



Local Government Project Portal Goal-Setting Guidance

Guidance for Setting a Renewable Electricity Goal: A Framework to Help Municipalities Achieve Their Objectives

Why set a renewable electricity goal? How can establishing renewable electricity goals help municipalities meet other key objectives? What aspects of renewable electricity goal setting are considered best practices?

This guidance document provides a framework for why and how to set a renewable electricity goal and discusses the key considerations and benefits of doing so. At the end of the document, a [four-page worksheet](#) provides users with actionable steps to set a renewable electricity goal.

If, in setting a renewable electricity goal, municipalities wish to *use* renewable electricity (rather than just generate it), they must substantiate the electricity as renewable and clarify the specific source/origin through Renewable Electricity Certificate (REC) ownership. RECs must be retained for the electricity to be considered [green power](#), which EPA defines as the subset of renewable technologies that provide the highest environmental benefit and reflect voluntary purchases, rather than mandatory purchases under state renewable portfolio standards.

By increasing use of renewable electricity for municipal operations, local governments can inspire and create pathways for citizens and neighboring towns and cities to follow suit. Using renewable electricity can boost the local economy, create jobs, help insulate against energy price risk, and contribute to a cleaner natural environment. Setting reasonable yet aggressive renewable electricity goals can serve as both the catalyst and the anchor for accomplishing these objectives.

This guidance document addresses the following questions:

- [What objectives do municipalities seek to accomplish by using renewable electricity?](#)
- [Why is goal setting important to meet renewable electricity objectives?](#)
- [What is the difference between the terms “energy” and “electricity”?](#)
- [What are the types of renewable electricity goals?](#)
- [Which municipalities have renewable electricity goals and how did they set their goals?](#)
- [What are key timing considerations for setting a renewable electricity goal?](#)
- [Which technologies should be considered in a renewable electricity goal?](#)
- [How can renewable electricity use create and support local jobs?](#)
- [How does current renewable electricity generation and/or use factor into goal setting?](#)
- [How does a state renewable portfolio standard affect goal setting and renewable electricity use?](#)
- [How might other state policies affect goal setting and renewable electricity use?](#)
- [How does organizational resource availability \(budgets and staffing\) influence goal setting?](#)
- [How to include internal stakeholders in the renewable electricity goal-setting process?](#)
- [How to include external stakeholders in the renewable electricity goal-setting process?](#)
- [What is the best way to communicate a goal?](#)



What objectives do municipalities seek to accomplish by using renewable electricity?

Municipalities should consider their objectives at the beginning of the goal setting process. A municipality may seek to use renewable electricity for:

- Environmental and health benefits, such as reducing harmful air emissions and improved public health;
- Local economic benefits and job creation resulting from project development;
- Electricity cost savings and increased operational efficiencies;
- Budgetary risk reduction due to the long-term price certainty of certain renewable electricity contract types;
- Energy system or infrastructure resiliency;
- Community pride due to environmental leadership/stewardship.

Narrowing down the municipality's primary reason(s) to use renewable electricity will help motivate, focus, and unify teams tasked with implementing renewable electricity projects; having clear objectives will then help prioritize project options.

- If municipalities seek to claim the associated [environmental benefits](#) from a project, they must retain the environmental attributes or [RECs](#) associated with any generation from a renewable resource to [rightfully substantiate renewable electricity use claims](#). To ensure your use makes a difference, the municipality should also prevent those RECS from being counted towards regulatory requirements, such as state renewable portfolio standards.
- If municipalities seek to create [local jobs](#), they should choose to build a project locally with local developers and contractors.
- If municipalities seek additional revenue, where substantiating renewable electricity use claims are not a key objective, they may opt to [sell the environmental attributes or RECs](#) associated with the project to another party in order to lower the delivered cost of electricity from the project.
- If they seek cost savings and price stability, municipalities might investigate self-generation or a [Power Purchase Agreement](#) supply option, which may or may not be sited locally.
- If municipalities seek to increase their infrastructure resiliency, they may consider an [on-site solar system with battery storage](#).
- If municipalities seek to [demonstrate environmental leadership](#), they may set an ambitious goal either by using high percentage of renewable electricity, a rapid achievement date, or both.

Different motivations may suggest competing paths or priorities to achieve the final project outcome. Primary renewable electricity motivations should be addressed with municipal colleagues and agreed to at the beginning of the goal setting process to best inform project options and support future success in implementing them.

