



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Gary Christenson, Malden City Council Members

FROM: Malden Climate Action and Sustainability Commission (Amanda Treat, Carey McDonald, Diego Maldonado, Lipin Ji, Rachel Surette, Rebekah McPheeters, Ricky Ma, Robert Fitzpatrick, Ron Cochran, Ryan O'Malley)

DATE: October 23, 2025

RE: FY2026 CASC Priorities

The Malden Climate Action and Sustainability Commission (CASC) is excited to present our strategic priorities for FY2026. Though we were officially formed in June of this year, we have quickly moved to implement key components of the city's 2024 Climate Action Plan (CAP). Our focus this fiscal year is on **renewable energy, community engagement, flood mitigation, and data reporting**. These are foundational areas critical to building a more sustainable and resilient Malden. We are thrilled to launch these initiatives and are confident they will deliver tangible, positive change for our community.

FY26 Near-Term Goals

Our top priorities for this fiscal year are centered on the following goals:

- **Renewable Energy:** We'll work to achieve **SolSmart Silver or better designation** by the end of the fiscal year. This designation will help streamline the city's permitting process for solar panel installations, one of the foundational elements for achieving net-zero carbon emissions across the city. This is an exciting opportunity to make it easier for residents and businesses to go solar.
- **Community Engagement:** We'll establish a **Clean Energy Coaches program**. We aim to develop and train a cohort of volunteer energy coaches to provide residents with free, peer-to-peer guidance on transitioning to clean energy. To support this effort, we are looking to partner with local universities and business leaders. This program pairs well with the SolSmart designation effort and is a fantastic way to empower our community, providing equitable access to affordable renewable energy options for all residents, including funding programs like tax rebates and MassSave incentives.

- **Flood Mitigation:** Our focus this year is to **identify opportunities for flood mitigation**. Malden has experienced multiple natural disasters throughout the years, with majority of them involving flooding. The eastern parts of our city particularly prone to severe flooding. Our goal is to work with city departments and local advocacy groups to identify potential solutions in high-risk areas. We are eager to lay the groundwork for this effort.
 - **Data Reporting and Strategy:** We'll update the city's **greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory**. This effort is crucial for monitoring progress against the CAP's targets and identifying key emission hotspots. By the end of the fiscal year, we'll use this data to inform our near-term and long-term strategic planning for the next three to five years. We also plan to use this information to provide a transparent and data-driven summary of our progress to the city. We believe transparent data will be a foundation tool in our execution of the CAP, supporting all of our focus areas.
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Key Collaborations

To implement these priorities, we'll collaborate closely with several key stakeholders:

- **Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC):** The MAPC is a crucial regional partner that will support us with technical expertise, data, and regional collaboration efforts for our ongoing initiatives.
- **Malden Inspectional Services Department:** Their partnership is essential for the SolSmart designation process, requiring streamlining permitting and inspection procedures.
- **Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD):** The OSPCD will be a key partner for both the Clean Energy Coaches program and other community engagement efforts.
- **Local Community Partners:** These partners will be key in our public outreach efforts such as Clean Energy Coaches program and can provide on-the-ground knowledge for flood mitigation.
- **SolSmart:** SolSmart provides free technical assistance in helping us achieve our designation, identifying opportunities for improvement in our permitting, zoning, and inspection process for solar installations.
- **Mass Save:** Collaborative of Massachusetts electric and natural gas utilities and energy efficiency service providers working to deliver energy-saving programs and incentives to residents and businesses.
- **MassCEC:** Quasi-public state economic development agency dedicated to accelerating the growth of the clean energy sector across the Commonwealth.