

Sample Language: Procurements for Low-Carbon Municipal Buildings

If your city or town has a commitment to carbon mitigation in municipal buildings, you may want to adjust your procurement language to communicate this priority to potential vendors. Your commitment might be a Low-Carbon Buildings Ordinance, a Net Zero or other Carbon Mitigation target, or a Green Communities designation with a 20% energy use reduction goal for municipal buildings. When structuring your procurement, consider which outcomes of a Net Zero or Low Carbon building are most important to your community. For example, you may choose to emphasize passive house standards or a well-insulated building envelope. A tight building envelope is particularly critical for a cooling center or other facility that needs to be resilient to extreme temperatures. If the building will consume a large amount of energy, such as a school building, a robust building envelope should be on your short list, but so too should energy conservation measures, such as highly efficient HVAC equipment and building controls that are easy to operate for the end user.

The low-carbon language can look a little different depending on the circumstance of the procurement. Are you looking to construct a new building? Replace equipment in an existing structure? Below is some sample language to get you started.

Considerations for a New Building or Major Renovation

To best represent your community's commitment to carbon mitigation, you will want to select vendors who:

- 1) are knowledgeable about and have experience designing and building to high performance building standards;
- 2) can supply an accurate estimate of the building's future energy use and effectively commission the building; and
- 3) will provide training to your facilities manager and other staff on utilizing the building to optimize its low-carbon performance and functionality.

It is generally helpful to have an owner's agent to provide guidance to the municipality on the review of bids for design, engineering, and construction vendors, and to ensure that the community's carbon mitigation priorities are upheld through contracting and design.

Sample Procurement Language:

To include in a solicitation for an Owner's Agent for a Low-Carbon Building:

The **Town/City of Municipality** seeks an Owner's Agent to represent the **Town/City** in procurement, selection of, and contracting with a **design, engineering, or construction** firm for the proposed **building name**. The preferred Owner's Agent would support implementation of the **Town's/City's commitment to energy and carbon savings in municipal building construction and major renovation**, and would be able to identify opportunities to increase the energy efficiency of the proposed design to meet these goals. Candidates certified in LEED standards, PHIUS, Living Buildings or comparable standards will be considered most favorably. Candidates for an Owner's Agent should demonstrate relevant experience in the design of net zero carbon and/or highly energy efficient construction in their bid.

To include in a Request For Proposal (RFP) for a Design, Engineering, or Construction Firm:

The Town/City of Municipality seeks an architecture or design firm to create a design for a building that meets the municipality's specifications and complies with the municipal ordinance or target. The design should prioritize the creation of an ultra-low carbon and cost-effective building envelope. The Town/City will judge proposed designs on their ability to meet the town's/city's energy and carbon reduction goals, reduce energy and maintenance costs, provide healthy and comfortable spaces, and improve the resiliency of the structure. Designs should minimize carbon-based energy use for the building, ideally avoiding onsite fossil fuel combustion, through cost-effective energy efficient design, building systems controls, and onsite renewable energy generation and energy or thermal storage. Preference will be given to designers certified in LEED standards, PHIUS, Living Buildings or comparable standards. Bidding designers should demonstrate relevant experience on zero carbon or high performance municipal or small commercial buildings in their response.

Considerations for Equipment or Installations within an Existing Building:

If you are seeking to procure individual technologies or building systems for existing buildings, you will want to reference your community's climate commitments and priorities. Including compliance with your ordinance or target in the selection process not only allows a City or Town to use their discretion during that selection, but also signals to vendors that they should reference and address the energy and carbon impacts of their bid.

We recommend that a city or town also ask a vendor to include an estimate of the energy savings that would be gained from the new equipment or building system in their bid, with the intent to minimize carbon-based energy use for the building and ideally avoid onsite fossil fuel combustion. As long as you establish the same assumptions among vendors, the energy savings can serve as an additional factor in the vendor selection process.

If you are looking to procure a large high-performance building system such as a solar thermal installation, a large solar photovoltaic system, an air-source heat pump, or an energy storage system, an owner's agent can help the municipality navigate the contracting, installation, and interconnection process, if applicable. An owner's agent is particularly useful if municipal staff lack familiarity with the technology, or if you anticipate navigating a third-party ownership model such as a power purchase agreement. The owner's agent can lend its expertise to help the municipality identify the main criteria to prioritize for a certain system. See above for sample solicitation language for an owner's agent. You might also consider conducting an initial procurement for feasibility studies and a second for the installation if there is a technology that is unfamiliar to you.

To include in RFP for a Developer or Installer:

The Town/City of Municipality seeks a developer/installer to design and install a system that meets the Town's/City's specifications and progresses the Town/City toward the ordinance or target. The design should prioritize energy and/or carbon emissions savings over the current or business-as-usual system. The Town/City will judge proposed designs and scopes of work on their ability to meet the Town's/City's energy and carbon reduction goals, reduce energy and maintenance costs, provide healthy and comfortable spaces, and improve the resiliency of the

structure. The **Town/City** aims to minimize carbon-based energy use for the building, ideally avoiding onsite fossil fuel combustion, through cost-effective energy efficient design, building systems controls, and onsite renewable energy generation and energy or thermal storage for each of its buildings, and bids will be assessed on how well they meet these goals. Preference will be given to developers certified in LEED standards, PHIUS, Living Buildings or comparable standards. Bidding developers should demonstrate relevant experience in zero carbon or high performance municipal or small commercial buildings in their response.