



MESM Academy

Green Communities 101

Sept 17, 2025





MASSACHUSETTS
**DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY RESOURCES**

Green Communities

**MassSave Municipal Energy Manager
Orientation**

September 2025





Agenda

A bit about DOER

A bit about Green Communities Division

How does a municipality become a Green Community?

Being a Green Community

Climate Leader Communities

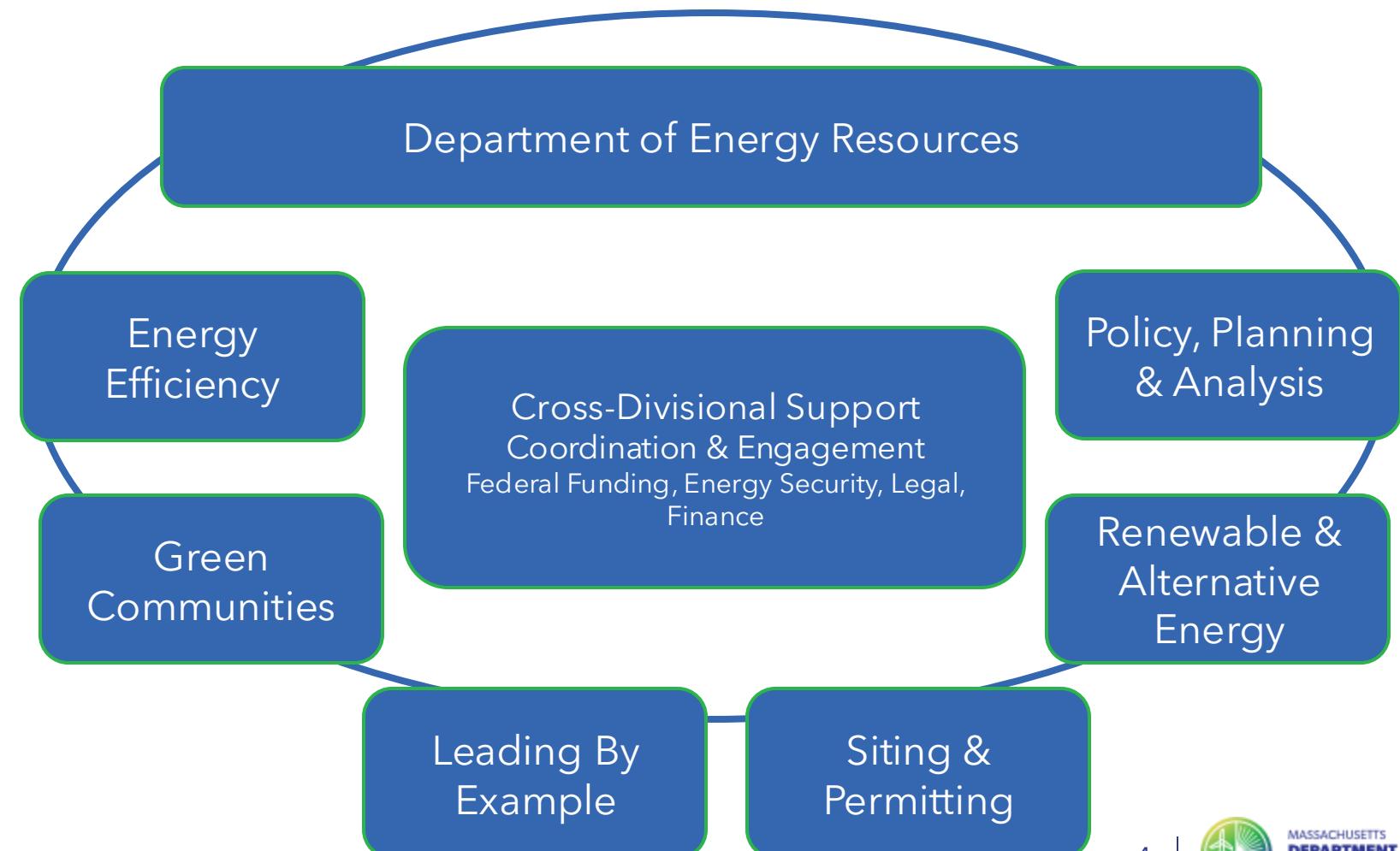
Important dates

About DOER

Mission: To create a clean, affordable, resilient, and equitable energy future for all in the Commonwealth.

Who We Are: As the State Energy Office, DOER is the primary energy policy agency for the Commonwealth.. DOER focuses on transitioning our energy supply to lower emissions and costs, reducing and shaping energy demand, and improving our energy system infrastructure.

We are an agency
of the **Executive Office of
Energy and Environmental
Affairs (EEA)**



Energy Efficiency

Goals for 2025

- Support Building Decarbonization in the Commonwealth
 - Collaborate with Mass Save program on customer enhancements
 - Ensure Lawrence, Andover and North Andover homes and businesses are served through Merrimack Valley Renewal Fund
 - Updated building codes, Commercial PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) guidelines, training and technical assistance
 - Continue Affordable Housing Decarbonization Grants
 - Secure and begin to use federal grant money
- Improve opportunities for public understanding and feedback on Energy Efficiency
- Launch Building Energy Reporting, which requires all owners of buildings over 20,000 square feet to report building energy use,



Energy Efficiency

2025 Key Projects

- Ongoing work with Mass Save Program Administrators on 2025-2027 Three-Year Plan
- Improve opportunities for public awareness of Energy Efficiency Division work
- Roll out Home Energy Rebate Program for municipal light plant customers, Home Electrification Appliance Rebate Program through Mass Save program

Proposed Designated Equity Communities



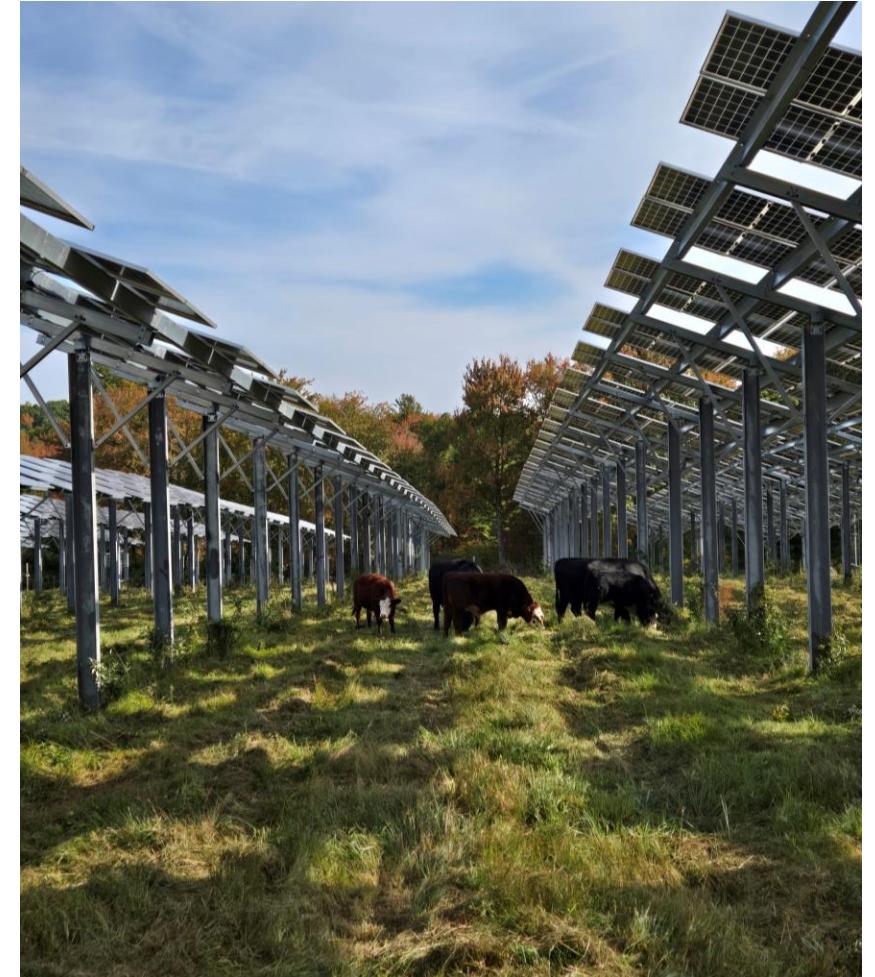
Chelsea
Lawrence
Boston
Fall River
Everett
New Bedford
Malden
Lowell
Quincy
Worcester
Springfield
Lynn
Revere
Salem
Framingham
Fitchburg
Brockton
Woburn
Pittsfield
Oak Bluffs
Tisbury



