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APPLIED SOLUTIONS NEWS

- Boulder, Colorado Engages Applied Solutions to Perform Economic Assessment
- View From the Economist’s Office
- Check Out the Minnesota Flip Model for Clean Energy Development

WEBINARS
- Technical Advisory Council Focuses Support on Allegheny County’s Strategic Facilities Plan

PROJECT PROFILE
- Fort Collins Blazes the Trail for Local Renewable Energy and Economic Development

CURRENT EVENTS

- California Launches Statewide PACE Program
- Pennsylvania Utilizes Innovative Funding Model for Efficiency at Schools and Universities
- Cities Explore Local Control over Street Lights
- NREL Releases Report Outlining Financial Structures for Large Solar Developments
- IDEA Releases New Planning Community Energy Guidebook

APPLIED SOLUTIONS NEWS
Boulder, Colorado Engages Applied Solutions to Perform Economic Assessment of Municipalization Effort

Boulder, Colorado is working with Applied Solutions to complete a comprehensive economic impact assessment of Boulder's municipalization effort as well as document the process through the development of a local government energy localization playbook that details the range of options to local governments on advanced clean energy options including municipalization. Additionally, Applied Solutions will be assisting in the development of Boulder's Energy Action Plan and the City of Boulder's Energy Future program.

In addition to the City of Boulder, Applied Solutions is working with a number of other local governments to provide economic and energy impact analysis studies which will be captured in the online Applied Solutions Library of Economic and Energy Assessments, available to all Applied Solutions members. For more information please contact Amy Bolten at amy.bolten@scwa.ca.gov.

View from the Economist's Office

Applied Solutions has launched a regular column looking at various aspects of the Clean Economy written by Applied Solution's Chief Economist Dr. James Barrett. October's article lays the foundation of the series by outlining the benefits and challenges facing local governments and offers a peek at some potential pathways for local governments to explore in taking control of their energy future. The full article is available at the Applied Solutions website Clean Economy Blog page.

Check Out the Minnesota Flip Model for Clean Energy Development

The Real Estate industry is exporting one of its most innovative financing mechanisms to clean energy development. The Minnesota Flip is a business model which enables entities with no tax appetite (such as a local government) to pair up with an entity that is able to take advantage of tax incentives to dramatically reduce the cost of clean energy development. While there are nuances essentially it works like this: the taxable entity initially maintains majority share in the project, bears the majority of the burden of developing a clean energy project and gets to take all of the tax incentives and depreciation. The local government then leases the project or utilizes the power. Once the tax incentives have expired, the ownership of the project "flips" to where the local government gains majority ownership. Different states may have different regulations impacting this financing structure, however it's worth taking a look for those interested in building clean energy facilities but are not able to foot the bill up front or utilize the incentives available to private business.
Technical Advisory Council Focuses Support on Allegheny County’s Strategic Facilities Plan

Thursday, October 18, 2012   10am PDT/ 1pm EDT

This interactive new webinar format will feature a collaborative discussion between Jeaneen Zappa, Sustainability Manager from Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, who will be presenting the County’s vision of the Strategic Facilities Plan, with response and input from Eric Coffman, Senior Planner of Energy Programs for the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection in Maryland and Susanna Sutherland, Manager of the Office of Sustainability in Knoxville, Tennessee. This will be an interactive webinar that welcomes live input during the webinar from participants.

The Applied Solutions Technical Advisory Council (ASTAC) is a network of highly skilled local government professionals who together serve as a technical support network on clean energy and sustainability work to counties and cities across the country. This network provides assistance, best practices and “what works” knowledge to accelerate clean energy, efficient water, and low impact transportation development. Through facilitated peer exchange, the understanding of clean energy project design and implementation of clean energy projects will grow substantially. For more information see the article Applied Solutions Technical Advisory Council on the homepage.

If you are a local government and interested in submitting a clean energy project to the ASTAC for peer evaluative support, please contact us at info@appliedsolutions.org. Space is limited. Reserve your Webinar seat now here.

PROJECT PROFILE

Fort Collins Blazes the Trail for Local Renewable Energy and Economic Development

FortZED (Zero Energy District) is a community-driven initiative to create one of the world’s largest net energy districts in an existing community. A partnership with the Community Foundation of Northern Colorado and created by the UniverCity Connections Sustainable Energy Taskforce, FortZED is an economic development program set out to create a net-zero energy district in the Fort Collins’ downtown area and main campus of Colorado State University. FortZED is innovative in that it is developed in an urban area using an existing energy distribution system and is built on public-private partnerships. The program is utilizing non-traditional methods to reduce energy use, manage peak loads through smart grid applications and build renewable energy systems. In addition to addressing energy use, FortZED is a broader sustainability effort incorporating thermal energy and transportation linkages into its design.

