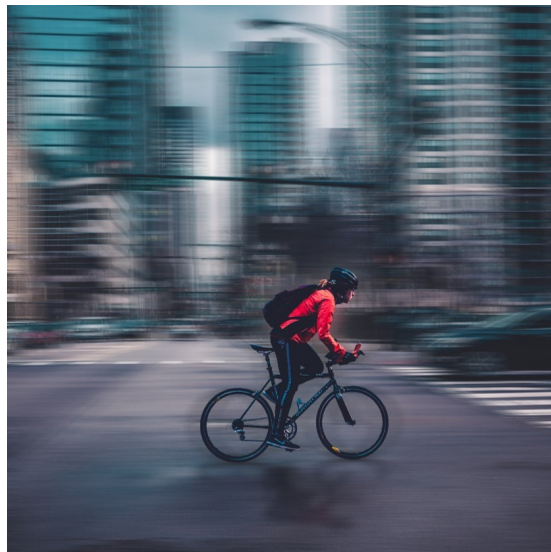
Under the \$5.5 million expanded MassEVIP programs, applicants can apply for funding of up to \$50,000 to install light-duty electric vehicle supply equipment for public fleets, workplaces, residents or the general public. Incentives for this program are available on a first-come, first served basis. For more information on the [MassEVIP application process click here](#).

The Commonwealth is taking a multi-phase approach to spending its share of \$75 million in Volkswagen Settlement Funds. [Read how Year 1 funds of \\$23.5 million will help us reduce emissions](#) from the transportation sector.

Massachusetts Draft Bicycle Plan Available for Comment

MassDOT is seeking public input on their [Draft Statewide Bicycle Plan](#) by **January 31st**. The goal of the plan is to increase the use of bicycles for short trips and create safer biking conditions to prevent injuries and accidents. The plan lays out six initiatives including building connected bike and trails networks, promoting biking safety and convenience, and road safety education programs for bikers.

Recognizing the important role that communities play to enhance bikeability, the [Municipal Resources Guide For Bikeability](#) offers cities and towns additional resources to support these efforts.



Commission on Future of Transportation Releases Recommendations and New Regional Policy to Reduce Transportation Emissions



The Governor's Commission on Future of Transportation recently released a [two-part report on transportation](#) needs and challenges facing the Commonwealth. The report highlights 18 recommendations on how to best prepare the transportation network for 2040.

Recommendations included prioritizing investment in public transit, providing better mobility options in rural communities, establishing a goal that all new cars, light duty trucks, and buses sold in Massachusetts will be electric by 2040, setting up a regional, market-based program to reduce transportation emissions and adopting dense, mixed use, and transit-oriented land use policies.

In a related development nine Northeast states and Washington D.C. announced a regional market-based policy to create a clean, equitable and efficient transportation system. This would mean taking steps to develop cleaner transportation systems that reduce congestion, promote walking, biking and transit use. [Read more here.](#)

Take Action

Vote to Boost the Efficiency of New Buildings in Massachusetts and Across the World



In 2019, we have a huge opportunity. Eligible municipal officials across the U.S. will vote on the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), the code for new buildings in the U.S and beyond. This code is the standard that can mandate that [new buildings be built with significantly higher energy efficiency](#) than those we live and work in today.

Buildings are responsible for over half of all energy consumption in Massachusetts and 46% of carbon pollution. To mitigate the worst impacts of climate change, it is vital that we significantly lower carbon emissions from our buildings sector over the next decade. With **YOUR** help, the next code would maximize building efficiency and safety, ensuring that every new building we build is better for the planet and our wallets.

Who can vote? Members of city councils or boards of selectmen, members of planning and building departments, city and town managers, sustainability directors and energy managers are all eligible to vote. Learn more about the process and timeline [here](#). Contact [Veena Dharmaraj](#) for additional information

Ask MBTA to Operate Zero Emission Electric Buses in Your Community



Through March 4, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) will host a series of regional open houses to share [47 proposals](#) to update and modernize [63 existing bus routes](#). Through this process MBTA is looking to consolidate duplicate routes, improve bus stop spacing and eliminate unnecessary route variations. In addition to providing feedback on routes, frequency and reliability of service, this is a great opportunity to tell MBTA to operate clean electric buses in your community. At a time when transit agencies across the country are accelerating investments in fleet electrification, MBTA has chosen instead to add [369 fracked natural gas and diesel buses](#) in the last couple of

years and will add another [194 hybrid buses](#) to its fleet. [Attend an open house](#) and ask MBTA to invest in a zero-emission electric bus fleet—that takes into account impact on climate, emission levels and public health—instead of continuing to procure polluting fossil fuel powered buses.

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