Renewable & Alternative Energy

Goals for 2025

- Roll out programs and funding to support renewables across the Commonwealth
- Modernize program metrics and data reporting
- Improve existing solar consumer protection and education
- Support a balanced approach to deploying clean energy infrastructure and protecting high value natural lands
- Support renewables readiness across the Commonwealth policies
 - Interconnection
 - Grid Planning
 - Rate Making



Renewable & Alternative Energy

2025 Key Projects

- **Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) Program:** issue draft regulations, engage stakeholders on next program iteration
- **Solar for All:** programs will open, including the first offering for single family homes
- **Low-Income Services Solar Program (LISSP):** accept applications for technical support and funding
- **Energy Storage Grant Program:** coordinate with stakeholders, develop and launch \$50M program
- **Energy Storage (83E):** in coordination with DOER, EDCs will procure energy storage

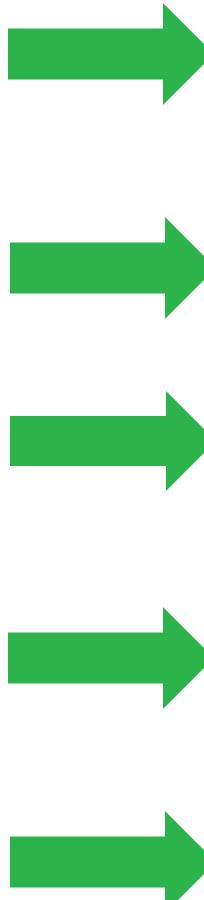


Green Communities Division

The energy hub for **all** Massachusetts cities and towns,
not just designated Green Communities.



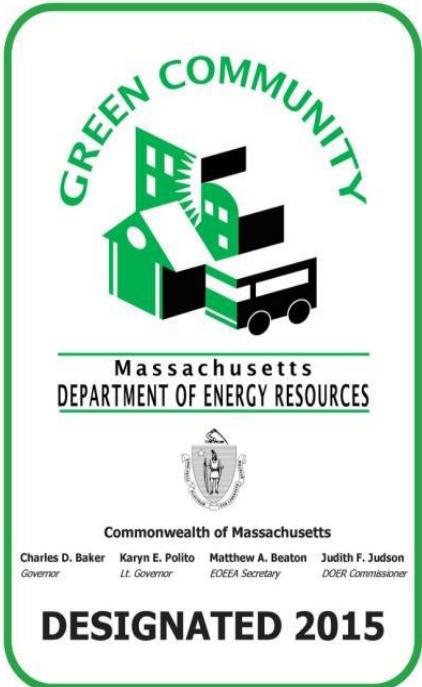
Clean Energy Resources for Municipalities



- Green Communities Designation and Grant Program
- Grants for water/wastewater sector
- Supports deployment of renewables -
 - Buildings and fleets
- Clean Energy Corps
- Solar Toolkit
- Utility incentives for ghg reduction

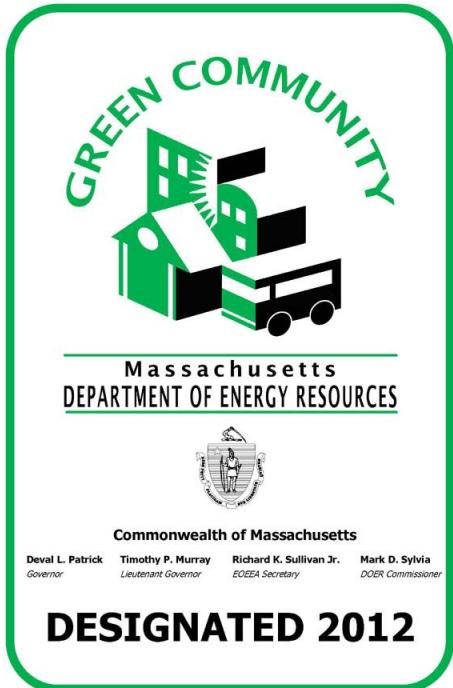
Green Communities Designation & Grant Program

Qualification Criteria - Designation



1. Adopt as-of-right siting for RE/AE generation, R&D, or manufacturing -
2. Adopt expedited permitting process
3. Create an Energy Reduction Plan to reduce energy use by 20% in 5 years
4. Adopt Fuel Efficient Vehicle Purchase Policy
5. Minimize life cycle cost in new construction → adopt the Stretch Code

Green Communities Criteria



Qualification Criteria

- 1. As-of-Right Siting for RE/AE**
2. Expedited Permitting
3. Energy Reduction Plan
4. Fuel-Efficient Vehicles
5. Minimize Life Cycle Costs

Green Communities Act, M.G.L. Ch. 25A §10

Criterion 1 - As-Of-Right Siting

For at least one of the following:

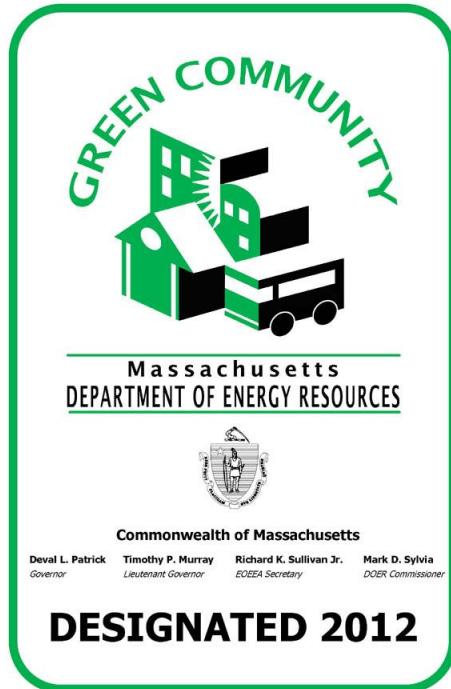
- ✓ Renewable or Alternative Energy Generating Facilities or;
- ✓ Renewable or Alternative Energy Research and Development (R&D) Facilities or;
- ✓ Renewable or Alternative Energy Manufacturing Facilities in designated locations

Criterion 1 - As-Of-Right Siting / Generation

- ✓ **On-Shore Wind - A minimum of a 600 kW turbine**
- ✓ **Solar Photovoltaic - A single ground-mounted system of a minimum of 250 kW**



Green Communities Criterion



Qualification Criteria

1. As-of-Right Siting for RE/AE
2. **Expedited Permitting**
3. Energy Reduction Plan
4. Fuel-Efficient Vehicles
5. Minimize Life Cycle Costs

