MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF ENERGY
TRANSFORMATION

Welcome to the Office of Energy Transformation Community Meeting

September 30th, 2026

Welcome to Tufts University

Tufts UNIVERSITY | Office of Sustainability

- Tufts addresses sustainability challenges through experiential learning, research and operational innovation to do more than our fair share for society.

- **Tufts Office of Sustainability**
  - Prepares students to be effective leaders using our institution as a classroom
  - Facilitates and collaborates on campus sustainability initiatives
  - Communicates successes and learnings for the benefit of our communities, the Commonwealth, and beyond

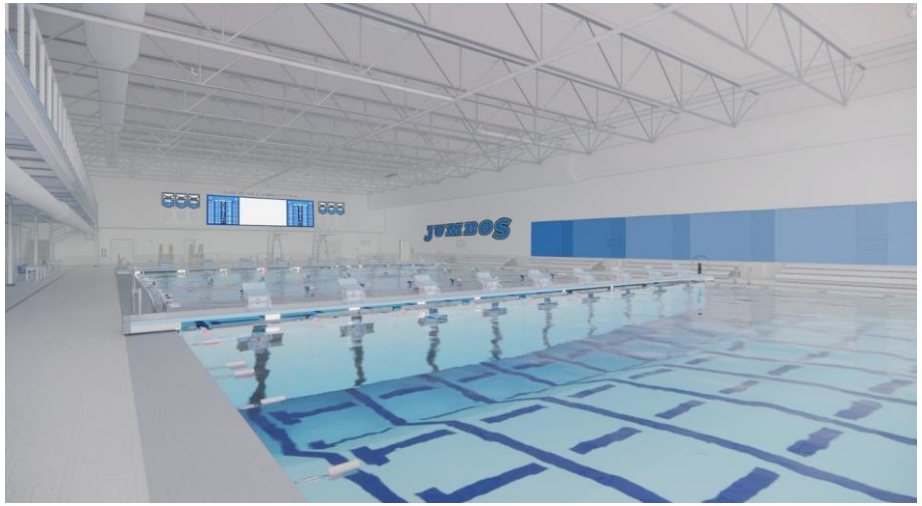


Sustainable CORE Fellows (Cultivating Our Resilient Environment), September 2026

The Energy Transition at Tufts

Tufts UNIVERSITY | Office of Sustainability

- All-electric projects
  - **Aquatics Center:** Olympic-sized swimming pool, solar ready
  - **Cummings School Learning Center:** two 160 seat classrooms, large gathering space
  - **Pachyderm Place:** 660-bed residence hall, solar ready
- Solar now and in the future
  - 2.4 MW of solar in Grafton
  - 0.5 MW of solar in Medford/ Somerville
    - Tisch Library coming soon!







Engaging with the Office of Energy Transformation

Tufts UNIVERSITY | Office of Sustainability

- Decarbonizing the Peak Focus Area Working Group
  - Tufts Central Energy Plant used as a case study
  - Aids other institutions in conceding the interconnected nature of heating and electricity
  - Helps refine system-level thinking about backup power and interconnection issues
  - Tufts student interns support critical data analysis
- Peak Energy Demand Reduction Working Group
- Tonight's session



Tufts Central Energy Plant

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Transforming the Energy Ecosystem – Affordably, Equitably, and Sustainably

Melissa Lavinson

Executive Director

Office of Energy Transformation

What's We'll Discuss

- Overview of the Office of Energy Transformation (OET)
- What is changing in our energy system and what does it mean
- How does this impact OET's work and what have we done
- What other major initiatives are happening across the Healey-Driscoll Administration to drive affordability and energy security and support municipalities' energy planning
- How to become a CELT Fellow and work with OET!

Office of Energy Transformation Overview

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Office of Energy Transformation (OET)

- Established May 1, 2024, this first-in-the-nation Office of Energy Transformation is charged with enabling the hands-on execution of the clean energy transition, including:

  – Gas-to-electric transition coordination,
  – Electric grid readiness, and
  – A just and equitable transition for workers, businesses, and communities.

- An Energy Transformation Advisory Board ("Advisory Board") launched concurrently to accelerate cooperation, understanding, and action among stakeholders.

- The Advisory Board authorized an overall approach and framework for OET to conduct its work and engage stakeholders.