At the local level FortZED supports a progressive municipal utility, fosters local innovation and entrepreneurship, and provides economic support for local private sector clean energy technology companies. FortZED’s vision is to be a proven model community for replicable net Zero Energy Districts and the benefits they provide.
CURRENT EVENTS

California Launches Statewide PACE Program

A public-private partnership launches the largest Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program in the nation currently including 14 counties and 126 cities in California. CaliforniaFIRST is a private-public partnership which covers Silicon Valley, San Diego County and Sacramento County, some of the State's most populated areas. Adding to the existing open market of commercial PACE programs in Los Angeles County, San Francisco City and County, and Sonoma County, PACE programs blanket two-thirds of the population of California.

CaliforniaFIRST is a program of the State's largest joint powers authority- the California Statewide Communities Development Authority (CSCDA) which has over 500 local government members. The CSCDA is sponsored by the California State Association of Counties and the League of California Cities.

For the full story visit this link.

Pennsylvania Utilizes Innovative Funding Model for Efficiency at Schools and Universities

The Campus Energy Efficiency Fund (CEEF) established in Pennsylvania is an investment opportunity that offers colleges and universities a financing model for energy efficiency projects. This model assists colleges and universities to keep costs down and become more sustainable while generating a market based rate of return for commonwealth funds. Ultimately the fund is created by the Pennsylvania Treasury, and then opens it up to investors. The CEEF generates positive returns for people and helps cut costs at schools while also cutting carbon emissions.

The projects utilizing CEEF include technologies such as efficient lighting, advanced heating and cooling systems, building controls and automation, and on-site generation. Although this is a model used in Pennsylvania, the program could be applied anywhere.

Here is the full story.

Cities Explore Local Control over Street Lights

The utility service company Southern California Edison (Edison) owns the majority of the street lights located in the Edison service area. What Edison customers began to notice was that the street light rates had increased more than 60% over the past 5 years, yet there was no increase in light fixture upgrades.

The Coalition for Affordable Street Lights (CASL) was then formed by cities served by Edison
with the intentions to motivate maintenance and learn more about the ratemaking process. What CASL found was that the facilities charges that were supposed to pay for light infrastructure costs were based on Edison replacing the lights every 35 years - yet, Edison had no active replacement program and only replaced the lights if they had to. Edison was also providing a "developer's discount" to the developers installing new street lights, and having the cities repay Edison at the full cost through facilities charges. Neither the cities nor developers knew of this subsidy.

CASL presented these finding to the Public Utilities Commission and media. After many discussions it was decided street light facilities charges will be based on Edison's actual costs, the developer's allowance will be eliminated, cities will no longer be charged for lights that are non-operational, and Edison will provide regular reports to CASL on street light replacement and maintenance activities and costs. Edison is now discussing with interested cities the possibility of street light sales. Huntington Beach has already begun preparations to purchase lights - expecting that local control over street lights will save city funds, improve light quality, open the for energy efficiency programs, and reduce annual utility budget by more than 200,000 annually. More cities are now exploring their options for local control over their street lights.

Applied Solutions is working with a technological partner who offers among the most energy efficient street lights including retrofit options for existing street lights to maintain historical aesthetic. If you are interested in learning more, please contact us at info@appliedsolutions.org and indicate EE Street Lights in the subject line.

Click here for the full story.

NREL Releases Report Outlining Financial Structures for Large Solar Developments

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) has released a new report evaluating state and federal policies which have been enacted to support renewable energy development over the past twenty years. The advanced financial structures described in this report include:

- Single owner finance, which includes utility balance sheet financing and developer balance sheet financing.
- Lease structures generally referred to as sale-leaseback and inverted leases
- Utility prepay (which has been solely utilized by the wind industry only modestly to date)

For additional information or to download the report please visit this link.

IDEA Releases New Planning Community Energy Guidebook

The International District Energy Association (IDEA) provides a new guidebook for elected officials, planners, community leaders, real estate developers, and economic development officials who want to establish more sustainable urban energy infrastructure, create community energy master plans and implement district energy systems in cities, communities, and towns.
The guidebook provides an overview of the local energy project development process and details on leading a comprehensive decision-making process on district energy systems. IDEA engages UK-based district energy specialist Michael King, author of the UK guidebook by the same name, to revise *Community Energy: Planning, Development and Delivery for the U.S. Market* to reflect relevant national energy and environmental policies and incorporate current U.S. market conditions and policy drivers on a federal, state and local level.

Click here for the guidebook.

Click here for Applied Solutions membership information.