



# Green Communities Technical Planning Assistance

## Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources

The Green Communities Act of 2008 created a grant and loan program for communities that meet a set of five criteria involving zoning and permitting of energy facilities, energy use benchmarking and plans for reducing energy use, municipal purchasing of fuel efficient vehicles, and minimizing life-cycle energy costs for new construction. The ultimate goal is to promote alternative energy generation and development within the Commonwealth, in concert with encouraging energy efficient communities. Prior to developing the grant program, the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) contracted with the Horsley Witten Group, Inc. (HW), along with ICF International, to assist communities in meeting these five minimum criteria.

In 2010, HW and ICF provided technical planning assistance to 25 communities to guide them in meeting all five criteria. Due to a successful first round of technical assistance, our Team has been contracted to assist 28 additional communities in 2011.

Through a process of public meetings, training seminars and webinars, the development of technical resources, and technical working meetings, HW works with each community to develop a detailed plan for achieving the criteria. HW is working with a diverse group of stakeholders in each community, including members of energy efficiency and alternative energy committees, planning staff, town administrators, selectmen, city councilors, school committees, police and fire administrators, and others.

### Five Green Communities Criteria

1. 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.
2. Adopt an expedited application and permitting process under which these energy facilities may be sited and which shall not exceed 1 year from the date of initial application to the date of final approval.
3. 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.
4. Purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles for municipal use whenever such vehicles are commercially available and practicable.
5. 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.

#### Client Contact:

Meg Lusardi, Green Communities Deputy Director  
MA DOER, 617-626-7364

HW Contact:  
Ellie Baker

[www.horsleywitten.com](http://www.horsleywitten.com)

- Civil & Environmental Engineering
- Wetlands Management
- Coastal Management
- Hydrogeology & Water Supply
- Stormwater Management
- Wastewater Management
- Site Assessment & Remediation
- Land Use Planning
- Education & Outreach



### Sandwich, MA

90 Route 6A  
Sandwich, MA 02563  
tel: 508-833-6600

### Newburyport, MA

30 Green Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950  
tel: 978-499-0601

### Providence, RI

370 Ives Street  
Providence, RI 02906  
tel: 401-272-1717