Green Communities Act, M.G.L. Ch. 25A §10

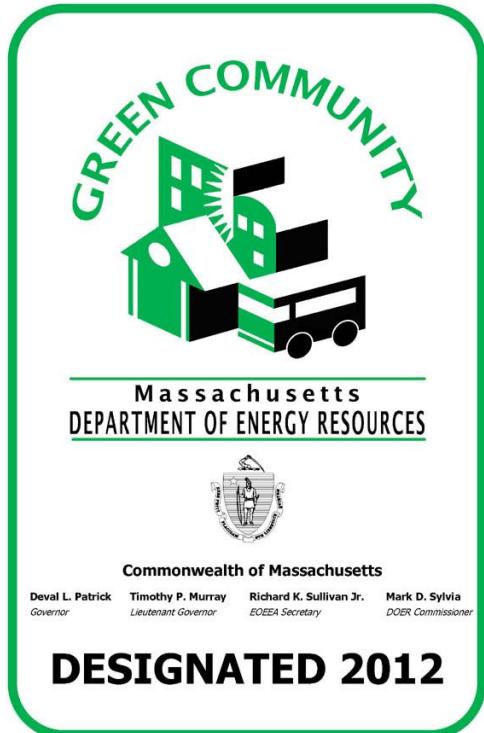
Criterion 2 - Expedited Permitting

12 months: date of initial application to date of final decision



- ✓ Applies only to the proposed facilities subject to the as-of-right siting provision
- ✓ Can apply the MGL c 43D permitting process to these zoning districts

Criterion 3 - Energy Reduction Plan



Qualification Criteria

1. As-of-Right Siting for RE/AE
2. Expedited Permitting
- 3. Energy Reduction Plan**
4. Fuel-Efficient Vehicles
5. Minimize Life Cycle Costs of new construction

Green Communities Act, M.G.L. Ch. 25A §10

Criterion 3

Energy Baseline & 20% Energy Reduction Plan

Calculate an energy use baseline inventory that includes:

- Municipal buildings, including schools
- Vehicles
- Street and traffic lighting (if municipally-owned)



MassEnergyInsight

• • • • • POWERING EFFICIENCY

- FREE online tool for MA cities, towns, RSD & WTP



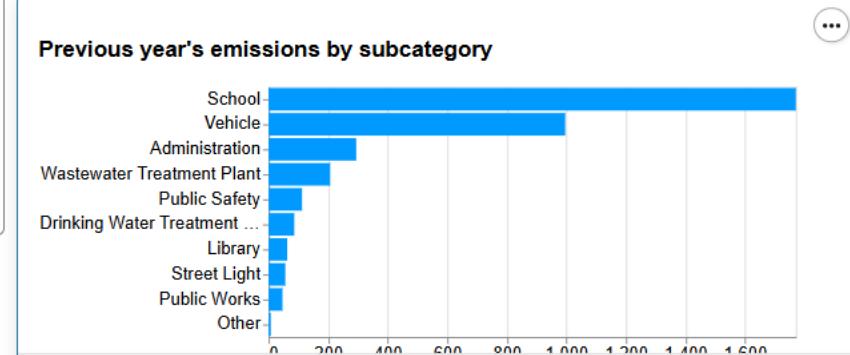
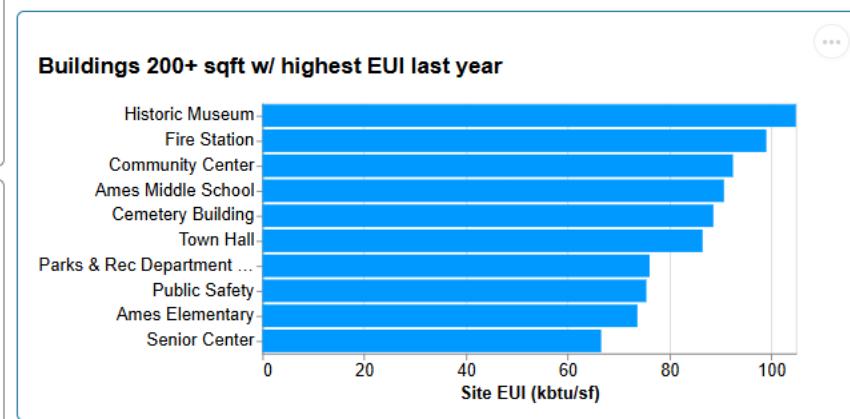
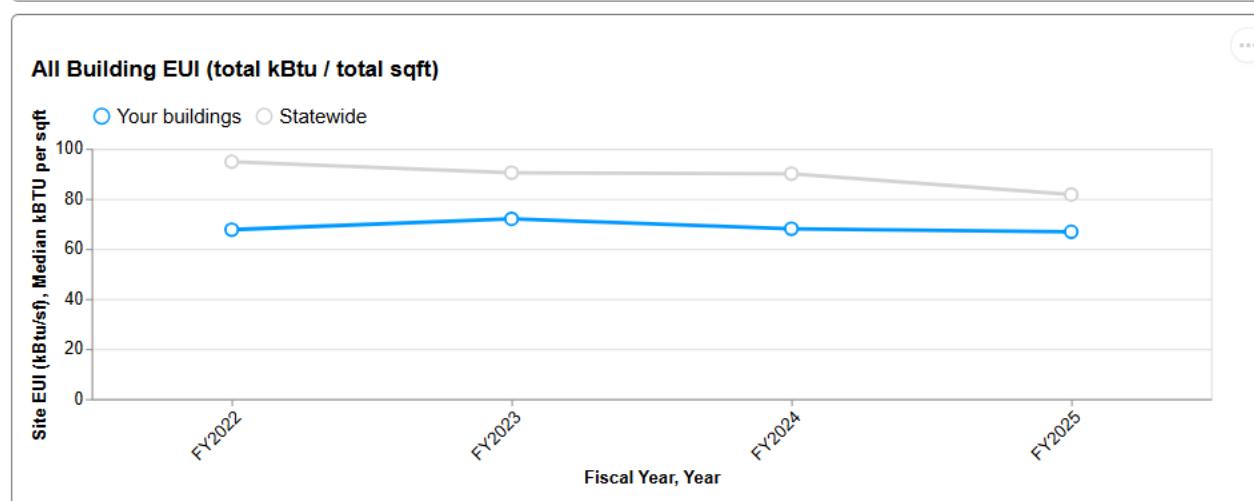
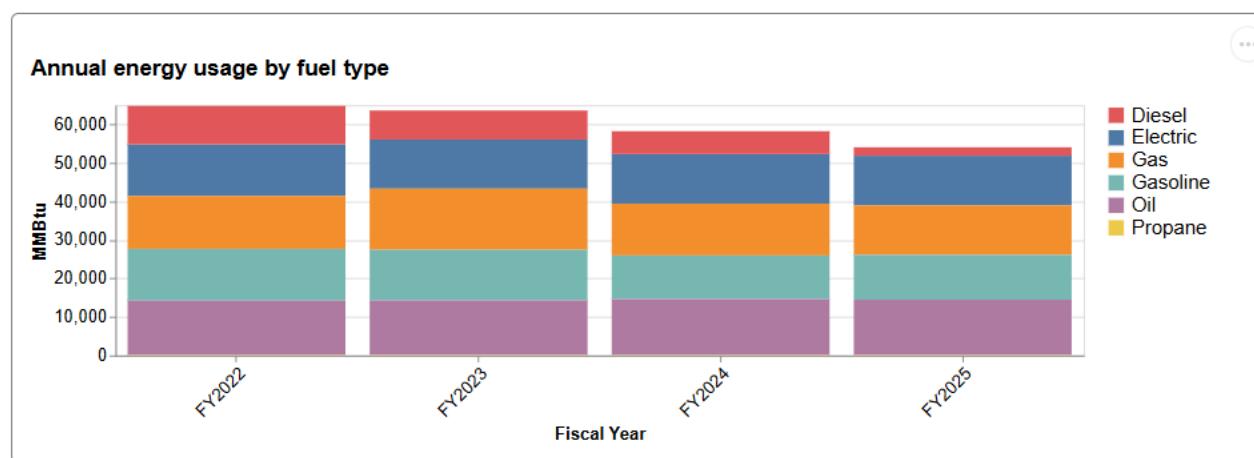
- **Benchmark:** track energy use by town, department or
- **Identify:** least efficient buildings for efficiency action
- **Measure and verify:** energy use trends by building over time

