



MASSACHUSETTS
**DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY RESOURCES**



Green Communities

Overview of FY26-27 Competitive Grant
Program

September 2025



Agenda

Survey and Listening Session Summary

Overview of FY 26-27 Competitive Grant PON

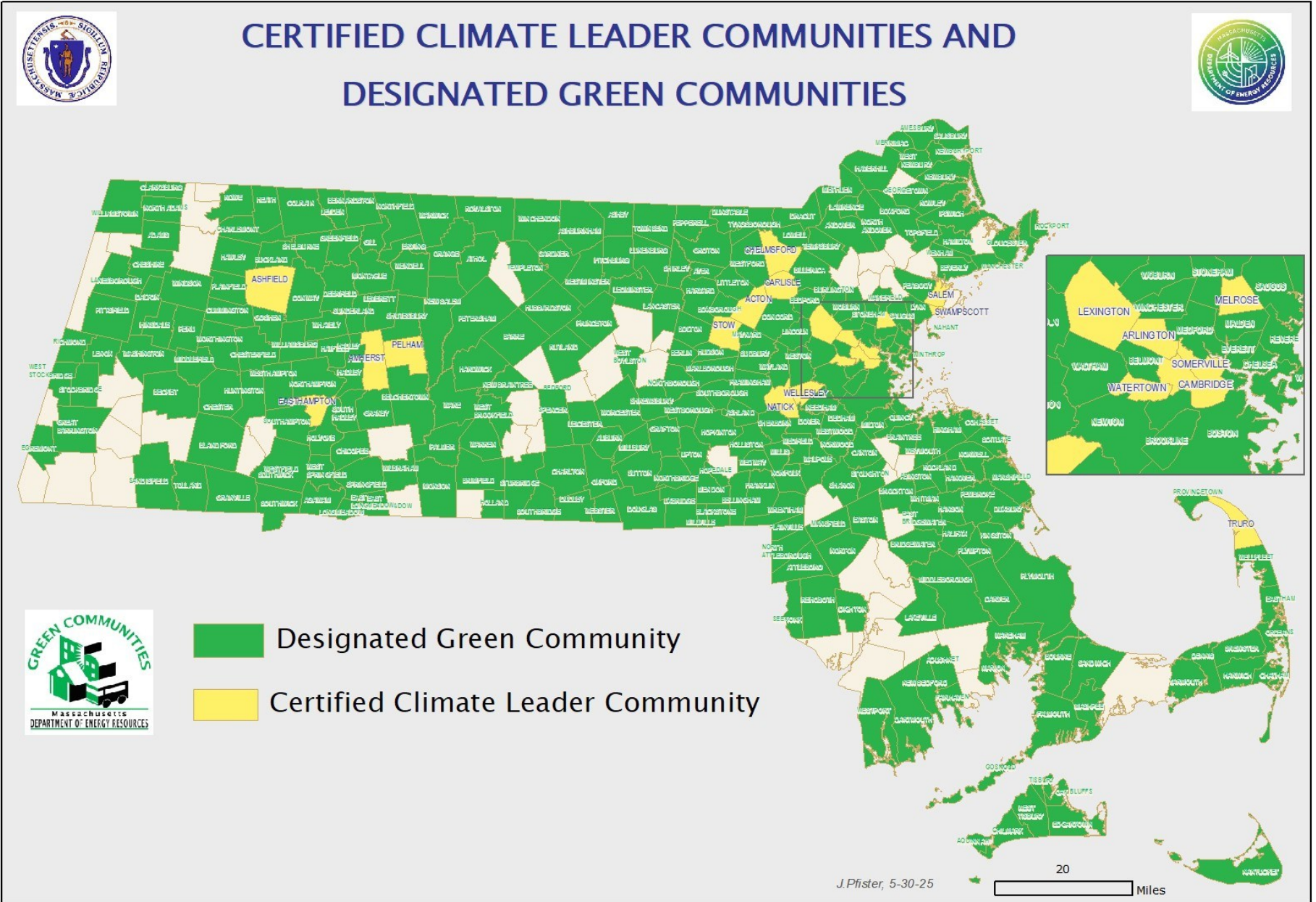
Focus on What's New and Different

Application Forms

Other Important Information

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**



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 Grant Feedback

Summary of Issues and Barriers

Results from spring listening sessions and survey



Suggestions for Application & Reporting Improvements

Streamline application process; remove redundant steps

Provide clear templates and instructions for narratives and grant tables

Faster response time from application to award

Clarify grant compatibility (e.g., GC vs. Climate Leader grants)