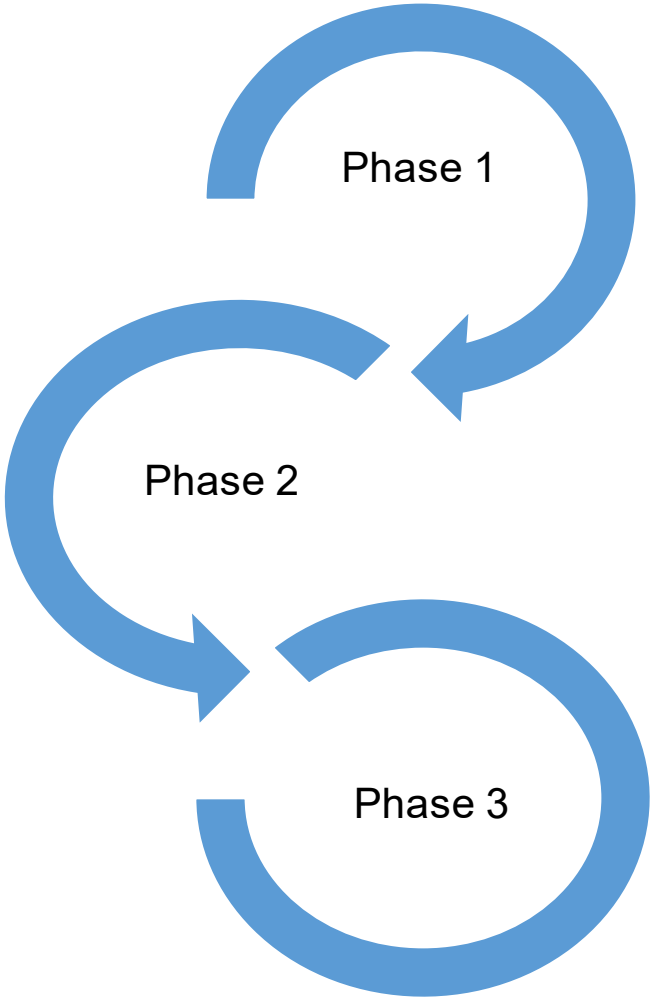
OET Approach and Process

Decision-making follows a structured approach:

1) Start with understanding the issues and perspectives, and assessing current state.

2) Identify and evaluate alternatives and potential solutions.

3) Conduct implementation assessment, make recommendations and get buy-in.

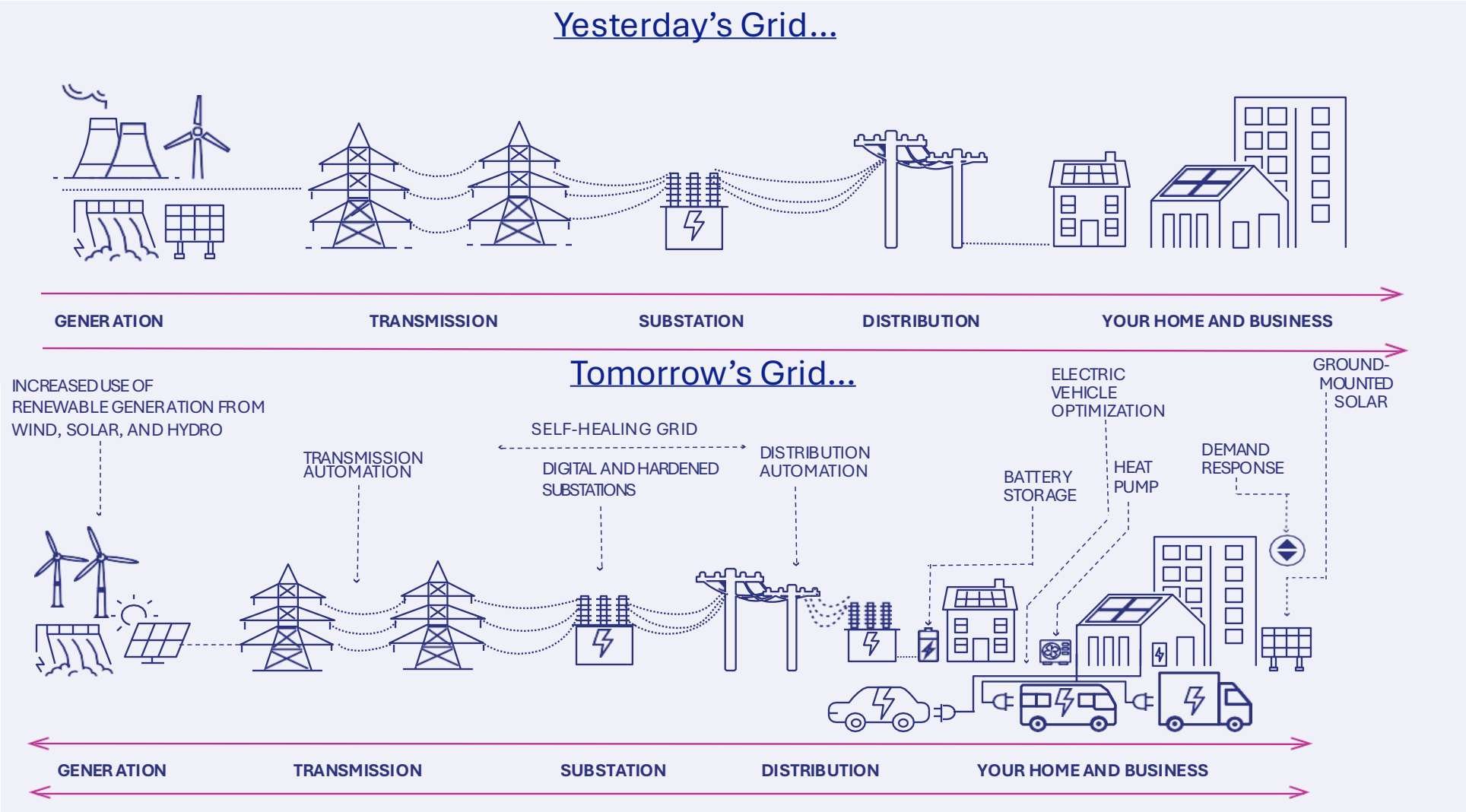


The Changing Energy System

What's Changing?

- The type of energy we use.
- The way we produce and deliver it.
- And, how and when we use it.

What Does This Change Mean for the Electric Grid?



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How Is This Change Informing OET's Work?

