



Resources for Solar-Ready Communities

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Michigan Energy Office Overview

- The Michigan Energy Office (MEO) is a U.S. Department of Energy-designated State Energy Office, and operates as a division of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)/MSF.
- It promotes energy efficiency and renewable energy to Michigan's residents, businesses, non-profits, and public institutions through a variety of programs as a way to foster community and economic reinvention in the state.



- MEO's Mission is:
 - To support sound energy policy and programs that promote economic growth and efficiency;
 - To reduce state dependence on imported energy resources; and,
 - To contribute to creating and retaining Michigan jobs.

Key Roles and Activities

- Advise the Governor and Legislators and work with other state departments on energy and economic development issues;
- Communicate the importance of energy issues to economic development and the environment;
- Provide education/outreach via publications and sponsored events
- Demonstrate applications of emerging energy technologies in real-world settings;
- Provide technical assistance to businesses, organizations, residents, and communities on energy efficiency & renewable energy topics.
- Assist in revitalizing Michigan communities by encouraging energy-related planning and investments;
- Offer information and incentives to assist businesses and organizations to reduce utility bills and energy waste;
- Support advanced manufacturing and industrial efficiency to retain and create jobs.

MEO's Energy Efficiency Initiatives

- Goals: Encourage cost-effective energy upgrades that reduce operating costs, support local job creation, and free up capital to re-invest in businesses and communities over the long term.
- Client types include:
 - Public schools
 - Colleges & universities,
 - Public housing authorities,
 - Local governments,
 - Nonprofits,
 - Small businesses,
 - Manufacturing sector,
 - and others.
- Along with our strategic partners, we provide:
 - Utility bill analysis & ENERGY STAR Benchmarking
 - Introductory Energy Evaluations (IEEs) with recommendations for no-cost, low-cost, and comprehensive improvements
 - Targeted grants for energy efficiency projects (building retrofits, LED street lighting, building operator certification training incentives, etc.)
 - Assistance in identifying additional project resources and partnership opportunities

MEO's Renewable Energy Program

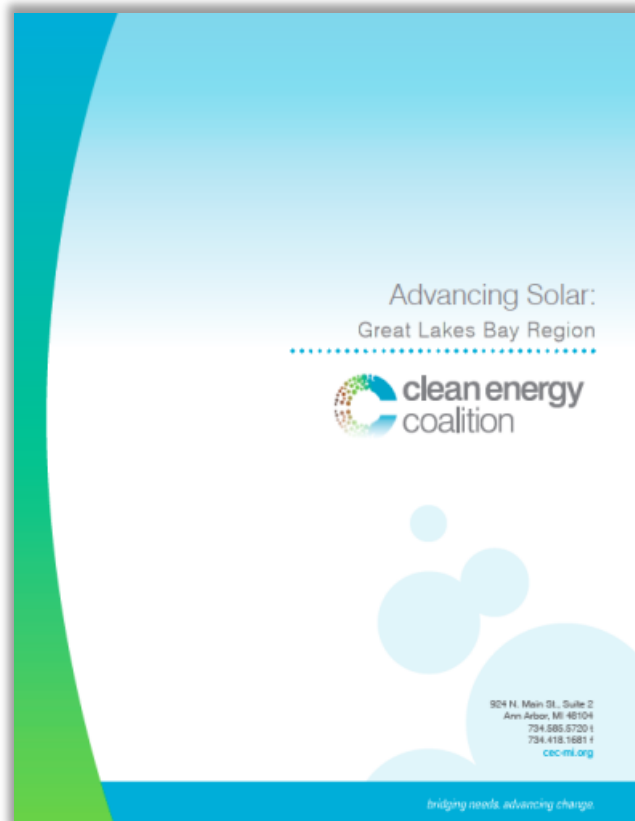
- Goal: To facilitate the sustainable production and use of renewable energy resources as an alternative to fossil fuels.
- There is currently a strong program emphasis on solar energy, with other support for biomass and wind initiatives available on an as-needed basis.
- Similar client types as EE initiatives, but current focus is on providing assistance to local governments and community-based organizations.
- MEO's Renewable Energy initiatives focus on:
 - Education/Outreach
 - Building and Leveraging Strategic Partnerships
 - Technical Assistance
 - Targeted Feasibility and Demonstration Projects
 - Community Energy Planning
 - Providing support for projects that maximize local talent, investment, and resources.

Solar-Ready Community Initiative

- The Michigan Energy Office is currently working with communities to help them prepare for and attract solar energy developments and businesses through its Solar-Ready Community initiative.
- The goal of this effort is to help local governments create a welcoming environment for solar installations through strategic community planning.
- Through this process, local governments can reduce the money and time spent by customers, businesses, installers, and municipal staff when evaluating solar projects.



