

Mayor Mitchell Joins Worldwide Compact of Mayors Addressing Climate Change and Renews City's Commitment to Local Action

The local company Beaumont Solar installed solar panels on a historic building near the New Bedford waterfront that houses the Buzzards Bay Coalition. Photo by John Robson.

With the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change now underway in Paris, Mayor Jon Mitchell has reinforced New Bedford's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and becoming more resilient to climate change.

Mayor Mitchell committed this week to the Compact of Mayors, a global coalition of city leaders who have pledged to reduce their community's greenhouse gas emissions, track their progress and prepare for the effects of climate change.

By participating in the Compact of Mayors, Mayor Mitchell reinforced New Bedford's commitment. The City is already national leader in the area of green energy, with a strong record of achievement in reducing its carbon footprint and preparing for the effects of climate change.

Mayor Mitchell spoke about why the city's focus on green energy is well placed, "As a coastal community with one of the greatest maritime traditions in the nation, we have a lot at stake when it comes to climate change and sea-level rise."

Mitchell added, "I feel strongly that our community should do our part to help address a global threat. That's why we are taking seriously our sustainability challenges. It is no

accident that we have made solar and wind energy, energy efficiency, and sustainability planning top policy priorities locally. New Bedford is very consciously trying to lead by example.”

New Bedford As A National Solar Leader

As profiled last year in the Wall Street Journal, the City of New Bedford has more installed solar capacity on a per capita basis than any other city in the continental United States. (See attached Wall Street Journal Profile of New Bedford Solar Initiative)

Ten major solar installations totaling more than \$60 million in privately-financed construction will save city taxpayers nearly \$1 million this year by cutting the utility bills of city departments. Over the next 20 years, the solar projects are projected to save city government \$22 million.

New Bedford To Play A Role In Offshore Wind Energy Development

New Bedford is the closest industrial port to the largest wind energy reserves in the United States, areas of open ocean south of Martha’s Vineyard off the Massachusetts coast.

With state and federal government now moving to develop these waters for large offshore wind turbine farms, major industry players, including Denmark-based DONG Energy (Bay State Wind), Offshore Wind MW, and Deepwater Wind, are now looking to the city’s port a location to stage their projects.

A key advantage of New Bedford’s port is a \$100 million marine terminal built specifically to handle the heavy loads of turbine components. Unique in North American, the New Bedford Marine Commerce Terminal, was constructed by the Commonwealth’s Clean Energy Center with support from the City.

Other Examples of New Bedford’s Leadership As Municipal Innovator and Leader in Sustainability Planning

The City of New Bedford boasts the largest municipal electric car fleet in Massachusetts. The vehicles, in use by Health Department inspectors in city neighborhoods, are leased for just \$70 per month per vehicle as the result of attractive financing and incentives.

The City of New Bedford's municipal landfill hosts two separate waste-to-energy projects which convert landfill gases and biogas into 3.4 megawatts of electricity annually, with plans for major expansion.

The City recently undertook one of the largest performance-contracting initiatives anywhere in the Northeast. The long-term partnership with Siemens Corporation will retrofit the City's stock of nearly 100 municipal buildings with energy efficiency measures, including heating and cooling systems and climate controls.

And in August, the City was selected by the Baker Administration as one of 15 communities to receive a \$250,000 state grant to study how to prevent flooding of the city's sewer pump stations triggered by extreme weather events and sea-level rise.