Helping Massachusetts Municipalities Create A Cleaner Energy Future

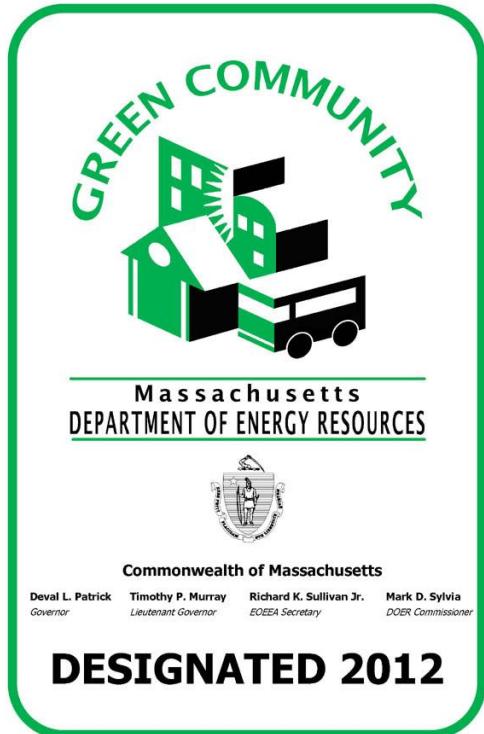
Ames Energy Overview

[Overview](#) [Buildings to Target](#) [Facility Dashboard](#) [Organization View Table](#) [Category View Table](#) [Data Loaded Table](#) [Legacy Reports](#) [Other Reports](#)

Overview



Criterion 4 - Fuel-Efficient Vehicles



Qualification Criteria

1. As-of-Right Siting for RE/AE
2. Expedited Permitting
3. Energy Reduction Plan
4. **Fuel-Efficient Vehicles**
5. Minimize Life Cycle Costs of new construction

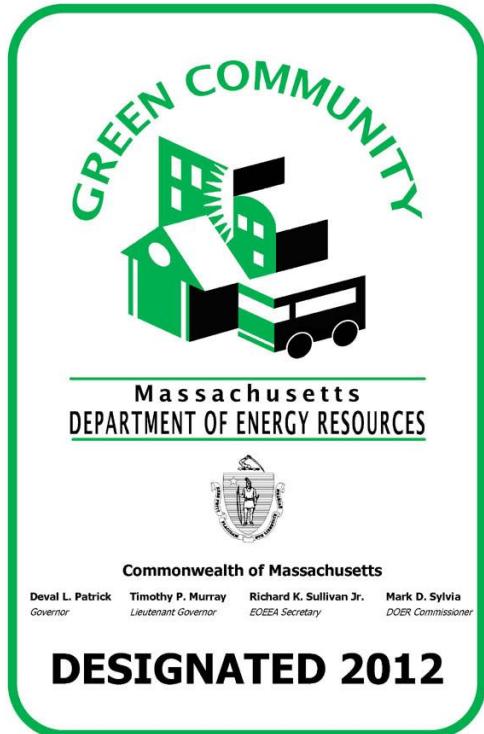
Green Communities Act, M.G.L. Ch. 25A §10

Criterion 4

Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Policy

1. Purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles for municipal use whenever such vehicles are commercially available and practicable
2. Police cruisers are exempt until commercially available
3. Heavy-duty vehicles > 8,500 pounds are exempt

Criterion 5 - Stretch Energy Code



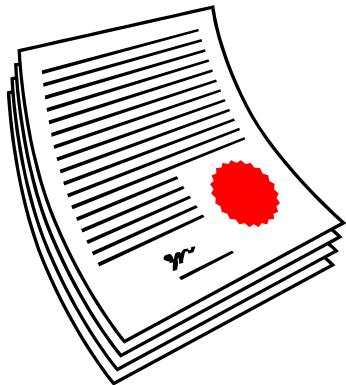
Qualification Criteria

1. As-of-Right Siting for RE/AE
2. Expedited Permitting
3. Energy Reduction Plan
4. Fuel-Efficient Vehicles
5. **Minimize Life Cycle Costs of new construction**

Green Communities Act, M.G.L. Ch. 25A §10

Criterion 5 - Minimize Life Cycle Costs

Documentation for Criterion #5



Stretch Energy Code

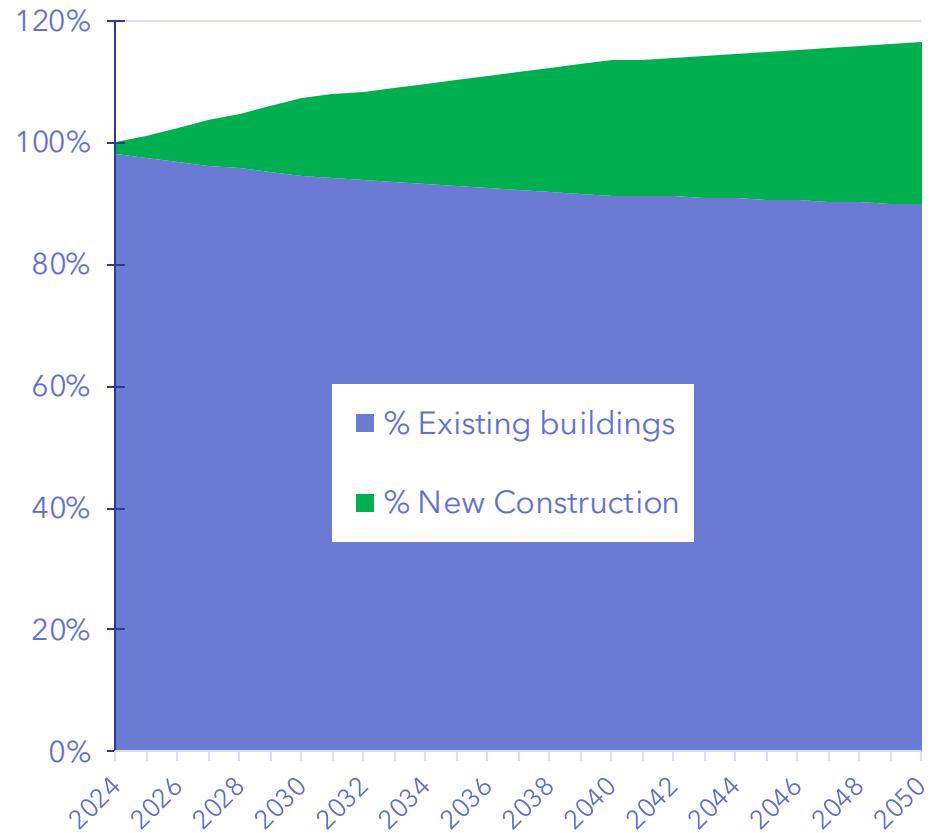
- Documentation of the city council or town meeting vote adopting 225 CMR 22.00 and 23.00

