Landmark Legislation Will Create New Financing Model for Local Clean Energy Projects

Applied Solutions is participating in the establishment of a major initiative that has the potential to accelerate clean energy project design and implementation at the local level. As part of this effort, Applied Solutions is requesting letters of support for a new financing vehicle that could be a potential game changer for counties and cities eager to spur clean economies at the local level.

The financing model currently under consideration by the Hawaii state legislature, if passed, will serve states and local governments across the country through the creation of a Clean Economy Bank. Hawaii House Bill 1033 will create a bank that offers financing for energy efficiency, renewable energy, and municipal water and transportation projects. Though this bank would be based in Hawaii, it would be accessible to counties, cities and states across the nation.

Full bill text is available [here](#). Letters of support from state and local governments are greatly needed. Draft text is provided [here](#). Please submit signed letters of support to Amy Bolten at amy.bolten@scwa.ca.gov no later than noon on Monday, March 19, 2012. If you have any questions about the Clean Economy Bank, please call Jim Barrett at (703) 407-1601.
Upcoming Applied Solutions Webinars

Sustainable Energy as an Infrastructure Investment: The SEU Model
March 22nd, 10am PST/1pm EST

The Sustainable Energy Utility (SEU) is a 21st century non-profit organization designed to serve our need for a low-carbon, efficient, renewables-sourced and economically robust energy services sector. The concept of the SEU and its unique bond financing structure was first adopted by the State of Delaware in 2007 as an independent, non-profit organization to foster a sustainable energy future for the State. Analysis at the Center for Energy and Environmental Policy (CEEP) of energy conservation programs throughout the U.S. finds that the SEU model achieves greater energy savings at a faster rate than traditional utility incentive programs.

Dr. John Byrne, who shares the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with the authors and review editors of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and developed the SEU tool, will detail the SEU structure and function and be joined by Applied Solutions Executive Director Michelle Wyman to discuss the options for local governments to consider a SEU as significant option towards building a clean economy locally that includes cost and carbon savings through efficiency and the strong potential for increased job creation through the clean energy sector. Webinar participants will receive an overview of the SEU model and the Foundation for Renewable Energy and Environment (FREE)'s Sustainable Energy Bond Program and learn how widespread adoption can help ensure a clean, safe and prosperous planet for future generations.

Space is limited. Please click here to reserve your spot now.

For videos and materials from past webinars, please visit our website.

Applied Solutions Hosts Local Clean Economy Conference in May

On May 2-3, the Sonoma County Water Agency and Applied Solutions are hosting a conference to share best practices and emerging trends in the integrated planning and implementation of water, energy transportation and resource management actions.

The Growing Sustainable Communities Conference is being developed with input from city and county staff across California. This conference is being presented in collaboration with Sustainable Cities Network and Climate Communities. For additional information please call Amy Bolten at (707) 547-1981, email amy.bolten@scwa.ca.gov, or visit www.gscwest.com.
Project Profile:
The City of Farmington Hills, MI

The City of Farmington Hills, Michigan values a clean and strong local economy. With a recent revitalization of their City Hall they have integrated water conservation, energy efficiency, low-impact transportation and beneficial land use aspects to demonstrate that sustainability, energy efficiency and resource conservation are within reach. The design of the project which includes a green roof, rain gardens, geothermal heating and cooling, solar thermal and photovoltaic panels, among other technologies achieve significant savings through mitigating energy cost increases while increasing operational efficiency.

Farmington Hills estimates that over 20 years they will save $8M in operational efficiency and $1.4M in energy savings while providing a more adaptable and modernized community facility. Built to LEED Gold standards, the city hall renovation project was paid for through accrued general fund savings, which significantly reduced the total project cost compared to a traditionally financed project of similar scope. For more information please visit the Farmington Hills website.

HEADLINES

Study Emphasizes Benefits of White Roofs

Because they absorb sunlight, dark roofs, dark buildings and dark streets and sidewalks make cities especially sweaty, a phenomenon known as the urban heat island effect. New York City can often be up to 5 degrees hotter than surrounding areas. So one of the simplest ways to cool cities, lower electricity usage and reduce the city's carbon footprint is to make rooftops white, ensuring that they reflect heat rather than absorb it.

In a paper published online in the journal Environmental Research Letters, a team of scientists from NASA and Columbia University's Earth Institute present results from the first long-term study of the performance of white roofing material in New York City. For more information, see the full article.

NREL Checklist for Power Purchase Agreements

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) has developed a checklist of sorts for State and Local Governments to use in considering Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs). This easy to use document provides top level guidance to assist in project evaluation through a stepwise process. For more information visit NREL's renewable energy finance website.
LBNL Policy Brief: Scaling Energy Efficiency in Middle Income Homes

Middle income American households - broadly defined here as the middle third of U.S. households by income - are struggling. Energy improvements have the potential to provide significant benefits to these households - by lowering bills, increasing the integrity of their homes, improving their health and comfort, and reducing their exposure to volatile, and rising, energy prices. Middle income households are also responsible for a third of U.S. residential energy use, suggesting that increasing the energy efficiency of their homes is important to deliver public benefits such as reducing power system costs, easing congestion on the grid, and avoiding emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants.

While middle income Americans have historically invested in improvements that maintain and increase the value of their homes, they have seen an important source of financing - the equity in their properties - evaporate at the same time that their access to other loan products has been restricted. A number of energy efficiency programs are deploying credit enhancements, novel underwriting criteria, and innovative financing tools to reduce risks for both financiers and borrowers in an effort to increase the availability of energy efficiency financing for middle income households. While many of these programs are income-targeted, the challenges, opportunities, and emerging models for providing access to capital may apply more broadly across income groups in the residential sector.

Click here to read the full report.

EPA Announces New Green Infrastructure Website and Technical Assistance

In February 2012, EPA announced the availability of technical assistance to a second set of partner communities. EPA is now accepting letters of interest from communities interested in receiving direct assistance for projects that facilitate the use of green infrastructure to protect water quality. The total EPA assistance available through this RLI is approximately $950,000, and will be distributed among 10-20 projects. The value of the assistance available to each project will be approximately $50,000 - $100,000. Letters of interest must be received by April 6, 2012. For more information, please see the Request for Letters of Interest.