Office of Energy Transformation Focus Area Work Groups

Energy Transformation Advisory Board (Advisory Board or ETAB)

Provides guidance and recommendations on strategic direction to OET and focus area work groups (FAWGs) to execute the energy transition, including gas-to-electric transition, electric grid readiness, and a just and equitable transition for workers, business, and communities.

Transitioning Away from Everett Marine Terminal (EMT)

To develop a coordinated strategy to reduce or ultimately eliminate the local gas distribution companies' reliance on the EMT Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) facility aligned with DPU Order 20-80 and the state's climate and clean energy mandates, including as established in the *Global Warming Solutions Act*.

Decarbonizing the Peak (DTP)

To demonstrate pathways to reduce reliance on and expeditiously eliminate fossil fuels from peaking power plants and combined heat and power (CHP) facilities and deploy alternative demand and supply side options to meet peak load needs in Massachusetts, aligned with the electric sector sublimit and clean energy goals in the *2050 Clean Energy and Climate Plan*.

Financing the Transition (FTT)

To identify alternative mechanisms for financing/funding electricity distribution system infrastructure upgrades needed to achieve Massachusetts's clean energy and climate mandates that minimize impacts on consumers' electricity bills, while providing an affordable, sustainable, and timely source of revenue for investments.

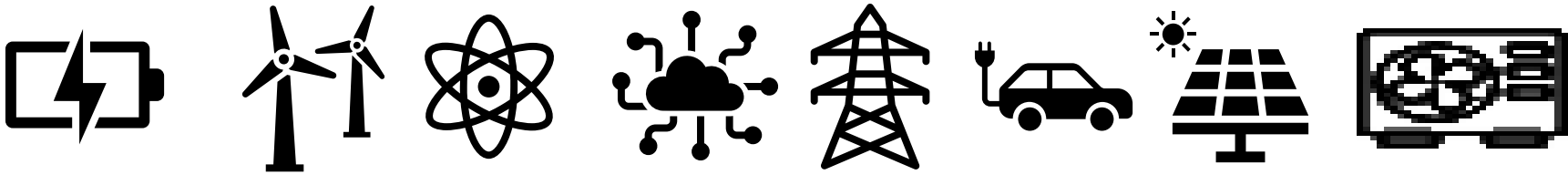
Enabling Sustainable Economic Development (ESED)

To advance clean energy-ready economic development zones that enable key business sectors to grow in Massachusetts, in alignment with the state's interconnection, land use planning, environmental justice and equity, housing, and economic development initiatives.

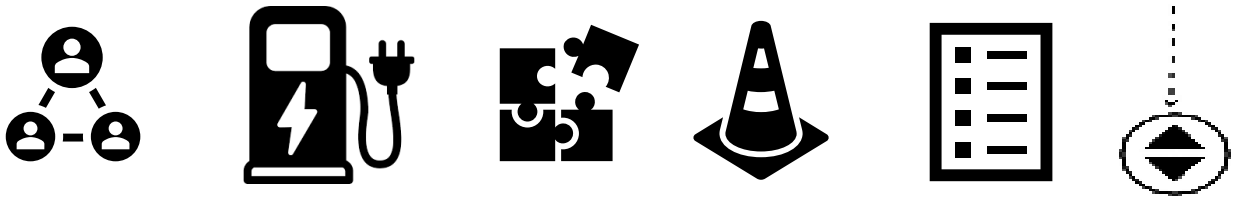
OET Has Engaged Hundreds of Stakeholders Through These Work Groups

Through the OET process, the work groups identify the technologies and processes needed to make tangible change and ensures that the people impacted by and associated with this change are engaged throughout.