Building Energy Code's role in reducing emissions

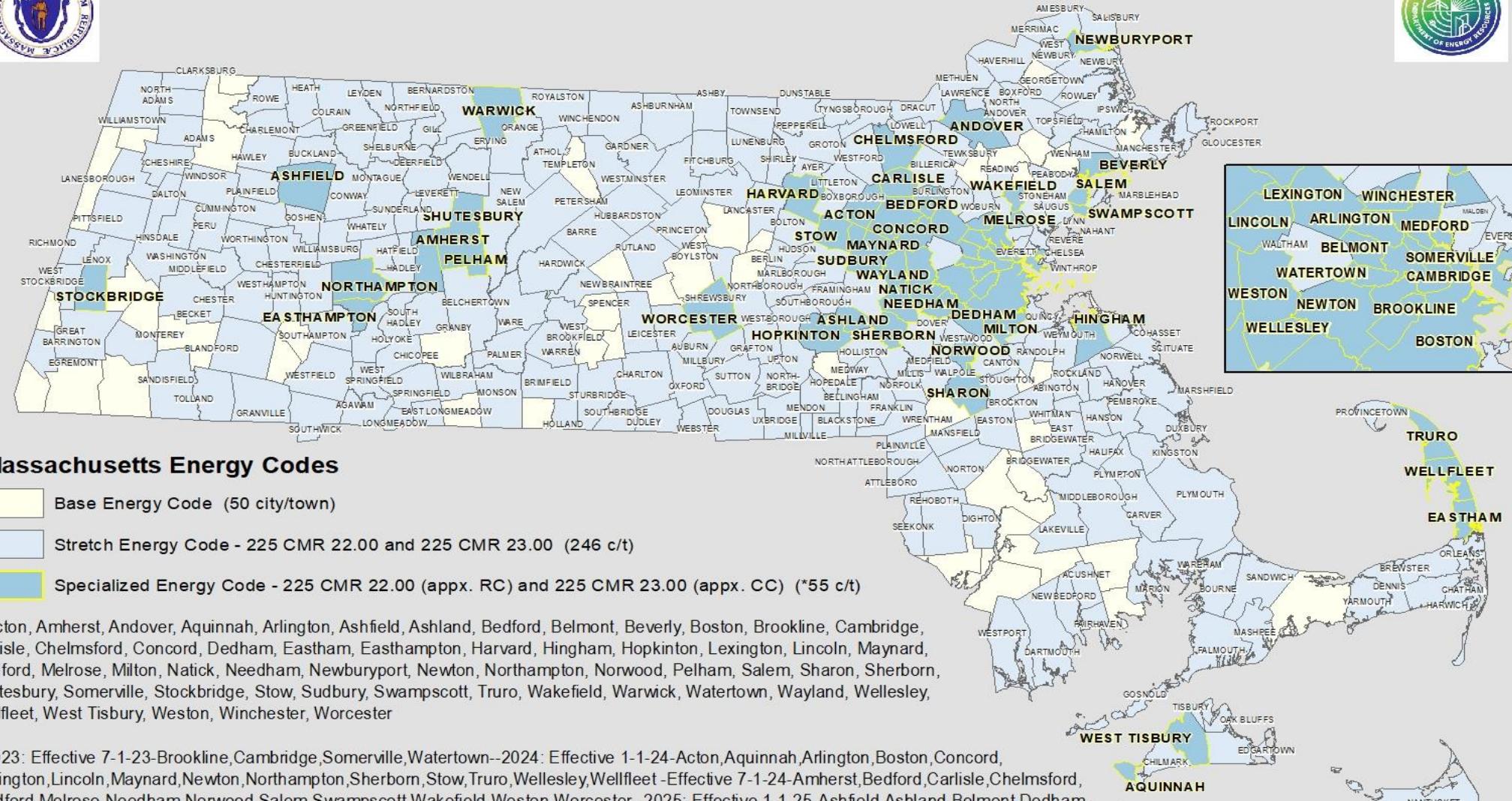
- Building code is the primary policy impacting new buildings.
- New buildings (built after 2023) ~27% of all building space by 2050
- New buildings are easiest and cheapest to make 2050-compliant
- New construction market helps drive cost reductions in building retrofits

2030: Massachusetts legal limit is at least 50% reduction in GHG from 1990

**New Construction % of MA total
2024-2050**



Massachusetts Building Energy Code Adoption by Municipality



Funding for Clean Energy Projects



GREEN COMMUNITY DESIGNATIONS REACH 297

MA Green Communities	Designation Date / Award Date	Designation / Competitive Grant Award	Grant Project Summary	100% Done	Population
Acushnet	Dec-13	\$154,225	to fund energy conservation measures in school and several municipal buildings	X	10,585
	Jul-15	\$206,014	to fund energy conservation, HVAC, lighting and controls, misers, weatherization, DCV, in municipal facilities including Town Hall, Parting Ways, Emergency Medical Services, Ford Middle and Elementary Schools, Council on Aging, and DPW garages	X	
	Jul-17	\$131,003	to fund energy conservation measures, weatherization, lighting, HVAC fuel conversion, and LED streetlights, in municipal facilities including Town Hall, EMA Building, Fire Station #1 & #2, and Golf Course Maintenance Building	X	
	Jul-18	\$132,287	to fund energy measures, insulation, lighting, and streetlights, in Parting Ways, Police Station, and Council on Aging	X	
	Aug-19	\$171,494	to fund energy conservation, LED lighting / controls, in municipal facilities including Elementary and Ford Middle Schools	X	
	Aug-20	\$153,358	to fund energy conservation , LED lighting / controls, in municipal facilities including Elementary and Ford Middle Schools	X	
	Jul-22	\$74,850	to fund energy conservation measures, pipe insulation, weather-stripping, air sealing, LED lighting, and administrative assistance, in municipal facilities including Highway, Ford Middle School, and town vehicle fleet	X	
	Mar-25	\$500,000	to fund energy conservation measures, VRF heat pumps - decarbonization project, in municipal facility, Elementary School		
Adams	Dec-15	\$166,865	to fund an HVAC Engineering Study for Memorial School/Community Center, ASHRAE Level II energy audits for Town Hall, Police Station, and Library, and LED streetlight and exterior lighting conversion for downtown and other areas	X	8,047
	Aug-19	\$15,000	to fund energy conservation measures, weatherization, in municipal facilities including Town Hall	X	
	Jan-22	\$140,486	to fund energy conservation measures, LED lighting, weatherization and administrative assistance, in municipal facilities including Dept of Public Works, Wastewater Treatment Plant, and Town Hall	X	
Agawam	Feb-17	\$207,970	to fund energy conservation measures, LED lighting, HVAC upgrades, refrigeration, energy management system, and variable frequency drives, in municipal facilities including James Clark School and Roberta Doering Middle Schools	X	28,393
	Aug-19	\$201,133	to fund energy conservation measures, EMS and air handling unit controls, and lighting, in municipal facilities including Granger Elementary School, Library, and DPW	X	
	Aug-20	\$177,396	to fund energy conservation measures, LED lighting, EC motors, evaporator fan controls, cooler miser, and VFDs, in municipal facilities including High and Junior High Schools	X	
Amesbury	Dec-13	\$173,775	to fund a HVAC assessment at the Middle School, purchase of two BigBelly compactors, purchase of an electric vehicle and charging station at the Water Department, services, and the following energy conservation measures: an LED retrofit of period streetlights in the downtown; and exterior lighting upgrades at the Cashman, Middle, and High Schools.	X	17,179
	Jul-15	\$225,865	to fund the following energy conservation measures at the Amesbury Middle School: installation of a new energy management system, destratification fans in the gym, and vending misers, and repair of heating system steam traps	X	
	Jul-17	\$250,000	to fund energy conservation measures in municipal facilities including Amesbury High School, Middle School, and Cashman Elementary School. The energy conservation measures funded by this grant are: weatherization, HVAC controls upgrades, transformer upgrades, and installation of variable frequency drive pumps	X	
	Jul-18	\$250,000	to fund energy conservation measures, LED streetlight conversion , in municipal facilities including streetlights	X	
	Aug-20	\$84,131	to fund energy conservation measures, fan motor VFDs, demand control ventilation, and DDC upgrade on rooftop air handlers, in municipal facilities including Middle, High, and Cashman Schools	X	
	Sep-23	\$135,577	to fund energy conservation measures, LED lighting, weatherization and insulation, and administrative assistance, in municipal facilities including Middle and High Schools	X	
Amherst	Jul-12	\$302,000	to fund the conversion of the town's streetlights from high pressure sodium to LED technology.	X	40,059
	Jul-14	\$102,541	to fund energy conservation measures in Town Hall and the North Fire Station	X	
	Jul-16	\$175,971	to fund energy conservation measures, electric vehicle purchase and EV charging station, AHU controls and elevator vents, boiler replacement, propane furnace, LED lighting and controls, in municipal facilities including Town Hall, Police Station, Conservation Field Office, Cherry Hill Golf buildings and town vehicle fleet	X	
	Aug-20	\$125,449	to fund energy conservation measures, LED lighting and idle reduction technology for vehicles, in municipal facilities including Munson Library, Police, Town Hall, and town vehicle infrastructure	X	