Why is goal setting important to meet renewable electricity objectives?

Setting concrete, publicized goals increases a municipality's chances of succeeding in generating and/or using more renewable electricity. The goal setting process establishes the necessary internal buy-in from key stakeholders early on. Working together across departments towards a clear end-goal will also help develop a compelling case for use of municipal resources. Additionally, municipalities with a goal can better measure progress over time and retain institutional continuity. Although municipal staff and organizational leadership may change, public goals can continue to focus staff and resources to achieve progress toward a longer-term

renewable electricity commitment. Based on various stakeholder experiences, organizations are more likely to achieve their environmental goals when goals are publicly announced.

What is the difference between the terms “energy” and “electricity”?

Electricity is a subset of *energy*, and therefore the use of each term in goal setting can lead to practical implications in how municipalities set and implement their goals. *Energy*, a broader term, includes all energy sources, such as fuels for vehicles, heating, and on-site combustion, in addition to electricity. While RECs apply to emissions associated with purchased electricity, they do not mitigate emissions from other energy sources. Although this EPA guidance document is geared towards setting a solar renewable electricity goal, municipalities can also use the guidance to set other, broader renewable energy goals.

What are the types of renewable electricity goals?

A renewable electricity goal is generally expressed in terms of a **solar system size** (generating capacity in kilowatts or megawatts) or as a **performance-based goal** (percentage of renewable electricity generation and/or use in kilowatt-hours by a certain year). Municipalities can also express their goals as a **percentage reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions** if they are purchasing renewable electricity to reduce their emissions footprint.

Municipalities should also specify if renewable electricity goals apply to their municipal operations or to their entire communities’ electricity use. EPA’s [Local Government Solar Project Portal](#) highlights various examples of municipal renewable electricity goals. Municipalities can also consult NREL’s [training PowerPoint](#) to learn more about different terminology used in goal setting.

What are key rationales for different types of renewable electricity goals?

System Size Goals

System size goals (expressed in kilowatts or megawatts of generating capacity) may be more likely to support local economic development, as the municipality is committing to install a certain amount of generating capacity. A municipality must consider whether adequate opportunities exist to site a system within the community to meet a fixed capacity target; if not, a municipality can consider siting a project outside the community. While system size goals can result in more built capacity, the generation resulting from projects only conveys renewable electricity use if the municipality retains the associated RECs. NREL’s [PVWatts Calculator](#) can help estimate the system size potential to fit a certain location and its projected annual generation of electricity in kilowatt-hours (kWh).

Performance-based Goals

Performance-based goals (expressed in percentages) account for efforts to reduce electricity use with energy efficiency projects, potentially making it easier to achieve a given percentage of renewable electricity generation and/or use. If the municipality’s electric load increases, (e.g. due to urban growth) it may be more difficult to meet a specific percentage of renewable electricity use.

What are key rationales for different types of renewable electricity goals?

GHG Emission Reduction Goals

GHG emission reduction goals account for more than increased renewable electricity use, where using renewable electricity often helps reduce GHG emissions substantially. Organizations that specifically seek to measure and manage their GHGs should follow the appropriate accounting standards, namely the [GHG Protocol's Standard](#) and related [Scope 2 Guidance](#). Additional [guidance](#) is available from EPA and other organizations, including the [Science-Based Targets Initiative](#), which helps organizations set ambitious yet achievable GHG emission reduction goals. EPA considers setting an absolute GHG emission reduction goal to be a best practice since intensity-based reduction goals may still allow for GHG emission increases.

Which municipalities have renewable electricity goals and how did they set their goals?

While setting their goals, municipalities can investigate how other governments of similar sizes or from similar regions have set goals via EPA's [Local Government Solar Project Portal](#). On the Portal, municipalities can sort participants by state and view what other cities have accomplished. The Portal features large-scale renewable electricity commitments by [New York City](#), [Philadelphia](#), and [Chicago](#), as well as goals from smaller cities, such as [Creve Coeur, MO](#); [Durango, CO](#); and [Ashland, OR](#). Municipalities are also encouraged to participate in any regional sustainability networks, such as [USDN Partner Networks](#), to learn how peer cities may be pursuing renewable electricity goals and use.

What are key timing considerations for setting a renewable electricity goal?