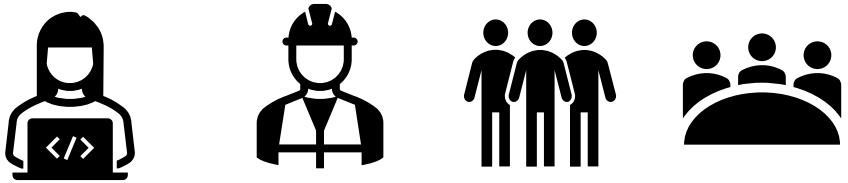
Technology



Process

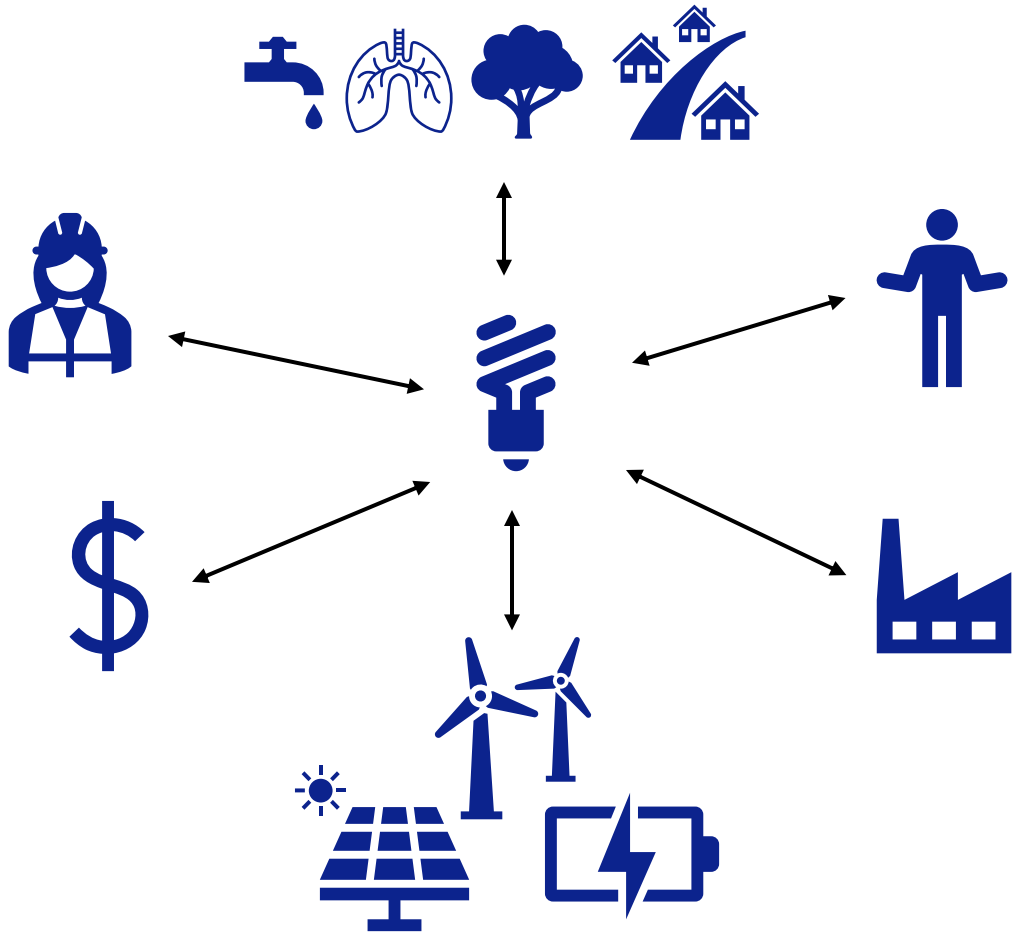


People

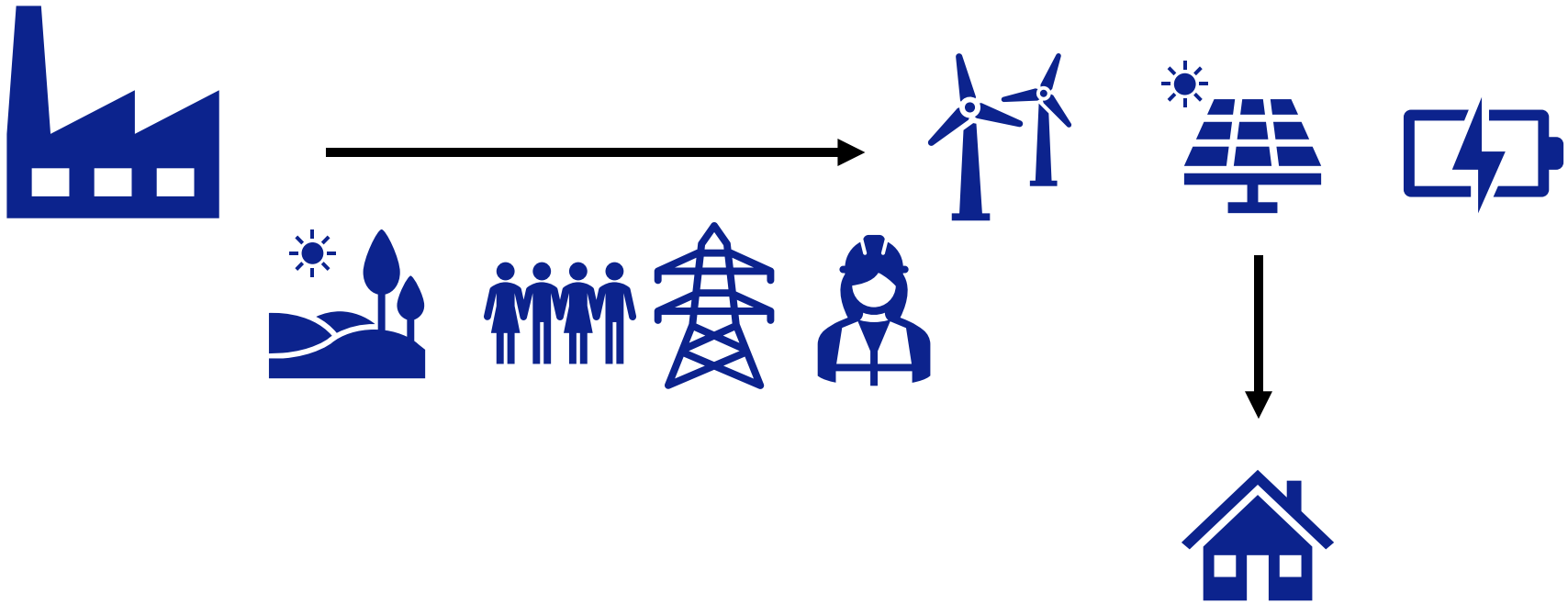


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Durable Progress Requires Engaging Many Perspectives…