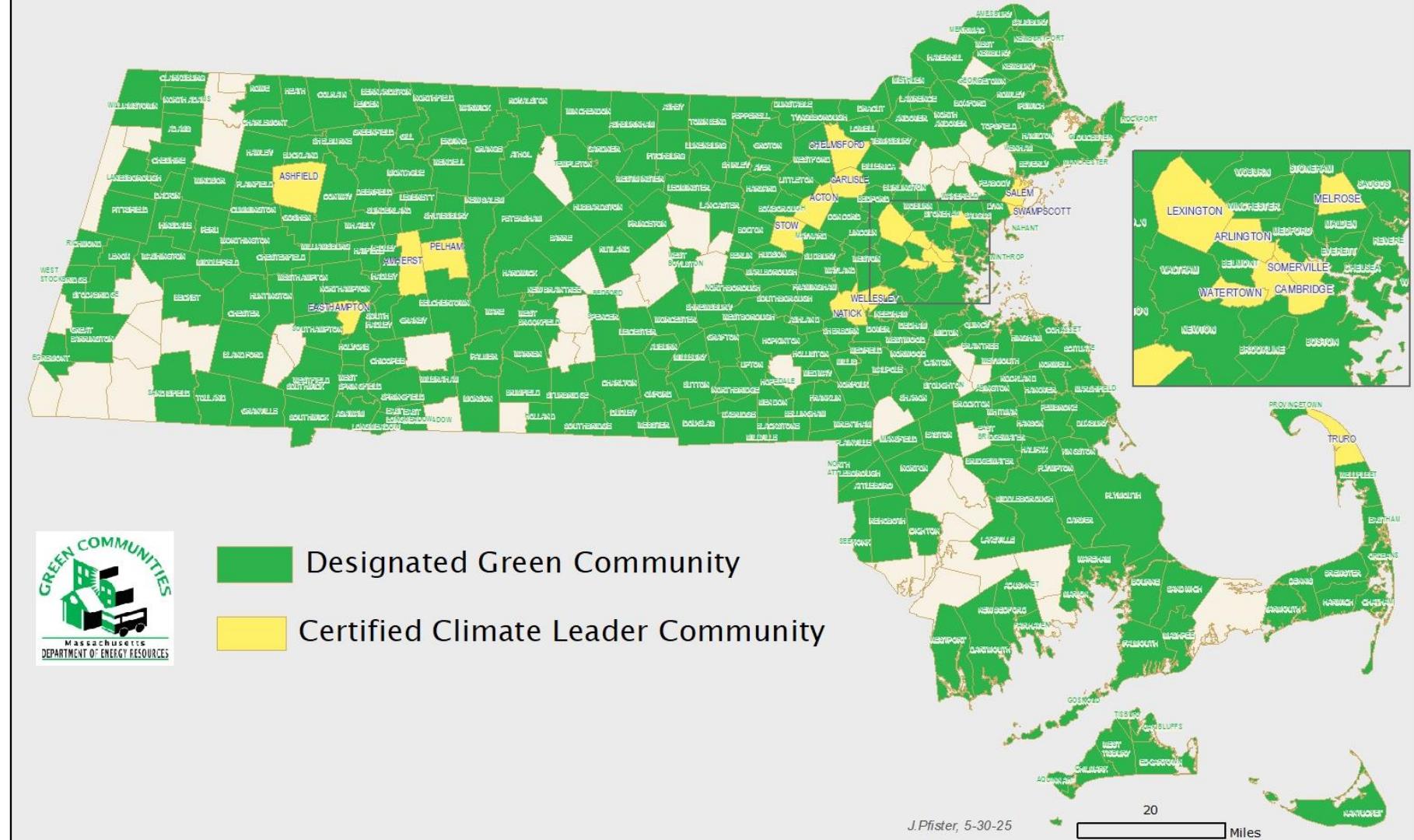
Green Communities Progress

- **298 of 351**
Cities/Towns are
Green Communities
- **19** Climate Leader
Communities
- **91%** of the
population lives in a
Green Community
- **\$198M+** grants
awarded since 2010
- **\$47M+** Leveraged in
MassSave Incentives
- **\$29M+** Annual
Energy Cost Savings
- **63K+** tons GHG
reduced
- **65** Cities/Towns met
20% energy
reduction goal



Designated Green Community

Certified Climate Leader Community





Being a Green Community

Stuff to know

Annual Reports

Working with your Regional Coordinator

Competitive Grants

Climate Leader Communities

Sign-up to Receive E-Blasts

Green Communities Updates | Mass.gov

Green Communities Updates

To sign up to receive Green Communities emails – newsletters and occasional updates – please fill in the following fields and hit submit.

To sign up to receive our email updates and newsletters about clean energy activities throughout Massachusetts, fill in the following fields and hit submit. Thanks, and welcome!

Name (Required)

First Last

Email (Required)

City or town (Required)

Organization name

Preferred format (Required)

Specific interests (Required)

- Building Energy Reporting
- Clean Energy Transmission Working Group
- Clean Cities Stakeholders
- Clean Peak Energy Standard
- DOER Appliance Standards
- DOER Interest
- Energy Storage
- GMAC
- Green Communities
- Inflation Reduction Act Home Energy and Electrification Program
- Interagency Rates Working Group
- RCS Stakeholders
- Renewable Thermal
- RET Stakeholders
- RPS Stakeholder Contact List
- SMART Program
- Solar For All
- Solar PV Contact list include SREC contacts
- Stretch Code

SUBMIT

MassEnergyInsight

- Get authorization
- View "Getting Started" video

Getting Started



Getting Started Video - updates have been made to MEI since this video was created, but it still provides helpful introductory information (15:48)

 **Complete**

Annual Report - FY2025 - Ames

Locked for review. [Annual Report Summary](#) submitted by **Kira Moodiar** at 8/8/2025 1:52:09PM

Instructions

How to use this web form

-  Site Review
-  Regulations
-  Permitting
-  Building Stock
-  Regional School
-  ECMs
-  Renewable Energy
-  Energy Summary
-  Energy Narrative
-  Vehicle Stock
-  Vehicle Transfers
-  Stretch Code
-  Other Notes
-  Submit Report

This process replaces the Excel workbook that was used in previous years. Most data will be captured from MEI and, if complete, will only require confirmation that it is correct. Energy accounts should be complete. For other tables that have not been updated throughout the year, this process can be done as you move through the report.

You may proceed to the next section by selecting **Save And Continue**, but are also able to navigate using the tabs at the left if a section needs to be re-visited.

A green  indicates that a section is complete, a red  indicates that more input is needed.