Every goal should have an achievement date, which helps keep relevant stakeholders motivated and on track to achieve progress. In setting this end date, municipalities should set an aggressive, yet reasonable, goal. What scale of project is achievable in 5 or 10 years? What types of investments in electricity infrastructure do community leaders seek to implement within the next 10 to 20 years? Such information should inform the chosen achievement date for the renewable electricity goal. If approval and construction processes often require additional time, municipalities should factor such timelines into the overall renewable electricity project development timeline.

EPA encourages all organizations to set near-term interim targets to help galvanize resources and internal action to meet the long-term end goal. For example, in the near term, municipalities could set a target to develop a concrete action plan in six months, alongside a two-year target to accomplish a large-scale project. [Step 2 in the Local Government Solar Project Portal](#) focuses on crafting such a plan. EPA recommends setting a "half-way target," namely half of any stated objective(s) by a certain year. For example, [Ashland, OR](#) (see page 30 in the linked document) set a goal to reduce fossil fuel consumption by 50 percent by 2030 and 100 percent by 2050. Deciding which end-date and interim targets are reasonable will depend on a municipality's resource and policy constraints.

Which technologies should be considered in a renewable electricity goal?

How a municipality defines eligible renewable technologies will impact the types of projects and supply options used to achieve the goal. Again, **EPA uses the market definition of [green power](#) as the subset of renewable technologies that provide the highest environmental benefit**, a definition that municipalities could also adopt. EPA also considers green power purchases to be voluntary, rather than mandatory under state renewable portfolio standards. State definitions for eligible renewable electricity may differ, however, and are often driven by non-environmental considerations including economic, job creation, and land use objectives. Depending on primary motivations for using renewable electricity (such as local renewable electricity use or local job creation), municipalities may choose to include or exclude certain sources from

their definition of eligible renewable resources. Additionally, the local availability of renewable resources or the municipality's willingness to engage with non-local projects can factor into your selection. Depending on local supply options, a goal that stipulates only using on-site resources may need to be less aggressive than a goal which allows use of larger-scale off-site projects. Also, if municipalities seek to participate in recognition programs (such as [EPA's Green Power Partnership](#)) or to collaborate with other organizations or registries, they may choose to use renewable resources that are eligible for those programs.

How can renewable electricity use create and support local jobs?

Renewable electricity projects may create local jobs directly via project planning, component manufacturing and transport, installation, grid connection, and ongoing operations and maintenance. According to the [International Renewable Energy Agency](#), on average, 73 percent of the jobs created by an onshore wind project or a solar PV project are local installation and maintenance jobs. Renewable electricity projects can also indirectly spur job creation in related sectors, such as energy-use management, project financing, sales, consulting, and environmental sustainability. Municipalities can encourage local economic benefits by emphasizing their priorities with developers and contractors. In requests for proposals (RFPs), some municipalities require developers to hire a specific number or percentage of local positions, and/or to offer job training programs during project installation. Some municipalities have also re-examined local planning and zoning ordinances, permitting processes, and financing options to support local growth and job-related economic benefits from renewable project development. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory has a [Jobs and Economic Impact \(JEDI\) model](#), which is a user-friendly screening tool that estimates the economic impacts of projects across various stages of the project development and operational pathway.

How does current renewable electricity generation and/or use factor into goal setting?

When setting a goal, municipalities should first determine how much renewable electricity is currently being generated and/or used for municipal operations annually. Such information is often available from an energy or facilities manager or electric service provider. EPA's [Guide to Making Claims About Solar Power Use](#) provides more information on the impact of RECs on environmental claims for municipalities seeking to claim use of renewable electricity.

Current percentage of renewable electricity use will serve as a helpful baseline from which to determine an ambitious, yet feasible renewable electricity goal. For instance, if a city already uses 10 percent renewable electricity in 2018, then 50 percent by 2025 might be an achievable goal, whereas 40 percent renewable electricity use by 2025 might represent a stretch goal for a municipality that currently does not use any renewable electricity. Urban municipalities may wish to estimate what percentage of feasible sites, such as rooftops, parking lots, and critical infrastructure sites, already have renewables installed. While most municipalities need not conduct a full site assessment prior to setting a goal, estimating the number of viable sites may help in setting a reasonable goal, especially when considering a renewable electricity goal based on system size or seeking to source renewable electricity from projects sited on municipally-owned facilities.