… and Understanding What's Needed to Make Change Happen



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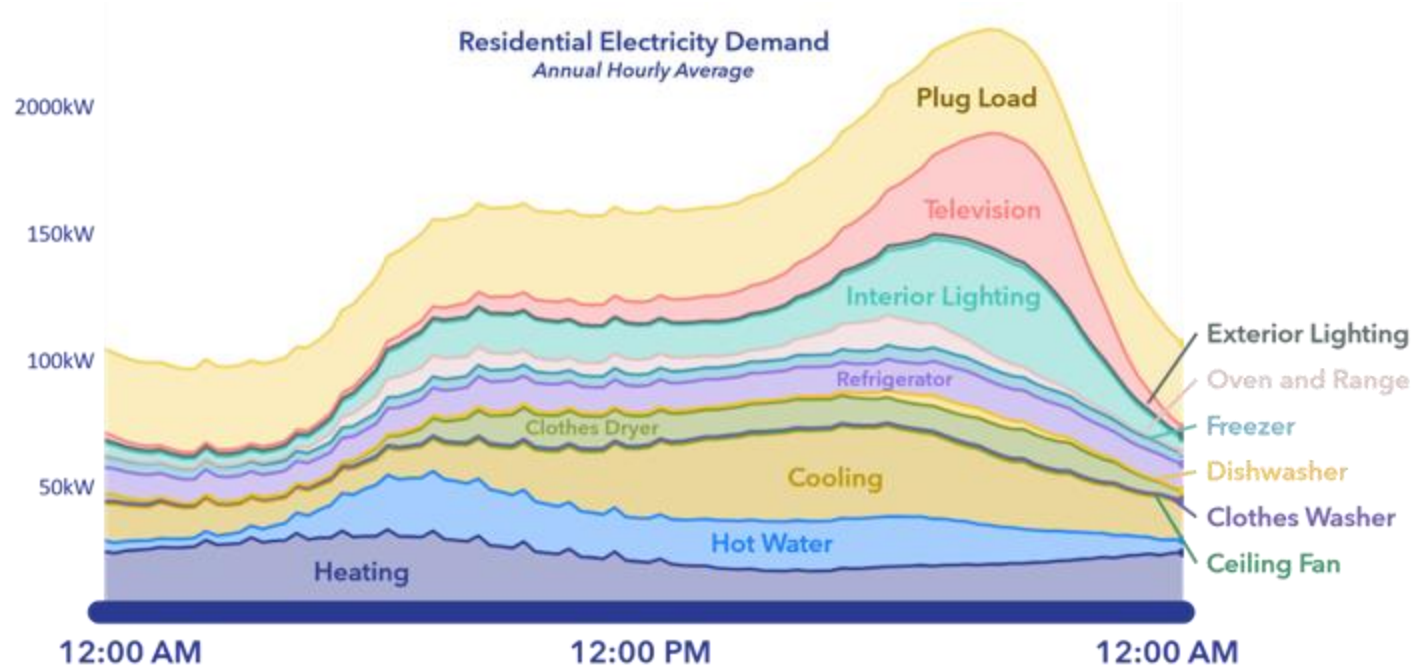
Focus of Work Groups

Everett Marine Terminal	Decarbonizing the Peak	Financing the Transition	Enabling Sustainable Economic Development
• Alternative infrastructure • Alternative supplies • Peak gas demand reduction • Strategic Electrification	• Peak electric demand reduction • Renewable/Storage • Renewable/Low Carbon fuels • Transmission/ Distribution	• Public Financing • Revenue-backed bonds • Public-Private Partnership	• Clean energy ready zones • Targeted economic development rates

These Work Groups were sunset and combined to focus on peak energy demand reduction.

What Is “The Peak” and How Is It Met?

