



# Green Communities Grant Program

Town of Lincoln  
March 8, 2010

# Introduction: Green Communities Program

Serving as the hub to all Massachusetts cities and towns on all matters related to energy



# Green Communities Grant Program

- Must meet all 5 qualification criteria
- Provides annual grants and loans to *qualifying* communities
  - Funds allocated for Green Communities from RGGI auctions – *roughly \$7 million for FY 2010*
  - Communities must meet all 5 criteria in order to be eligible to receive a grant
- FY 2010, 1<sup>st</sup> round: Up to \$1 million per community
  - Can apply for various projects
  - Used to fund all or a portion of the costs of *studying, designing, constructing and implementing* energy efficiency activities, including but not limited to:
    - Energy conservation measures and projects
    - Procurement of energy management services (ESCO)
    - Installation of energy management systems
    - Adoption of demand side reduction initiatives
    - Adoption of energy efficiency policies. Financing the siting and construction of renewable and alternative energy projects on municipally-owned land

## Overview of the Criteria

1. Adopt as-of-right siting, in designated locations, for RE/AE generation, or RE/AE R&D or manufacturing
2. Adopt expedited (12 month) application/permitting process and enforcement mechanism
3. Establish an energy use baseline inventory with a plan to reduce baseline by 20% in 5 years
4. Adopt fuel-efficient vehicle policy
5. Passage of the Stretch Code

## Meeting Criterion 1: Where Lincoln Stands

*“provide for the as-of-right siting of renewable or alternative energy generating facilities, renewable or alternative energy research and development (R&D) facilities, or renewable or alternative energy manufacturing facilities in designated locations.”*

- Lincoln’s Approach:
  - Solar generation on the parking lot at Minuteman Technical
- Actions Taken/Underway:
  - Creation of Green Tech Group to determine feasibility of site and build support (Public Meeting)
  - Warrant language for Solar Zoning Overlay and Bylaw submitted
  - Presentations at Planning Board and Selectmen’s meetings

## Meeting Criterion 2: Where Lincoln Stands

*“adopt an expedited application and permitting process under which these energy facilities may be sited within the municipality and which shall not exceed 1 year from the date of initial application to the date of final approval”*

- **Lincoln’s Approach:**
  - Identify all permitting processes relevant to solar generation at the site
  - Document that no process exists that will hinder expedited, as-of-right permitting
  - Include constructive approval language in the Solar Bylaw
- **Actions Taken/Underway:**
  - Identified relevant permitting processes
  - Warrant language for Solar Zoning Overlay and Bylaw submitted
  - Presentations at Planning Board and Selectmen’s meetings

## Meeting Criterion 3: Where Lincoln Stands

*“establish an energy use baseline inventory for municipal buildings, vehicles, street and traffic lighting, and put in place a comprehensive program designed to reduce this baseline by 20 percent within 5 years of initial participation in the program”*

- **Lincoln’s Approach:**
  - Use the Mass Energy Insight (MEI) Tool to benchmark energy use
  - Use MEI and NSTAR audit findings to identify target buildings for Energy Reduction Strategy
- **Actions Taken/Underway:**
  - Attended MEI training
  - Preliminary inventory complete
  - Developed a process to identify reduction approaches

## Meeting Criterion 4: Where Lincoln Stands

*“purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles for municipal use whenever such vehicles are commercially available and practicable”*

- Lincoln’s Approach:
  - Create Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Purchase Policy
  - Conduct vehicle inventory and replacement plan
- Actions Taken/Underway:
  - Updated existing policy to include language regarding purchasing of fuel-efficient vehicles
  - Inventory and Plan are underway

## Meeting Criterion 5: Where Lincoln Stands

*“require all new residential construction over 3,000 square feet and all new commercial and industrial real estate construction to minimize, to the extent feasible, the life-cycle cost of the facility by utilizing energy efficiency, water conservation and other renewable or alternative energy technologies”*

- Lincoln’s Approach:
  - Passage of Stretch Code at Town Meeting
- Actions Taken/Underway:
  - Green Tech Group hosted public meeting
  - Internal meeting with Department heads
  - Presentation at Selectmen meeting

## Next Steps for each Criteria

- Criterion 1: Passage of Solar Zoning Overlay District and Bylaw at Town Meeting
- Criterion 2:
  - Document relevant permitting processes and file, if necessary file relevant notices.
  - Passage of Solar Zoning Overlay District
- Criterion 3: Use MEI tool to complete baseline inventory and reduction strategy
- Criterion 4: Submit documentation
- Criterion 5: Passage of the Stretch Code at Town Meeting

## What Other Communities are Doing...

- No communities have been designated
  - Applications are accepted starting March 19<sup>th</sup>
- Communities that have passed the Stretch Code:
  - Newton (2009 - City Council)
  - Cambridge (2009 - City Council)
  - Mashpee (February - Special Process)
  - Springfield (March 1 – City Council)
  - Tyngsboro (March 2 – Special Town Meeting) – in addition to passage of zoning amendments
  - Lowell will vote on Stretch Code on March 23<sup>rd</sup> – City has met all other criteria

## Next Steps to Becoming Eligible for Funding

- Designation Application
  - Must complete designation prior to grant submittal
  - Begin accepting March 19, 2010
  - Deadline: May 14, 2010
- Grant Application
  - Deadline for FY10 grant: May 28, 2010
  - Most likely two rounds in FY 2011

## Becoming a Green Community – Why Do it?

- Economic Benefits – save energy
- Environmental benefits – reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Recognition – Sustainability leader in the Commonwealth
  - Recognized on DOER website, printed materials
  - Recognition sign placed in each community
- **Grants** - to become even greener!