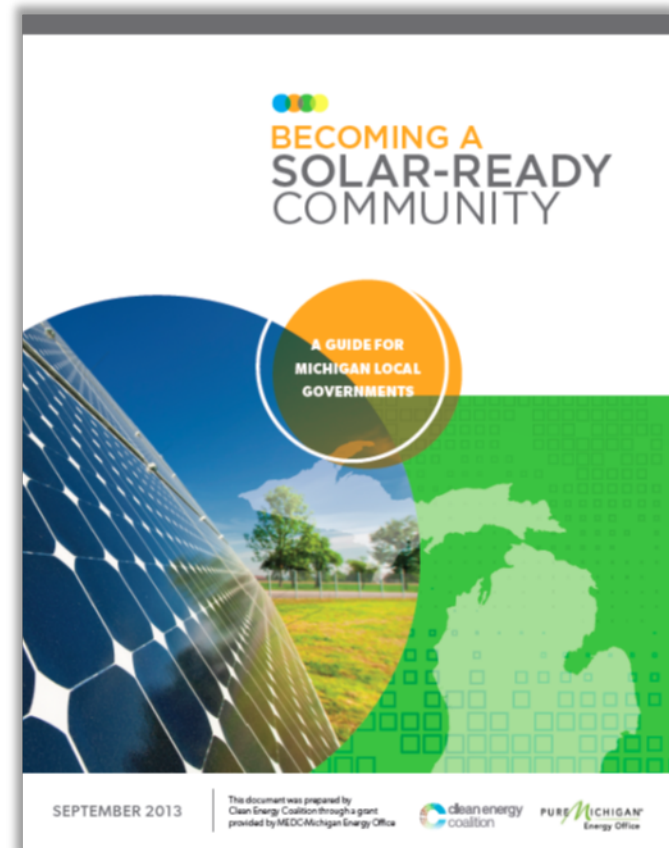
Advancing Solar: Great Lakes Bay Region



- The Solar-Ready initiative emerged from the “Advancing Solar: Great Lakes Bay Region” project, conducted in 2012.
- This project evaluated permitting processes, solar zoning ordinances, and application processes across four municipalities in the City of Midland, City of Saginaw, Thomas Township, and Williams Township.
- During this project, it was discovered that the process and costs for installing solar PV varied widely among jurisdictions.

Becoming a Solar-Ready Community

- In 2013, MEO and Clean Energy Coalition developed a Solar-Ready Community guidebook.
- The guidebook includes an overview of solar terminology and other background information; a 10-step process; sample planning, zoning, and permitting language; and links to other resources that community planning staff can refer to when drafting solar guidance documents.
- It is available at:
http://cec-mi.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Guide-Book_Solar_FINAL_web.pdf



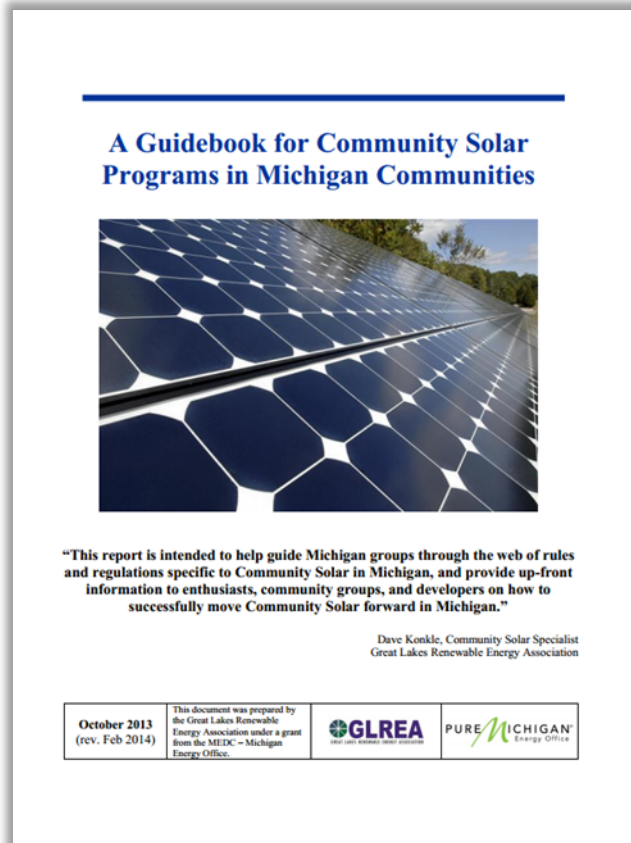
10 Steps to Becoming Solar-Ready

- The ten steps to Solar-Readiness include:
 - Step 1: Begin the discussion
 - Step 2: Adopt a Resolution
 - Step 3: Establish a Guiding Policy that Supports Solar
 - Step 4: Update Code Language
 - Step 5: Create an Easy-to-Use Permitting Process
 - Step 6: Provide Easy Access to Information
 - Step 7: Establish Solar Installation Targets
 - Step 8: Train Staff
 - Step 9: Pursue Solar Business Development Opportunities
 - Step 10: Go the Extra Mile
- Many of these steps can be taken simultaneously and all can be adapted to suit local needs.

