



MAYOR DAVID J. NARKEWICZ
City of Northampton
Office of the Mayor
210 Main Street, Room 12
Northampton, MA 01060-3199
(413) 587-1249 Fax: (413) 587-1275
mayor@northamptonma.gov

For Immediate Release – September 8, 2015

City of Northampton Selects Ameresco, Inc. to Develop 3.3 Megawatt Solar Array on Former Glendale Road Landfill

Today Mayor David J. Narkewicz announced that the City of Northampton had selected Ameresco, Inc. to develop a 3.3 megawatt (MW) solar array on its former Glendale Road landfill, which closed in May 2013. Ameresco, headquartered in Framingham, MA, was one of twelve companies to bid on the project through a public RFP process initiated by the city in March.

“This exciting landfill solar array project demonstrates Northampton’s ongoing commitment to increasing the percentage of power we use from renewable energy.” said Mayor Narkewicz. “The city continues to invest in this goal by first reducing the amount of energy we use and second, working to switch the energy we do use to local, clean, carbon-free energy sources. This project has the added benefit of reducing what the city pays for electricity.”

The project involves leasing Ameresco 15 acres of land on and adjacent to its former Glendale Road landfill to design, construct, install and operate a solar power facility able to generate 4,248,000 kilowatt-hours of carbon-neutral electricity a year. This new solar power generation would represent about 40% of Northampton’s annual municipal electric use – enough to power all of Northampton’s public schools and municipal office buildings. In addition to clean energy, the 3.3 MW landfill solar array will provide the city about \$9 million dollars over 20 years in cost-savings and income.

“Ameresco is honored to have been selected to work with Mayor Narkewicz and the City of Northampton to deliver a sustainable solar energy project on top of the municipality’s closed and capped landfill,” said Ameresco Vice President, Jim Walker. “Ameresco’s dedicated team of specialists will work with the City to design and build a high-quality solar project to provide Northampton with utility savings and a clean, quiet, renewable source of electricity for twenty years.”

When installed, the new landfill solar array will roughly triple the amount of solar energy generated in Northampton, producing enough clean electricity to power over 600 average Northampton households. Increasing the amount of renewable energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions are guiding principles of the Sustainable Northampton Plan. This announcement is the latest in a series of clean energy projects undertaken by the City in recent years including the highly-successful Solarize Northampton initiative where city residents quadrupled the amount of solar installed in the city at that time.

The project still faces a potential roadblock, namely the state's cap on solar net-metering which currently prevents new solar projects in Massachusetts from selling electricity credits. If the cap is lifted, under Ameresco's proposal the city would be able to purchase these credits resulting in a substantial cost savings on its electric bill. Another issue affecting the viability of the project is the pending expiration of federal solar tax-credits at the end of 2016. Mayor Narkewicz is hopeful that Governor Baker and the Massachusetts Legislature will agree on one of two pending proposals that would raise the net-metering cap in time for solar developers like Ameresco to access the expiring federal tax credits.

Mayor David Narkewicz and Ward 6 City Councilor Marianne LaBarge will host an informational meeting on the project at R.K. Finn Ryan Road School Gymnasium at 7:00 PM on Tuesday September 29, 2015. A copy of Ameresco's proposal is available at www.northamptonma.gov.

Following the public information meeting, Mayor Narkewicz plans to present an order to City Council at its October 1, 2015 meeting asking for the authority to lease the land and enter into a 20 year contract with Ameresco to build and operate the solar array.