How does a state renewable portfolio standard affect goal setting and renewable electricity use?

Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia have renewable portfolio standards (RPSs). These state policies generally require investor-owned utilities (and potentially publicly-owned utilities) to increase renewable electricity use within a specified timeframe. Eight additional states have non-binding renewable electricity goals. RPS policies with rigorous requirements to increase renewable electricity use typically result in active markets, higher REC prices, and experienced market players, which may influence and affect goal setting. The U.S. Department of Energy's [DSIRE](#) database or the [National Conference of State Legislatures' map](#) are helpful sources of information on renewable portfolio standards and goals.

Voluntary renewable electricity use (i.e. green power) should not count toward state RPS requirements, if the municipality is seeking to increase renewable electricity use and reduce their emissions footprint. For instance, when setting a renewable electricity goal in Nevada, which requires an investor-owned utility to supply 25% renewable electricity to rate payers by 2025, a local government should set a goal that is additive, such as 50% renewable electricity use by 2025, which explicitly accounts for the renewable electricity use required by state policy. In limited instances where states may have a 100% renewable energy target, such as Hawaii, all new generation ultimately counts towards the RPS and therefore incremental voluntary action does not result in incremental environmental benefit.

Some municipalities have publicly-owned or municipally-owned utilities. This goal setting guidance document is not designed to set goals for increasing a publicly-owned utility's use of renewable electricity. Rather, it is oriented toward municipalities that are interested in generating and/or using renewable electricity for the municipal government's operational electricity needs.

Several state RPS policies have additional targets for specific technologies like solar. The presence of a specific target (also known as a carve-out) for solar is likely to raise demand for RECs from eligible sources of solar power, leading to higher market prices for solar RECs. In those markets, project developers commonly propose selling the RECs from projects eligible to meet an RPS's technology carve-out, to improve the project's economics. However, if those RECs are sold to increase the project's revenue, then the electricity customer has also sold the associated claims of using "renewable" power. In these cases, project developers commonly offer a REC swap or "arbitrage" option, whereby the proceeds from the RPS-eligible RECs are used to purchase replacement RECs from a different project, which allow the customer to still substantiate renewable electricity use claims. [EPA's REC Arbitrage guidance document](#) provides more information on this approach.

How might other state policies affect goal setting and renewable electricity use?

Solar policies can vary dramatically from state to state, including by electricity market structure (competitive retail vs. traditionally-regulated), by the requirements that developers must adhere to when connecting a project to the grid (interconnection standards), by policies such as net-metering that affect project cost recovery options, and by in-state utility rates and tax incentives. Thus, EPA recommends that municipalities consult EPA's [Green Power Supply Options Screening Tool](#) (XLSM) (1 pg, 125 K), which explains how certain policies affect project development and suggests viable supply options for specific geographic regions. After using the screening tool, municipalities can review NREL's interactive [Mid-Market Solar Policies site](#), which further explains each state's policy landscape regarding mid-scale solar projects (those from ~50 kilowatts to 2 MW). NREL's resources help one determine how policy circumstances in different states might affect project sizes, and therefore, determine a feasible, appropriately-sized goal. For instance, if a state does not allow [net-metering](#), a municipality will likely seek to install a smaller solar project to consume all electricity produced on-site, and will account for smaller project sizes when setting a goal. In other states, policies may support access to larger-scale projects, making a more ambitious goal achievable. The Department of Energy's [Solar Policy Toolkit](#) provides further resources on solar policies. Overall, a robust knowledge of a state's policy landscape will better inform the goal setting process and help set an appropriate goal.

How does organizational resource availability (budgets and staffing) influence goal setting?

Since a large renewable electricity project requires financial resources and staff effort to plan and execute, determining the scope of available resources will help municipalities set ambitious, yet feasible goals. Has an environmental manager or other full-time position been allocated to execute the renewable electricity project? Do the available staff have some time to dedicate to this effort? Alternatively, does the municipality have an energy or sustainability committee whose efforts could be leveraged? The availability of a full-time staff member or committee available to work on project implementation could influence the type and level of renewable electricity goal chosen and will improve chances of accomplishing the goal.