Proceed to the next step

Continue

✓ Complete

Instructions

✓ Site Review

✓ Regulations

✓ Permitting

Building Stock

Regional School

ECMs

✓ Renewable Energy

✓ Energy Summary

✓ Energy Narrative

Vehicle Stock

Vehicle Transfers

✓ Stretch Code

Other Notes

Submit Report

Annual Report - FY2025 - Ames

Locked for review. [Annual Report Summary](#) submitted by Kira Moodiar at 8/8/2025 1:52:09PM

AR Review Progress and Discussion

Status:

No discussion yet

CRITERION 3: Energy Summary (MMBtus)

Non-Weather Normalized

Category	Baseline (FY2021)	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Building	36,857	38,031	35,945	35,291
Street/Traffic Lights	1,708	738	749	806
Vehicle	18,535	20,681	17,288	13,830
Water/Sewer	3,901	4,195	4,274	4,156
Adjustments				
Building Stock Changes	0	0	0	0
Regional School Districts				
Totals	61,001	63,645	58,257	54,084
% Diff from Baseline	4.3%	-4.5%	-11.3%	

Weather Normalized

Category	Baseline (FY2021)	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Building	38,961	40,107	37,050	35,287
Street/Traffic Lights	1,708	738	749	806
Vehicle	18,535	20,681	17,288	13,830
Water/Sewer	3,901	4,195	4,274	4,156

Annual Report Deadline: November 7

MEI Office Hours for Annual Reports:

- Thursday, September 18 at 10am
- Tuesday, October 7 at 11am
- Friday, October 31 at 10am
- Wednesday, November 5 at 10am

Green Communities Regional Coordinators

Regional Coordinators act as direct liaisons with cities and towns

Western:
Chris Mason
Christopher.Mason2@mass.gov
857-753-2159 - cell



Central:
Kelly Brown
Kelly.Brown@mass.gov
617-780-8144 - cell

Northeast:
Dillan Patel
Dillan.Patel@mass.gov
857-283-1264 - cell

Southeast:
Lisa Sullivan
Lisa.M.Sullivan@mass.gov
617-312-4018 - cell

Regional Coordinators Can Help With:



MassEnergyInsight
Authorizations



Set up
Stretch/Specialized
Code Public Info
Sessions



Organize grant kick-off meetings with utility reps and vendors



Direct other clean energy-related questions to DOER staff



Explain Green Communities and Climate Leader requirements



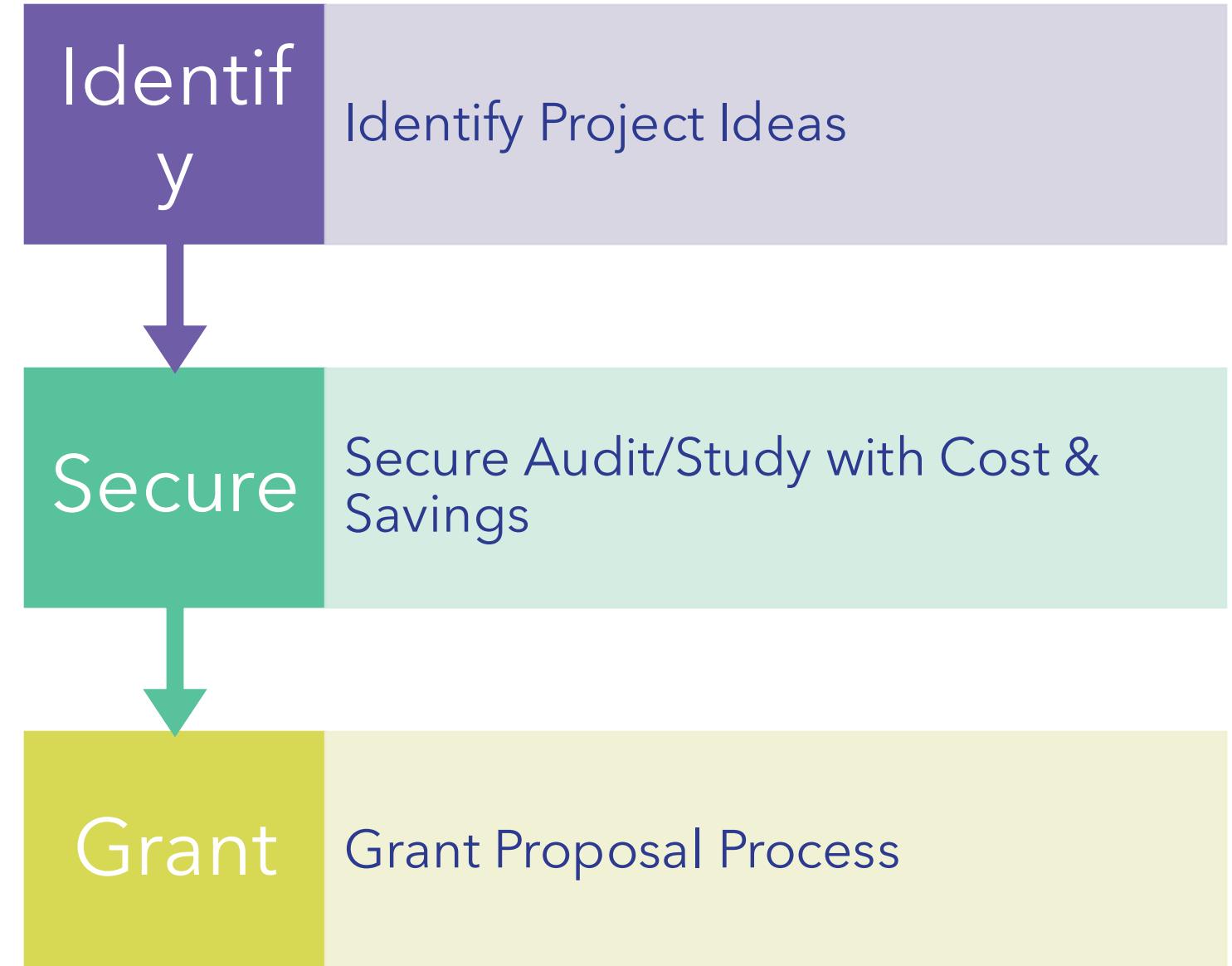
Share other clean energy opportunities

Green Communities Competitive Grants

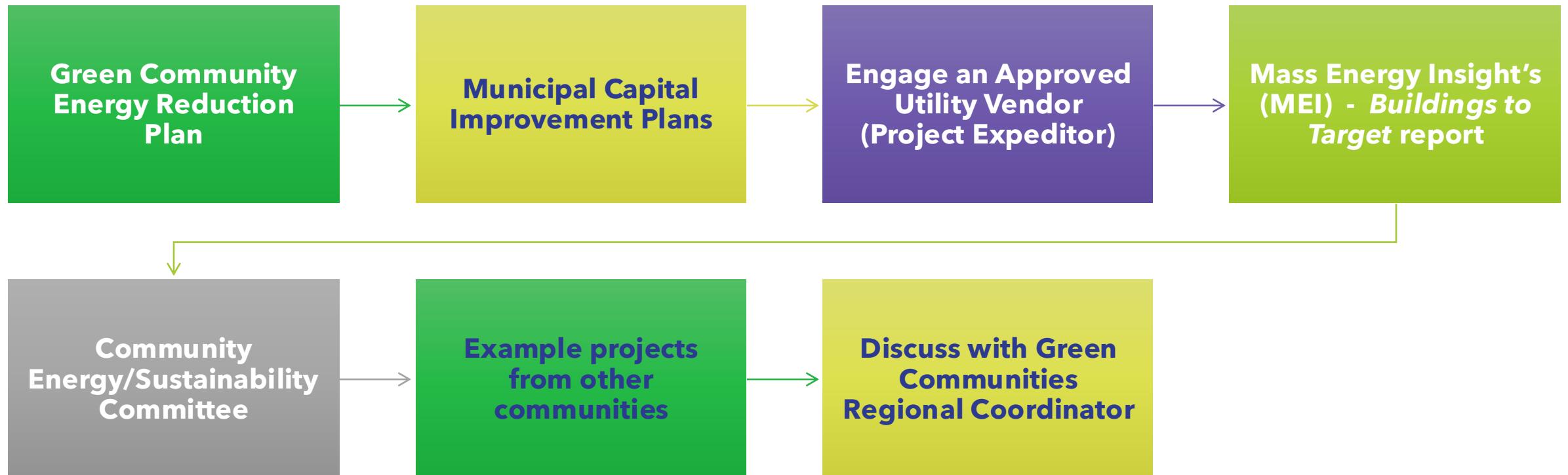
Available to Eligible Green Communities

- **Grant Awards** up to \$250k
- **Limits** for communities who have received over 1 million dollars in competitive awards
- **Decarbonization projects** = support for larger, more complicated projects (\$500k max) Community Contribution required
- **Prescriptive projects** = streamlined application requirements and evaluation including EV vehicle bridge funding & level 2 charging stations for example.
- **Traditional Energy Efficiency Projects** = building envelope improvements, controls, retro-commissioning, Heat Pumps
- DOER **no longer supports** new fossil fuel-fired heating