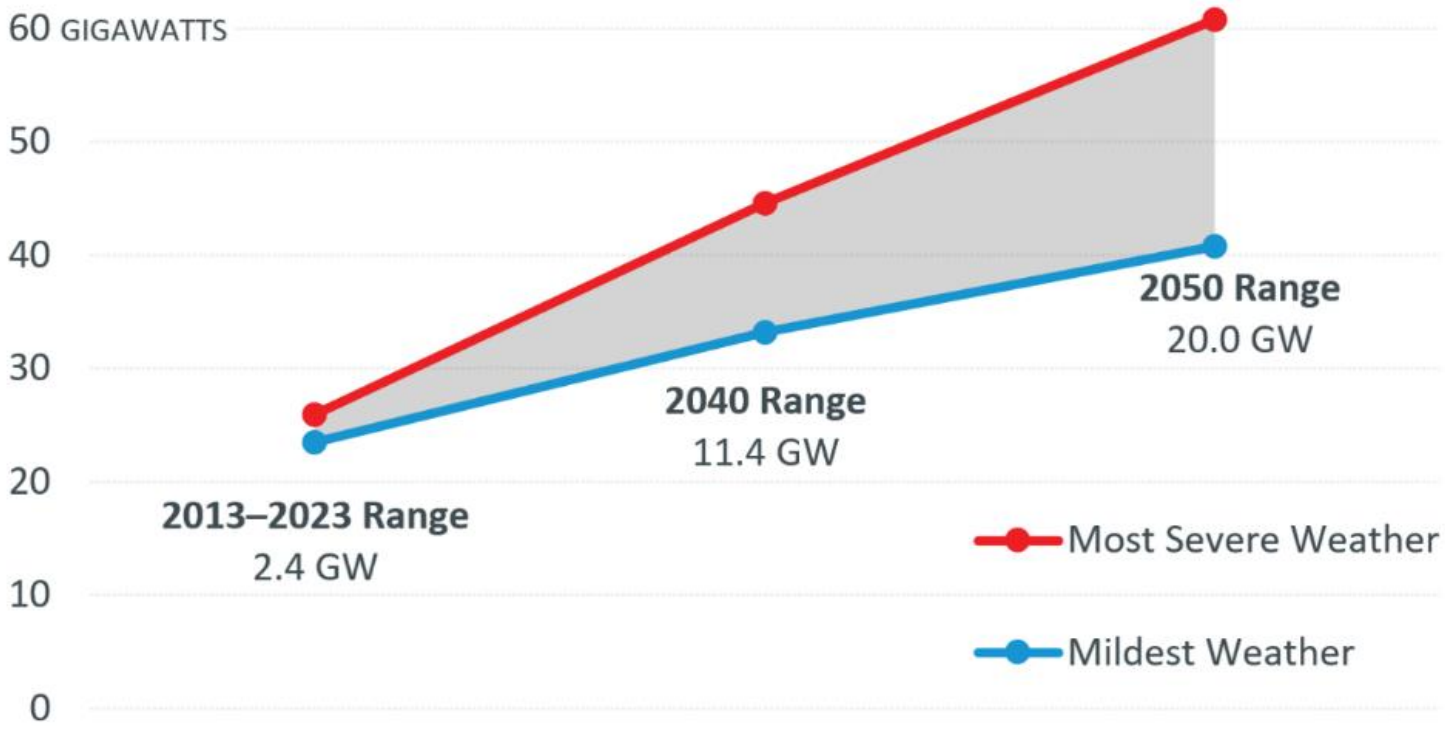
- Peak power refers to the time greatest demand on the system for a given period.
  - This demand is met today by fossil-fired resources that can ramp up and down quicky – they tend to be the least efficient, most costly facilities on the system, having an outsized impact on affordability and emissions.
- The regional electric grid reflects the aggregate effect of consumer usage patterns, with periods of higher and lower consumption throughout the day and year.
- The highest demand for power generally coincides with the hottest and coldest days.



Changes in Consumer Demand are Expected to Result in Changes to System Peaks

ISO-NE projects peak demand will shift from summer to winter in the mid-2030's and double in magnitude by 2050

Annual peak demand is expected to vary significantly year to year, depending on severity of weather



Peak Energy Demand Reduction Working Group Mission

- Executive Order 654 (March 2026) set a target of **3.5 GW of new electric load management by 2035** and called for identifying opportunities to accelerate gas demand reduction in strategic EMT served locations.
- The **Peak Energy Demand Reduction (PEDR)** focus area working group will identify and prioritize strategies to:
  - Reduce system-wide peak gas and electric demand, and
  - Reduce peak demand growth in targeted locations where it could otherwise require electric infrastructure upgrades or continued LDC contracting with the EMT.