Need more guidance on grant closeout and inspections

Appreciation for high grant acceptance rate (80-85%)

Funding & Project Eligibility

Avoid	Avoid partial funding; small municipalities face financial strain covering balance
Expand	Expand eligible projects: solar, windows, doors, roofs
Increase	Increase funding limits, especially beyond \$1M threshold
Include	Include regional school districts, LED lighting for non-school buildings

Feedback on Application Process



**Publish clear
eligibility guidelines
for project types**



**Provide tutorial
resources to support
new administrators**



**Listing specific
documents to be
included in
submission**

Support and Communication

Improve Coordination

- Improve Mass Save and utility coordination; set vendor response expectations

Practical Project Evaluations

- Call for more practical, reality-based project evaluations from vendors

Proactive Support

- Continue and expand proactive GC staff support

Outreach Materials

- Develop community outreach materials (e.g., stretch code benefits).

Braid Funding Sources

- Coordinate with other funding opportunities for complex projects

Program Impact and Appreciation



MassEnergyInsight improvements have been valuable over time



DOER staff praised for understanding and support



The program has built a collaborative sustainability community



Overview of FY26-27 Grants



FY 26-27 Competitive Grant PON Calendar at a Glance

Block	1	2	3	4
Application Deadline	October 22, 2025	April 10, 2026	October 9, 2026	April 9, 2027
Date previous grant awards spent down and projects complete	August 29, 2025	February 13, 2026	August 28, 2026	February 12, 2027
Final Grant Report Due Date	August 29, 2025	February 13, 2026	August 28, 2026	February 12, 2027
Final Grant Report Approved	September 26, 2025	March 27, 2026	September 25, 2026	March 26, 2027
Annual Report Completion	FY24 Report submitted and approved	FY 25 Report submitted by November 7, 2025, and approved by March 27, 2026	FY 25 Report submitted and approved	FY 26 Report Submitted by November 6, 2026, and approved by March 26, 2027
Questions due to CommBuys	September 26, 2025	March 20, 2026	September 25, 2026	March 19, 2027

Award Limits & Conditions



General max for most projects:
\$250,000



Decarbonization Projects: max
\$500,000



High cumulative
award communities:
max \$125,000

*Received >\$1million
in competitive and
climate leader
grants*

What's new and different?



Limited support for windows



Limited support for LED lighting for all buildings



Limited support for solar PV on electrified buildings



Enhanced funding benefitting vulnerable populations



Rules for Climate Leader Communities



Application Worksheet replaces project narrative

Project Categories

PON, p. 8

- **Section 2 Prescriptive Measures** - streamlined application requirements and evaluation

PON, p. 13

- **Section 3 Traditional Energy Efficiency Projects** - building envelope improvements, HVAC, controls, retro-commissioning, etc.

PON, p. 17

- **Section 4 Building Decarbonization Projects** - support for larger, more complicated projects

PON, p. 18

- **Section 5 Special Funding Levels and Projects** - expanded offerings

Prescriptive Projects

PON, pp. 8-12

Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs)

Walk-in Refrigeration Controls

Door and Window Weather-Stripping

Workforce Development

Added last year

Light-duty Hybrid (HEVs) or Plug-in Hybrid Vehicles (PHEVs)

Light-duty Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs)

Medium- or Heavy-duty BEVs

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

Battery-powered Lawn Care & Landscaping Equipment

New!

Window replacements

Now Rx!

LED Lighting – including streetlights

Added last year

Traditional Energy Efficiency Projects

PON, pp. 13-17

- A. Building Envelope Improvements
- B. Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Equipment
- C. Water Heaters
- D. Building Controls Systems
- E. Retro-commissioning
- F. Pumps, Motors, and Drives
- G. Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)
- H. Repairs to Existing Renewable Energy Systems
- I. Commercial Refrigeration



Building Decarbonization Projects

PON, pp. 17-18

Comprehensive building decarbonization projects that extend beyond the typical grant in implementation time and cost and are ready for immediate implementation

\$500,000 limit

At least 25% local match, 10% for applications directly benefitting EJ

Must demonstrate GHG emission reductions

Must be completed within three (3) years of grant contract execution

Cannot apply for other projects in PON

Cannot apply for competitive grants for 2 years after award



Details on new project types and changes

Window Replacements

LED Lighting Retrofit Funding

Special Funding Levels and Projects

Environmental Justice and other Vulnerable Communities

New

Window Replacements

Funding Details

- \$75/sq. ft. for window replacement
- \$100/sq. ft. for municipal facilities benefiting:
 - EJ Communities, & Vulnerable Populations
- Max award per application: \$50,000 (\$75,000 EJ)