Applying for a Competitiv e Grant



Identify Project Ideas

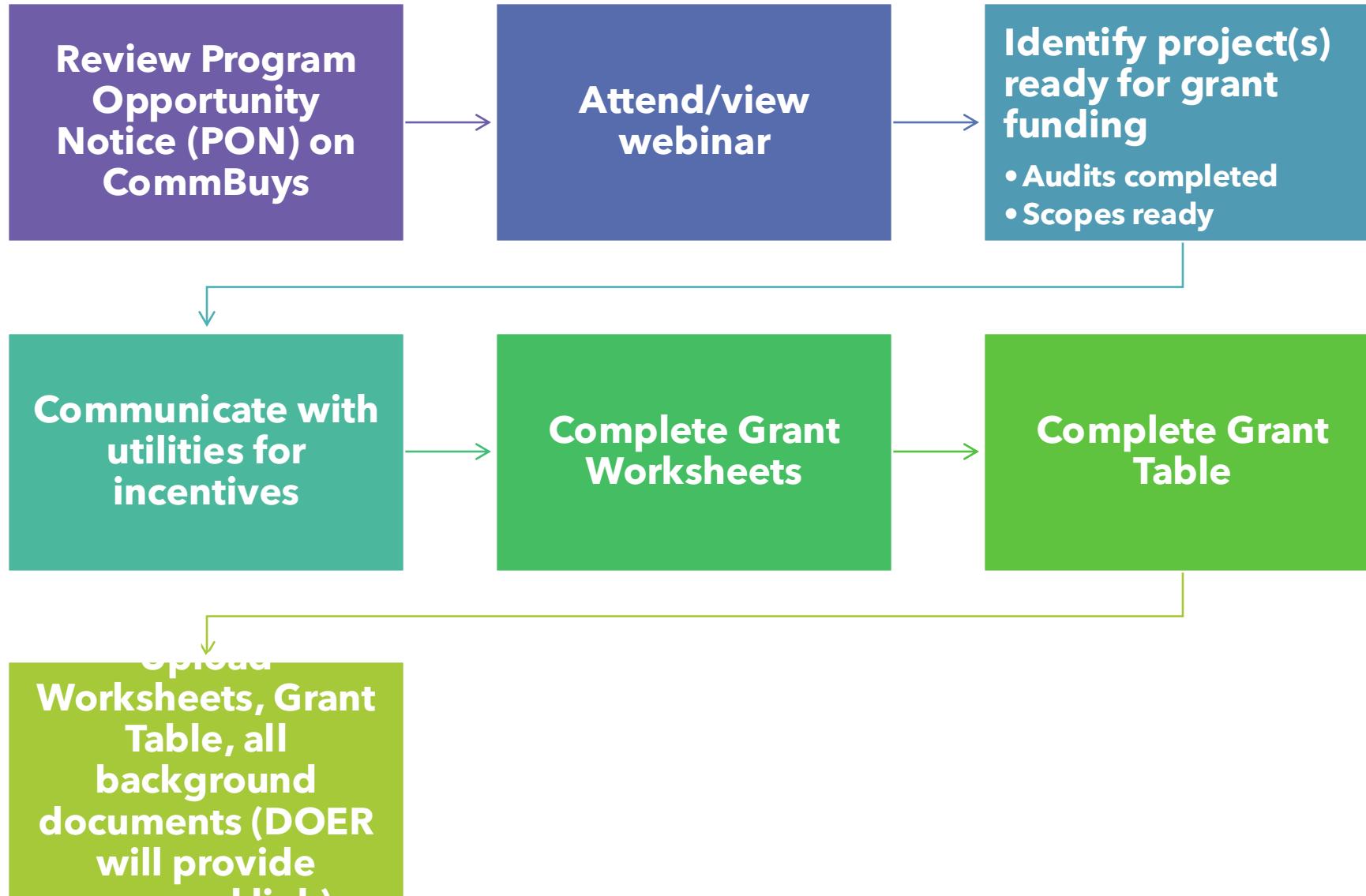


Secure Study with Cost & Savings

- ✓ Engage an Approved Utility Vendor [M.G.L. 25A, Sec 14]
 - . Project Expeditor (N'Grid)
 - . Municipal Vendor (Eversource)
- ✓ State contract PRF 74: Energy, Climate Action, and Facility Advisory Services
- ✓ M.G.L. c. 30B – Procurement of Supplies and Services



Grant Proposal Process



Climate Leader Communities-Green Communities 2.0



Builds on success for Green Communities program



Aligns resources for municipalities with EEA energy and climate goals



Enhances engagement and forward progress with municipalities



Encourages adoption of climate/clean energy policies and programs



Expands opportunities for community engagement

Program Evolution: From Green Community to Climate Leader

Green Communities Criteria	Climate Leaders Criteria
Adopt as-of-right siting for RE/AE generation, R&D, or manufacturing	Establish/maintain local committee to advise, coordinate, and/or lead clean energy and climate activities
Adopt expedited permitting process	Municipal decarbonization commitment
Create an Energy Reduction Plan to reduce energy use by 20% in 5 years	Create Municipal Decarbonization Roadmap with 2030 & 2050 goals
Purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles	ZEV-First vehicle policy
Minimize life cycle cost in new construction – a.k.a adopt the Stretch Code	Specialized Stretch Code Adoption

Climate Leaders Accelerator Grants Up To \$1 Million

Available to Certified Climate Leader Communities



Municipal building
electrification/decarbonization



Support for on-site solar PV + storage



Support for geothermal for existing
buildings and new construction

Pre-construction

- Feasibility studies
- Pre-electrification work
- Test wells
- Procurement documents

Equipment and installation

- Buy down the cost of direct ownership or PPA

Quick Win

- Solar on newly constructed all-electric schools

2025-2026 Calendar *(subject to change)*

Opportunity	2025	2026
Green Communities Competitive Grant	Oct. 22	April 10
Regional School District Decarbonization Grant	Sept 5	March 6
Municipal Decarbonization Roadmap Assistance	Nov. 28	March 27
Green Communities Summit	Nov. 18	Fall - TBD
Climate Leader Communities Technical Support	Nov. 28	May 29
Designation Deadlines (Green Communities & Climate Leader Communities)	Dec. 31	June 30
Climate Leader Communities Decarbonization Accelerator	Aug. 1	Feb. 6
Annual Reports Due	Nov. 7	N/A

Green Communities Contacts

Regional Coordinators act as direct liaisons with cities and towns on energy activities

Northeastern MA:

Dillan Patel

Dillan.Patel@mass.gov

857-283-1264 - cell



Western MA:

Chris Mason

Christopher.Mason2@mass.gov

857-753-2159 - cell



Central MA:

Kelly Brown

Kelly.Brown@mass.gov

617-780-8144 - cell



Southeastern MA:

Lisa Sullivan

Lisa.M.Sullivan@mass.gov

617-312-4018 - cell

Sign up to receive our E-Blasts

Joanne Bissetta, Director - Joanne.Bissetta@mass.gov

Mark Rabinsky, Deputy Director -

Mark.Rabinsky@mass.gov



MASSACHUSETTS
**DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY RESOURCES**

Thank You!