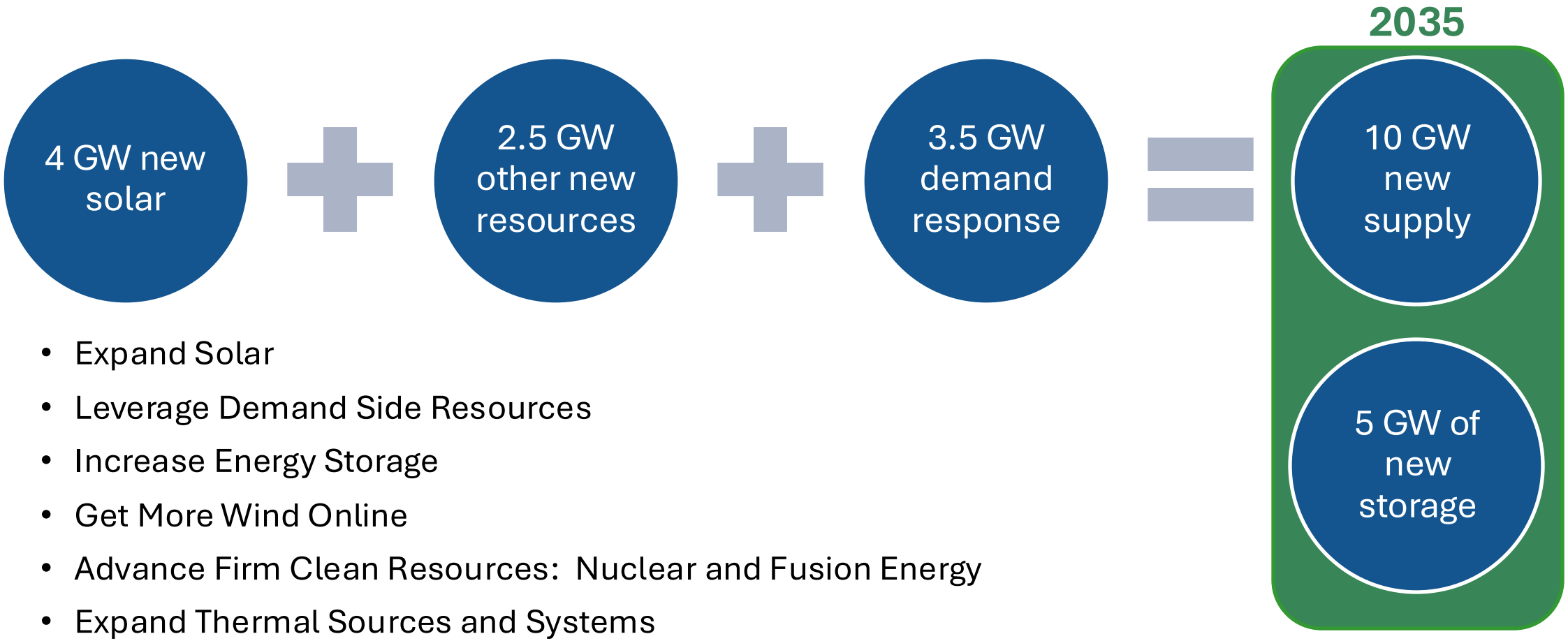


To develop a prioritized set of gas and electric peak demand reduction actions for Massachusetts to minimize future supply and infrastructure investments and enable the affordable, reliable, and equitable achievement of the Commonwealth's climate and clean energy requirements.

Healey-Driscoll Administration Actions on Affordability and Energy Security

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Executive Order 654: Securing MA's Energy Future



- Expand Solar
- Leverage Demand Side Resources
- Increase Energy Storage
- Get More Wind Online
- Advance Firm Clean Resources: Nuclear and Fusion Energy
- Expand Thermal Sources and Systems
- Accelerate Grid Connection, Avoid Spending, and Build Resilience
- Ensure Gas and Electric System Reliability and Reduce Costs

Energy Affordability, Independence, and Innovation Act

More than $10 Billion in Savings Over 10 Years

- **Filed on May 13, 2025**
- **Holistic approach to driving affordability, with a focus on:**
  - Lowering bills
  - Stabilizing prices
  - Avoiding spending
  - Bringing more energy online
- **Provide households and businesses with options to leverage technologies to more affordably, sustainably, and equitably meet energy needs.**

Get Costs Off Bills | *Saves $6.9 Billion*

- Phase out alternative portfolio standard bill charge
- Reduce net metering credit
- Pay for programs like Mass Save differently
- Reform existing rates and charges

Create Accountability | *Saves $2.5 Billion*

- Provide more oversight of costly transmission projects
- Restrict costs that utilities can recover from ratepayers
- Authorize utility management audits
- Require utilities to comprehensively plan and minimize grid costs

Bring More Energy into Massachusetts | *Saves $200 Million*

- Expand state energy procurement authority
- Provide flexibility to set supply rates
- Allow customers to connect faster to the grid
- Reduce barriers to small nuclear technologies

Empower Customers to Lower Bills | *Saves $900 Million*

- Protect customers from predatory electricity marketing and pricing
- Reduce upfront costs to building geothermal
- Reform low- and moderate-income discount rates
- Establish new financing tools for customers to efficiently heat and cool buildings
- Make Mass Save more efficient and responsive

Power Innovation and Growth

- Create clean energy ready zones to accelerate development
- Share benefits of infrastructure investments with ratepayers and communities

Massachusetts Data Center Governance: Executive Order 658 Issued September 2026

9.8.2026 Protect and Support Ratepayers, Communities, and the Environment (EO 658)

The Healey-Driscoll Administration established that state agencies shall not issue permits to a data center project unless it has demonstrated conformance with the framework for responsible data center development and operations and submitted a community benefits agreement with key stakeholders.

Protect Ratepayers

- Requires data centers to procure enough clean energy to cover annual electric use or pay into a new Ratepayer Protection Fund.
- Recommends DPU advance large-load rate schedules to protect other ratepayers from added costs and prevent speculative developers from diverting resources needed to connect other customers.

Protect Communities

- Community benefits agreement required before state issues permits for any data center project 25 MW or more.
- Agreements must receive Office of Environmental Justice and Equity review.
- State agencies prohibited from signing NDAs with data center developers.

Protect the Environment

- Data centers must demonstrate compliance with air quality, water quantity and quality, and public health standards in MA law.
- DEP will evaluate data center greenhouse gas emissions under Clean Energy and Climate Plan.

EOEEA and EOED are required to publish a Municipal Guide by the end of the year, with EEA required to establish annual reporting and disclosure guidance for data center projects.

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Power Forward:
Bridging Grid Planning and Development

- Challenge
  - Municipalities and developers often lack early visibility into grid capacity, creating uncertainty around project feasibility, cost, and timing.

- What's Needed
  - Earlier, more actionable insights into grid capacity to inform development decisions before projects are too far along.

- Power Forward
  - Provides municipalities with tools and information to evaluate grid capacity at development sites- helping reduce uncertainty, improve siting decisions, and support affordable and mixed-use housing.
  - Allocates $3 million in funding to support municipalities in studying electric upgrade needs.

Power Forward Funding for Municipalities

- **Eligibility:** Engineering study funding is available to municipalities served by National Grid & Eversource.
- **Funding availability:** Up to $100,000 per eligible municipality per year.
- **Program cap:** $1.5 million in 2026 and $1.5 million in 2027 ($3 million total)
- **Limitations:** One funding allocation per municipality per year
- **Administration:** Funding available through Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER), in coordination with the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)

Eligibility Criteria

- "Adjacent", "Commuter Rail", or "Rapid Transit" MBTA communities that have adopted the specialized stretch code or are in Gateway Cities
- Top three MBTA communities for pending housing units (as of November 2025)
- Gateway Cities and mid-sized towns selected based on per capita income, recent growth, grid capacity, and location (Central and Western Massachusetts)

Thank You

Q&A

Link to OET Website for further Information:

SCAN ME

What is CELT?