Next, municipalities should evaluate several potential funding sources. For example, does the municipality have access to a capital improvements fund? Have funds been set aside for sustainability projects? Are grants available through the local utility for renewable electricity projects? Some renewable electricity projects, such as [power purchase agreements](#), do not require capital investment and may save the municipality money on electricity costs immediately. Other arrangements, such as solar land leases, can even generate revenue for a municipality. More information about these financing options is available in the Department of Energy's short guidance document, [Solar as a Revenue Generator for Local Governments](#). Large funding sources are not always necessary to successfully increase renewable electricity use. However, the process of setting a goal and studying the feasibility of various project types *will* require both time and budgetary resources. Thus, municipalities would benefit from an accurate assessment of these resources.

Third, municipalities should consider the time needed to accomplish a municipal project. How long do the planning and commitment stages generally take for similar capital investment projects, design and approval processes, and construction? When choosing a goal achievement date, municipalities should allot sufficient time to accomplish each of the [Project Development Pathway Steps](#); EPA recommends allotting 16 to 24 months to complete a mid-size renewable electricity project.

Finally, municipalities should consider the availability of various types of regional renewable electricity sources. For example, is geothermal or hydropower an option locally? Are there viable biomass or biogas options? Though solar and wind technologies are viable in most parts of the U.S., municipalities should conduct a preliminary assessment of local sites that could be viable for an installation prior to setting a goal. To do so, they can list any municipal properties that might be suitable for a larger-scale solar installation, such as parking lots, cleared fields, brownfields, and the roofs of any large municipal buildings or critical infrastructure locations. Municipalities need not conduct a detailed site assessment before setting a goal, however, [considering future project development steps](#), assessing potential aspects of a renewable electricity development plan, and collecting site data using the EPA [Solar Site Assessment and Utility Data Spreadsheet](#) can all help municipalities set a reasonable renewable electricity goal.

How to include internal stakeholders in the renewable electricity goal-setting process?

Engaging internal stakeholders to secure commitments from relevant decision makers will enable a smoother goal setting process. Project leads should secure support from municipal leadership and engage the participation of key internal stakeholders to solicit feedback on a proposed renewable electricity goal. Typically, staff from the following departments (or local equivalent) should be engaged: the Mayor's office, Facilities and Operations, Environmental Sustainability, Procurement/Purchasing, Communications, Legal, Finance, and Public Works. Other influential stakeholders may also need to be included. This short [video on Stakeholder Analysis](#) provides guidance on which stakeholders to engage, at what frequency, and what information they need to be supportive of a specific initiative. It recommends creating a "power grid," to plot stakeholders with the most interest in the project and the most influence over its outcomes. Powerful, interested stakeholders should be engaged early and thoroughly, to secure their support for the initiative. Interested stakeholders with less influence over its outcomes can be consulted periodically as the project progresses. Finally, stakeholders with little interest in a renewable electricity goal who, nonetheless, retain influence and decision-making power, should be provided with key information that could align with their priorities to facilitate their support.

In addition to securing support from leadership, municipalities should identify an internal "champion" to resolve any procedural or informational barriers among stakeholders. Before setting a goal, the champion should anticipate and seek to resolve any stakeholder concerns. For example, the Facilities Department may express concern over increased maintenance duties. The champion can explain that renewable electricity project contracts feature different operations and maintenance options, including maintenance as a developer responsibility, whereby the project would not place additional burdens on the Facilities Department. The Procurement Office might be concerned about the potential project cost and the

anticipated complexity of the contract. The champion can explain that some supply options, such as power purchase agreements, require no up-front capital costs, and that [several resources](#) exist to help governments navigate the RFP and contract negotiation processes. The Mayor's Office and Communications department might be concerned with how other peer towns and cities are using renewable electricity and may seek to publicly differentiate the municipality's leadership on renewable electricity. The champion can emphasize recent studies confirming widespread public support for renewable electricity projects. For example, according to a 2011 National Marketing Institute study, at least 80% of American consumers support the use of renewable energy. Effectively managing the concerns of all important stakeholders will ensure that the entire municipal team works together effectively to achieve renewable electricity goals.

How to include external stakeholders in the renewable electricity goal-setting process?

In drafting a renewable electricity goal, municipalities should also consult external stakeholders, such as small businesses, citizens, project site neighbors, surrounding towns, and the media, to garner support for a renewable electricity goal. External stakeholder engagement can also identify any unforeseen barriers and concerns prior to setting a goal. Project leads are encouraged to conduct community feedback sessions to solicit input on the primary objectives of a renewable electricity goal, the type of goal, the amount of renewable electricity included, the end-date, and any interim targets. Similar to the process for internal stakeholder engagement, project leads should anticipate concerns from various external stakeholder groups and work to proactively alleviate them prior to finalizing the goal. After gathering external feedback on a draft goal, project leads can work with the relevant internal stakeholders to modify or finalize the goal. Additional resources related to external stakeholder engagement are available on [EPA's Toolbox for Renewable Energy Project Development](#).