In Progress/What's Next?

- A grant was recently awarded to Clean Energy Coalition to provide direct technical assistance to the Village of Chelsea and City of Flint, and provide outreach and guidance to other interested communities.
- As part of this grant, a workshop is tentatively being planned for Dec/Jan to showcase the work done by Michigan communities so far and to generate additional interest and feedback.
- MEO is currently evaluating how the Solar-Ready initiative may evolve to more closely align with other programs at MEDC.
- MEO is also considering how the Solar-Ready process may be expanded to include consideration of other Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, and other Green/Sustainable Community opportunities.
- Feedback gained this year will help to shape the direction of this and other initiatives in FY16.

A Guidebook for Community Solar



- Another tool which may be of interest to communities pursuing solar is the Michigan Community Solar Guidebook: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdcd/Michigan_Community_Solar_Guidebook_437888_7.pdf
- The guidebook examines existing legislation and regulations specific to Michigan, identifies barriers, and recommends solutions and scenarios to encourage the development of community solar in Michigan.
- It is intended to assist a variety of groups in understanding the options available and the steps necessary to plan and implement successful projects.

Current MEO Funding Opportunities

- Current funding opportunities from the Michigan Energy Office are posted at:
<http://www.michiganbusiness.org/public-notices-rfps/>
- Energy Loan Fund Notice of Available Funding:
<http://www.michiganbusiness.org/public-notices-requests-for-proposals/energy-loan-fund-notice-of-available-funding/>
- Retooling and Manufacturing Grant Opportunity Request for Proposals:
<http://www.michiganbusiness.org/public-notices-requests-for-proposals/retooling-and-manufacturing-grant-opportunity-request-for-proposals/>
- LED Street Lighting Project Request for Proposals:
<http://www.michiganbusiness.org/public-notices-requests-for-proposals/led-street-lighting-project-request-for-proposals/>
- Electric Vehicle Charging Station Project Request for Proposals:
<http://www.michiganbusiness.org/public-notices-requests-for-proposals/electric-vehicle-charging-station-project-request-for-proposals/>
- Encouraging Green Building Initiative Request for Proposals:
<http://www.michiganbusiness.org/public-notices-requests-for-proposals/state-energy-program-encouraging-green-building-initiative-request-for-proposals/>
- Community Energy Manager Pilot Request for Proposals:
<http://www.michiganbusiness.org/public-notices-requests-for-proposals/state-energy-program-community-energy-manager-pilot-request-for-proposals/>

Additional Resources

- Becoming a Solar-Ready Community: A Guide for Michigan Local Governments: http://cec-mi.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Guide-Book_Solar_FINAL_web.pdf
- Advancing Solar: Great Lakes Bay Region: <http://cec-mi.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/AdvancingSolarintheGreatLakesBayRegion.pdf>
- Renewable Energy Community Guidebook for Michigan Residents and Small Businesses: http://cec-mi.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Guide-Book_Renewable-Tools_FINAL_web.pdf
- A Guidebook for Community Solar Programs in Michigan Communities: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdcd/Michigan_Community_Solar_Guidebook_437888_7.pdf
- Solar Powering Your Community: A Guide for Local Governments: http://www4.eere.energy.gov/solar/sunshot/resource_center/sites/default/files/solar-powering-your-community-guide-for-local-governments.pdf
- Michigan Interfaith Power & Light Solar Aggregation Project: <http://www.miipl.org/projects-grants-proposals/current-projects/solar-aggregation-feasibility-study/>
- Michigan Public Service Commission: <http://www.michigan.gov/mpsc>
- Readyng Michigan to Make Good Energy Decisions – Renewable Energy: <http://www.michigan.gov/energy>
- GVSU's Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center (MAREC): <http://www.gvsu.edu/marec/>
- Michigan Saves: <http://www.michigansaves.org/>
- Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency: <http://www.dsireusa.org/>
- Grants.gov: <http://www.grants.gov>
- DOE EERE Funding Opportunity Exchange: <https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/>
- USDA Rural Development – Energy Programs: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/Energy.html>
- MEDC Capital Locator Tool: <http://www.michiganbusiness.org/capital-locator/>
- MiPlace Toolkit: <http://miplace.org/resources/funding>

Closing Remarks

- Sharing knowledge and resources will help to shorten the learning curve for us all and promote quicker development and spread of best practices.
 - What are some ways we could do more with limited resources?
 - Do you have an experience others could learn from?
 - Do you know of an opportunity others could benefit from?
- Please share any feedback you may have that will assist us in providing the best possible programs.





Questions?

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For more information on MEDC's business and community development programs, visit:

www.michiganbusiness.org

Or call 1-888-522-0103

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