- Massachusetts's CELT, **Clean Energy and Environment Legacy Transition**, which aids the state's plan for energy transition and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

- Inspired by Ireland’s MaREI model, the **Healey-Driscoll Administration partnered with UMass Lowell and Boston University** to drive clean energy, support local decarbonization, and grow the geothermal workforce.



Student Opportunity: OET Fellowship



OET Fellowship Program:

- 12-month fellowship for students from diverse backgrounds
- Real-world placements aligned with OET's key initiatives
- Fellows contribute directly to Massachusetts' clean energy transition
- Hands-on experience in policy, infrastructure, and energy planning
- Paid opportunity open to students in all areas of study and at all program levels

2027 Cohort Applications Now Open | January – December 2027

Student Opportunity: Municipal Fellowship

Municipal Fellowship: For Students

- 6-month fellowship supporting MA communities
- Gain experience in clean energy & local government
- Work directly with municipal leaders on real projects
- Build skills in policy, finance, electrification etc.
- Receive mentorship, training & career development
- Help towns advance energy transition goals
- Paid opportunity open to students in all areas of study and at all program levels



Project areas may include:

- Electrification & geothermal
- Grant writing & policy research
- Community outreach & communications
- Finance, budgeting, and data analysis

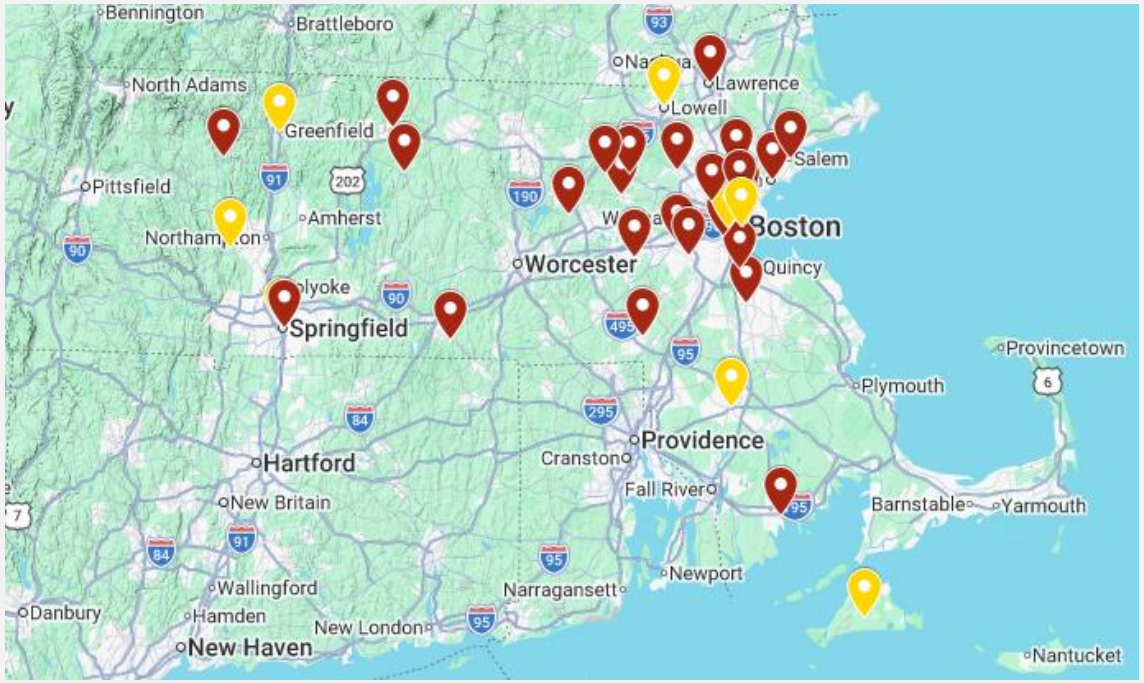
2027 Cohort Applications Now Open | January – July 2027

Interested in Hosting a Fellow?

Municipal Fellowship: For Municipalities

- No-cost support for energy transition projects
- Fellows placed based on community-specific needs
- Flexible, high-impact assistance
- Since May 2025, 40 students have been placed in 36 unique municipalities and organizations

- Any **town, city, regional agency, or organization that supports municipalities** can apply using the application form



Key:
Red identifies municipal placements | Yellow identifies regional planning agency (RPA) and organization placements

2027 Cohort Municipal Applications Now Open | January – December 2027

Fellowship Project Examples

OET:

- Several of the fellows have helped with drafting the report for the commission on fossil fuel workforce
- Stakeholder data base formulation
- Research on land-use planning and the positive impacts of successful city planning
- Research into financing alternatives and been a crucial help to progressing the work of the OET working group on financing the transition

Municipal:

- Neighborhood Scale Electrification/Electrify Arlington
- EV Charging Station Development
- School Building Development
- Grant Writing for Wastewater Energy Recovery initiative at Springfield Water & Sewer
- Sustainable Business Recognition Program
- Energy Audits & Stretch Specialized Codes for Residential & Commercial Buildings
- Regional Outdoor Recreation Inventory
- Climate Leader Grant

Thank you!



OET Fellowship



CELT Initiative



Municipal Fellowship

Questions?

Email macelt@uml.edu