What is the best way to communicate a goal?

Municipalities may announce a public commitment by posting it on a [municipal webpage](#), publishing it in an [environmental action plan](#), and/or issuing a [press release](#), as some examples. This [factsheet](#) provides further examples of how municipalities have expressed their goals. Alternatively, some towns may choose to pass a legally binding municipal resolution, which formally commits the municipality to achieve a goal by a certain year. How the goal is expressed and communicated (e.g. publishing a non-binding goal or working with the city council to sign a resolution) can affect how municipalities work with stakeholders to garner support for the goal and the timing of when the goal is released.

In addition to publicizing their goals on their websites and/or issuing press releases or public statements, EPA encourages municipalities to celebrate their renewable electricity goals via social media, with local community partnerships, and on [EPA's Local Government Solar Project Portal](#) to demonstrate leadership and provide examples for other municipalities to follow. EPA can assist municipalities in creating credible public outreach messaging regarding their renewable electricity goal and can feature the goal on [EPA's Green Power Partnership LinkedIn Group](#). EPA encourages municipalities to develop creative messaging and visuals that can galvanize and maintain support for project development towards meeting the goal. For example, municipalities could create a solar project "thermometer" that measures progress toward the goal and/or host a community-wide celebration when projects are completed and they meet their goals. By showcasing their renewable electricity goals and outreach efforts on the [Local Government Solar Project Portal](#), municipalities can also help foster and disseminate best practices to their peers.

Worksheet for Renewable Electricity Goal Setting

Based on the guidance provided above for setting a renewable electricity goal, the following worksheet provides the necessary logistical steps to successfully complete the goal setting process.

1. Determine primary reasons for generating and/or using renewable electricity. Check the most compelling reasons that best reflect your municipality's objectives in using renewable electricity. Then, write out a renewable electricity Vision Statement to help guide and focus the project team throughout the project development pathway.

- Environmental and health benefits of increased renewable electricity generation in the community, such as reduced air pollution and improved public health;
- Local economic benefits and local job creation resulting from project development;
- Electricity cost savings and increased operational efficiencies resulting from self-generation;
- Budgetary risk reduction due to long-term price certainty and predictability of electricity prices;
- Energy system or infrastructure resiliency;
- Environmental leadership, including emissions and air pollution reductions;
- Other _____.

Determine if your municipality seeks to generate *and* use renewable electricity. Keep in mind, if your municipality wants to claim use of renewable electricity, your municipality must retain the associated environmental attributes (ie. RECs) to substantiate use of "renewable" electricity *and to establish that your purchase makes a difference above what would otherwise occur absent voluntary procurement.*

- Generate renewable electricity (without RECs)
- Use renewable electricity (maintain REC ownership)

Vision Statement

2. Explore how other towns and cities have set renewable electricity goals. EPA recommends using EPA's [Local Government Solar Project Portal](#) to evaluate examples of goals and commitments from other municipalities. Regional sustainability networks, such as [USDN Partner Networks](#), may also provide information on renewable electricity initiatives in nearby cities.

- Examples to follow from other municipalities' goals: _____
- How is their goal or the way they structured their public commitment inspiring? _____
- List possible local, regional, and/or sustainability or infrastructure-related networks for participation: _____

3. **Assess municipal resources and policy constraints.** Gather a realistic picture of available municipal resources and potential constraints to set an ambitious, yet feasible goal.

How long does a project of this scale typically take? _____

When should the project be completed? _____

How much renewable electricity is the city currently using? _____%

How much does grid-generated electricity cost locally? ___ per kWh

What is the difference between conventional electricity prices and the projected cost to self-generate electricity from a solar project? If the costs to self-generate electricity are equal to or less than costs of purchasing conventional power, the project may be financially viable. If not, project leads should reassess the financial viability of the project in the context of your municipality's broader objectives in seeking to generate and/or use renewable electricity.