Performance Requirements

- U-value maximums:
 - 0.25 for fixed windows
 - 0.30 for operable windows
- Priority funding for:
- Energy Star® Most Efficient certified windows for Northern Climate Zone

Priority funding for fully electrified buildings

Change Product Type

ENERGY STAR Most Efficient 2025

Windows, Doors & Skylights

THE YEAR'S BEST OF ENERGY STAR FOR EFFICIENCY & INNOVATION

Products that make the ENERGY STAR Most Efficient list for 2025 deliver cutting edge energy efficiency along with the latest in technological innovation. They represent the year's very best for energy savings and environmental protection.



Click here for a complete list of ENERGY STAR certified Windows, Doors & Skylights

Find your ENERGY STAR Climate Zone Here.

909 Records Found

Filter Your Results

filter by keyword

Product Category

- Door (289)
- Skylight (15)
- Window (1433)
- Do not filter

ENERGY STAR Most Efficient

- Most Efficient (1016)

ENERGY STAR Climate Zone

- Northern Zone Products (1472)

Sort by:

U-Factor Minimum



Share Your Results

Rebates in your zip code:

01730

CHANGE ZIP

Windows, Doors and Skylights

Up to \$600 for windows and \$250 for doors

Tax Credit

Federal Government

The Federal Government offers tax credits for windows, doors and skylights via tax credit. Offer valid 01-01-2023 through 12-31-2032. Other restrictions apply; please visit the website for additional details.

VISIT WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE

LED Lighting Retrofit Funding

Revised Offering:

- \$1.00/kWh annual savings
- \$1.20/kWh for qualifying municipal/EJ facilities
- **All buildings eligible**

What's Changed?

- Removed \$100K cap
- Not just schools
- **No longer covering full cost minus incentives**

MassSave support for municipal/school LED lighting sunsets fall 2026

Specially-eligible and Climate Leaders

Specially-Eligible

- Green Community for six (6) or more years, and
- achieved and maintained a minimum of 15% energy reduction for 3+ years within the past 6 years
- No violations of GC Criteria the past year

Climate Leader

- An officially certified Climate Leader Community

Community outreach programs

- Promote programs like:
 - MassSave, Solarize, HeatSmart, MassEnergize etc.
- Extend efforts in:
 - Mass Save Community First Partnerships
 - MassCEC's EmPower program
- Requirements:
 - Tangible goals
 - At least 1 community partner
 - Strategy to address EJ & vulnerable population

Double award amounts for vehicles and battery powered landscaping equipment

Solar PV for already electrified buildings

Eligible for Enhanced Funding and Projects

Specially-eligible

Acton	Lexington	Saugus
Ashburnham	Lowell	Shelburne
Athol	Malden	Stockbridge
Becket	Manchester-by-the-Sea	Stow
Belchertown	Maynard	Sudbury
Belmont	Medford	Sunderland
Berlin	Melrose	Sutton
Beverly	Mendon	Tyngsborough
Blackstone	Millbury	Upton
Brockton	Montague	Waltham
Cambridge	Natick	Warwick
Chesterfield	New Salem	Wellfleet
Gill	Newburyport	Wendell
Granby	Newton	Williamsburg
Greenfield	Northfield	Williamstown
Halifax	Palmer	Winchester
Harvard	Provincetown	Windsor
Lakeville	Quincy	Woburn

Climate Leader Communities

Acton	Melrose
Amherst	Natick
Arlington	Pelham
Ashfield	Salem
Cambridge	Somerville
Carlisle	Stow
Chelmsford	Swampscott
Easthampton	Truro
Lexington	Watertown
	Wellesley

New

Onsite Solar PV

- Onsite solar PV systems providing electricity to a municipal facility heated with cold-climate heat pumps
- Can be a PPA or municipally-owned



Only for fully electrified buildings

Solar PV Funding Rates

Ownership and Metering-	Rooftop Solar, per Watt	EJ facility
Muni-owned, behind the meter	\$1.00	\$1.25
Third party-owned, behind the meter	\$0.75	\$1.00

- Solar panels & equipment (e.g., inverters, wiring)
- Structural systems (e.g., steel)
- Interconnection & permitting
- Construction commencement & installation

