

Power Forward: Aligning Utility Processes with the Commonwealth's Housing Needs

"Providing timely information to municipalities and developers to enable informed decisions and accelerate housing development."

Purpose

Power Forward is an effort between the Healey-Driscoll administration, Eversource, and National Grid to better align Massachusetts' electric infrastructure with urgent housing development needs. The program helps municipalities and developers identify where affordable, energy-efficient housing can be built by providing clearer information on grid capacity and interconnection costs.

This objective is accomplished through advanced grid "engineering studies" that assess (1) feasibility and, (2) connection requirements at specific sites. These studies would be completed in bulk for multiple potential development sites at once, with state funding available for eligible municipalities.

Snapshot

- Who can apply: All municipalities served by Eversource or National Grid.
- What is included: One consolidated engineering study for up to three parcels for potential housing development in your municipality.
- Funding eligibility: Select municipalities (see Table below).
- Applications open: May 1, 2026.

Power Forward

Who: All municipalities in Eversource or National Grid territory are eligible to submit a Power Forward application; the municipalities in the table below are eligible to receive funding for an engineering study from DOER, if needed.

When: Municipalities can apply to Power Forward starting in May 2026.

How: Municipalities that are interested may submit Step Zero request(s) or formal new electric service requests(s) to be considered for consolidated study through Power Forward. Municipalities can apply to Power Forward using a dedicated application on the Eversource and National Grid websites, providing the following information:

1. The municipal point of contact for the Power Forward application.
2. The project/parcel locations.
3. The Step Zero/new service request associated with each project/parcel.

Municipalities may identify up to three parcels for potential housing development within a defined area of their town or city in their application for evaluation through Power Forward.

Once you've submitted your application:

1. The Power Forward application will be sent to the municipality's dedicated account executive at the utility company.
2. The utility will then hold a meeting with the municipality to discuss their Power Forward application and to better understand the municipality's needs.
3. The utility will determine if the sites included in the Power Forward application require an engineering study.
 - i. If an engineering ***study is required***, the utility will request a deposit from the municipality to conduct the study or, for municipalities eligible for DOER funding, the municipality, in coordination with the utility, will seek funding from DOER. DOER will confirm funding eligibility and the availability of funding in writing within ten business days to both the municipality and the utility.
 - ii. If an engineering ***study is not required***, the utility will provide an analysis detailing the grid capacity at the parcels identified in the Power Forward application through the "Step Zero" process.
4. Once a utility determines a Power Forward application requires an engineering study, the utility will not advance any future applications for engineering studies in that location (load or distributed generation) through the connection process from the start of the Power Forward study through 90 calendar days after the release of the study.
5. Within the 90-day window, developers must submit a written work request and pay a detailed design fee, in accordance with the utility's standard process, to maintain their position in the grid connection queue. This fee will be applied to the overall cost of the project and is non-refundable if the project is cancelled (note: the customer will be credited for any fee amounts collected above the utility's actual costs).
6. Within 90 days, the utility must provide the municipality and developer with the outcome of their engineering study. These results will provide an estimated grid connection timeline, as well as a +50%/-25% cost estimation window for providing distribution service to the parcel. More detailed connection costs will be provided during the subsequent design phase once initiated by the developer.

Limitations:

1. Municipalities may only have one Power Forward application at a time.
2. Municipalities may submit a new Power Forward application after the engineering study from a previous Power Forward application is completed and delivered to the customer.

3. For calendar years 2026 and 2027, DOER will provide funding for one Power Forward application per eligible municipality per year.
 - a. For calendar years 2026 and 2027, there will be an annual cap of \$1.5 million in total to funding.
4. Funding is on a first-come, first-serve basis.
5. The funding for a new calendar year will reset on January 1, 2027.

| Municipalities Eligible for Funding | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Acton – Eversource | Everett – National Grid | Medford – National Grid | Somerville – Eversource |
| Amesbury – National Grid | Fall River – National Grid | Melrose – National Grid | Sudbury – Eversource |
| Andover – National Grid | Gardner – National Grid | Methuen – National Grid | Swampscott – National Grid |
| Arlington – Eversource | Grafton – National Grid | Milton – Eversource | Springfield – Eversource |
| Ashland – Eversource | Greenfield – Eversource | Natick – Eversource | Wareham – Eversource |
| Attleboro – National Grid | Haverhill – National Grid | New Bedford – Eversource | Watertown – Eversource |
| Bedford – Eversource | Hingham – National Grid / Hingham Muni (N/A) | Needham – Eversource | Wayland – Eversource |
| Beverly – National Grid | Hopkinton – Eversource | Newburyport – National Grid | Wenham – National Grid |
| Brockton – National Grid | Lawrence – National Grid | Newton – Eversource | Westborough – National Grid |
| Brookline – Eversource | Leominster – National Grid | Palmer – National Grid | Westford – National Grid |
| Cambridge – Eversource | Lexington – Eversource | Pittsfield – Eversource | West Springfield – Eversource |
| Canton – Eversource | Lincoln – Eversource | Quincy – National Grid | Weston – Eversource |
| Chelmsford – National Grid | Lowell – National Grid | Randolph – National Grid | Winchester – Eversource |
| Chelsea – Eversource | Lynn – National Grid | Revere – National Grid | Worcester – National Grid |
| Dedham – Eversource | Malden – National Grid | Salem – National Grid | |
| Easthampton – Eversource | Maynard – Eversource | Sharon – Eversource | |

Table 1: Table of Eligible Municipalities.