How much budget is available to accomplish higher renewable electricity use? \$ _____

Are there existing funds, [financing options](#), or grants that could be used? Yes No

Specify: _____

Does my state have a competitive retail electricity market? Yes No

Does my state have a Renewable Portfolio Standard? Yes No

If so, what is it? _____

Does my state allow net-metering? Yes No

Does my state allow for third party ownership or financing arrangements for developing projects?

Yes No Specify below:

4. **Determine members of an internal renewable electricity implementation team.** Check the departments that will form the internal municipal team or committee. Some possibilities include staff from:

The Mayor's Office

Environmental Sustainability

Facilities and Operations

Public Works

Procurement/Purchasing

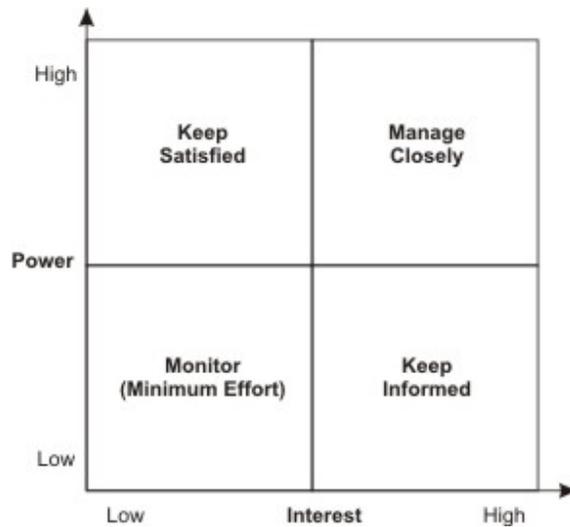
Finance

Legal

Other(s) _____

- Lead staff member or internal “champion”: _____
- Proposed members of the renewable electricity advisory committee, which may include citizens and local business owners: _____

5. **Conduct a stakeholder analysis.** On the grid below, plot relevant internal and external stakeholders (e.g. specific municipal leaders, colleagues, internal decision makers, allied department heads, influential stakeholders) based on their interest in the project and influence on its outcomes. See this [video](#) for an example of how to fill out the grid.



- Which stakeholders need to be engaged more versus less closely engaged? _____
- What are their primary concerns? _____

- What information will alleviate their concerns? _____

6. **Work with internal stakeholders to set a draft goal.** The information below provides examples of how municipalities can structure their interim and end goals.

- Draft renewable electricity goal (percentage-based or system size goal):**
 _____ % by _____ or _____ KW installed by _____
- Interim Targets:** Finalize a renewable electricity Implementation Plan by _____ (i.e., *~one year from now*)
 _____ % by _____ (i.e., *~3 to 5 years from now*)
 _____ % by _____ (i.e., *half-way target*)

_____ % by _____ (i.e., ~3 to 5 years before the overall end-date)
_____ % of local solar by _____

7. Garner support and feedback for a draft goal from external stakeholders. Municipalities should engage residents, business owners, and any other influential community stakeholders early to build support for the project and address concerns to ensure project success.

What outreach strategy, tactics, and deliverables (e.g. materials) will most effectively engage community stakeholders?

Who will lead the development and distribution of external communications materials (e.g. flyers, posters, email blasts, blog posts, stakeholder meetings, etc.)? _____

Proposed date by which draft external outreach materials will receive internal approval: _____

Proposed date(s) by which staff will engage external stakeholders with key outreach tactics:

Proposed date(s) for public engagement meetings (e.g. resident town hall(s)) (if applicable):

Proposed date by which internal team must incorporate stakeholder feedback into a final goal proposal: _____

Proposed date(s) for internal stakeholders to meet, discuss, and *finalize* goal: _____

Proposed date and mechanisms (e.g. press release, social media, etc.) for publicly announcing goal:

8. Publicize goal! EPA encourages municipalities to celebrate their success in committing to a renewable electricity goal. Municipalities should email their goal to EPASolarPortal@erg.com (contractor in support of EPA) to feature their goals on EPA's [Local Government Solar Project Portal](#).

Renewable electricity goal: _____ % by _____ (or) _____ KW installed by _____

Interim targets: Finalize a renewable electricity Implementation Plan by _____

_____ % by _____ _____ % by _____

_____ % by _____ _____ % of local solar by _____

Press release date (if applicable): _____

EPA notified of new goal by email? Yes No

Congratulations on setting a renewable electricity goal!