Average cost per watt for roof-mounted public entity systems = \$3.03/watt

\$1 Million Club

Grant awards limited to \$125,000*

Acton

Acushnet

Amesbury

Andover

Arlington

Auburn

Beverly

Chelmsford

Gloucester

Hamilton

Hanover

Kingston

Lexington

Littleton

Lowell

Malden

Maynard

Medford

Medway

Melrose

Milton

Natick

Newburyport

Newton

Northampton

Northbridge

Pembroke

Quincy

Rockland

Salem

Scituate

Southborough

Stoneham

Stoughton

Sutton

Swampscott

Tewksbury

Wenham

Westford

Westwood

Weymouth

Winchester

Woburn

*Except for \$500k Decarbonization Grant

Climate Leader Community Rules

If a CLC-certified at time of grant award...

CLCs not yet closed out Decarb Accelerator grant:

- ✓ Max \$125,000 (no overlap in scope)
- ✓ Must demonstrate capacity to manage multiple grants
- ✓ CLCs can apply for Decarb Projects only if Accelerator grants are closed

Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities and Other Vulnerable Populations

Enhanced funding opportunities



50% more for window replacements



100% more for vehicles



20% more LED lighting



50% more for battery-powered landscaping equipment



Reduced match for \$500K decarb grant



25-33% more for solar PV *(for specially-eligible or Climate Leader Communities)*



Application Forms



New!

Project Worksheets

- Ensures all pertinent info is included
- The goal is to reduce/eliminate follow up questions

I. Applicant Information (required)

Enter the name of the Green Community in the box

Please check all that apply:

- My community is a certified Climate Leader Community or has applied for Climate Leader Community certification (PON, pg. 4)
- Some or all the grant request(s) will support Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities or Other Vulnerable Populations. (PON, pg. 5).
- We have met, teleconferenced, or had an email exchange with our utility representatives regarding the availability of utility incentives for all the projects proposed in this application. (PON, pg. 6)

Grant Contacts

Role	Name	Title	Address	Phone	email
<input type="checkbox"/>	Application Preparer				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Follow-up Questions				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Award notifications				

Total Grant Request (\$)

Prescriptive	
Traditional ECMs	
Building Decarbonization	
Special Funding	
Administrative Funding ¹	
Total Grant Request	

Worksheets

- Worksheets include a place for brief project narrative
- Only fill out the one(s) applicable to projects
- Delete unused Worksheets

II. Prescriptive Projects (PON, pg. 8-13)

A. Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs) - Installation of VFDs for 3 phase 10hp or less motors (PON, pg. 8)

Funding details

- Two thousand four hundred dollars (\$2,400) for up to 1HP and then an additional \$200/HP above 1HP up to 10HP
- Maximum of four thousand four hundred dollars (\$4,400) for 10HP or not to exceed total project cost, including incentives

1. Building Name(s) [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

2. Address(es) [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

3. Municipal Personnel Responsible for Project Oversight

Name	Title	Phone	Email

4. VFDs Summary Table

Facility Name	Quantity	Horsepower	Application	Funding Request

5. Short Project Narrative (describe current building conditions, timeline, procurement, ~~future plans~~ for building)

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

6. Cost/Budget

Grant Request	
Utility Incentive	
Community Funds	
Other (describe in narrative)	
Total Project Cost	

7. Are there any permits required for this project? (Yes/No, please describe)

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

8. Attachments:

- Energy audit or study recommending project.
- Specification sheets

Other Important Information

Refer to PON for details

Applicants will not be awarded more than one (1) competitive grant per year

Program administrative cost requests must include a justification statement and cannot exceed 10% or \$10,000 of the total awarded funds, whichever is less

Application completeness. DOER reserves the right in its sole discretion to reject incomplete applications

The Competitive Grant application should include estimated or confirmed **utility incentives**

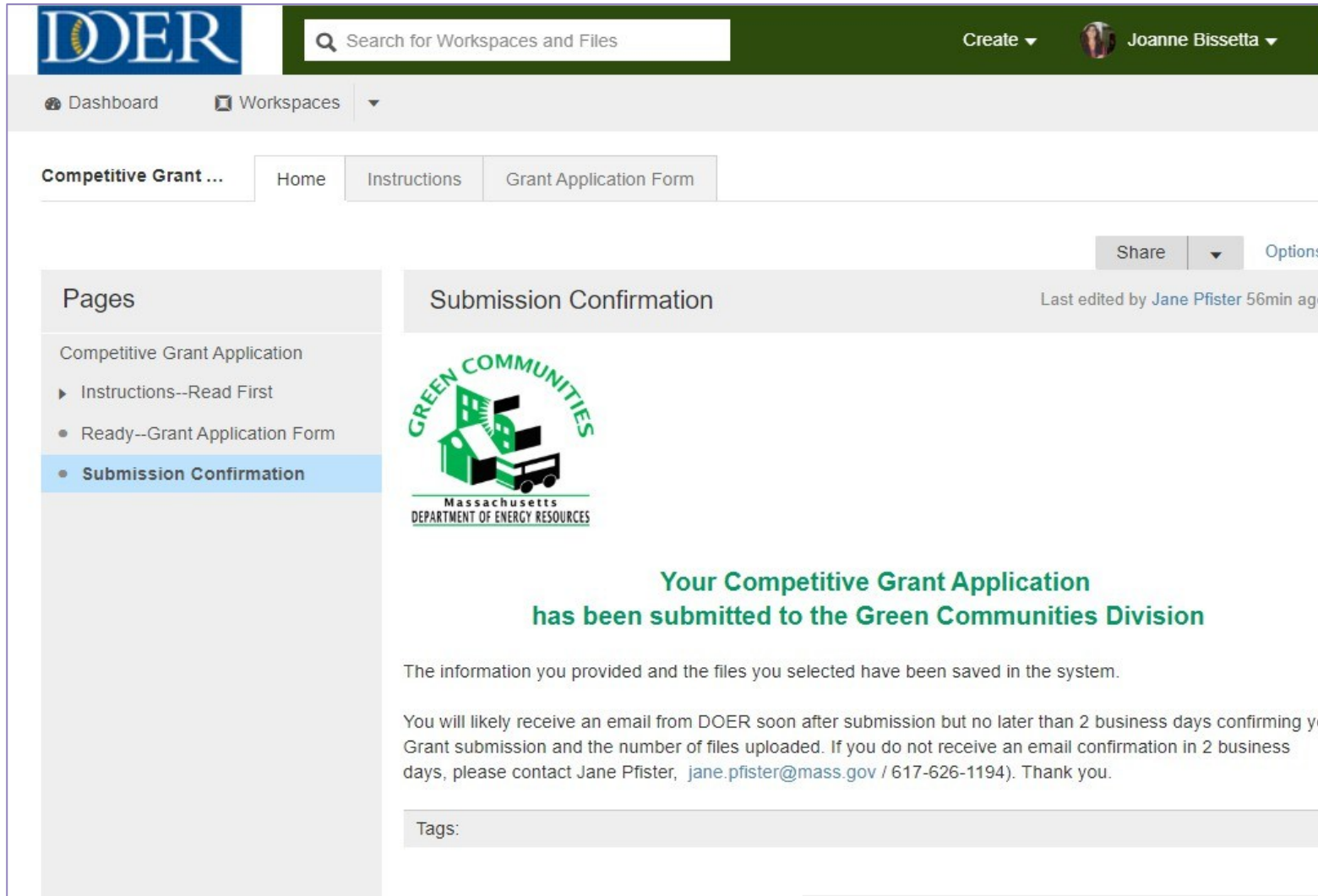
To receive grant awards, municipalities must comply with MBTA Communities Act, as applicable

Application Logistics

- ✓ Use CommBuys Q&A function for grant-related questions
- ✓ Must use DOER's *online application portal (iMeet Central)*
 - Do not submit applications to CommBuys
- ✓ Follow instructions – reach out to RCs for clarification

Confirmation of Submittal

Make sure you receive a confirmation of submittal PLUS an email from DOER confirming submittal and number of files uploaded



DOER Search for Workspaces and Files Create Joanne Bissetta

Dashboard Workspaces

Competitive Grant ... Home Instructions Grant Application Form

Pages

- Competitive Grant Application
- ▶ Instructions--Read First
- Ready--Grant Application Form
- **Submission Confirmation**

Submission Confirmation Last edited by Jane Pfister 56min ago

GREEN COMMUNITIES
Massachusetts
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES

**Your Competitive Grant Application
has been submitted to the Green Communities Division**

The information you provided and the files you selected have been saved in the system.

You will likely receive an email from DOER soon after submission but no later than 2 business days confirming your Grant submission and the number of files uploaded. If you do not receive an email confirmation in 2 business days, please contact Jane Pfister, jane.pfister@mass.gov / 617-626-1194. Thank you.

Tags:

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



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Thank You!