



New Jersey Board of Public Utilities

NEWS RELEASE

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N.J. Board of Public Utilities and the City of Paterson Highlight Proposed Town Center Microgrid

Paterson, N.J. – New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (Board) President Richard S. Mroz today was joined by Paterson Mayor Jane E. Williams-Warren and Congressman Bill Pascrell at the Mary Ellen Kramer Park in Paterson to highlight the Board’s funding of a Town Center Microgrid Feasibility Study for the city.

“As we learned from Superstorm Sandy, keeping diverse critical facilities such as medical centers, police and fire departments, shelters and schools powered and operational is critical during a natural disaster.” said President Mroz. “I’m excited this proposed town center microgrid proposes to use the historic Great Falls as a central component of the town center microgrid. In doing so, we will build upon Thomas Edison’s Electric Company plan of a 4,849 kilowatt hydroelectric facility that operated from 1914 until 1969.”

The existing generation technology for the proposed project is the Great Falls Hydro-Electric Generation Plant (“Great Falls”). The Great Falls can generate between 3.5 to 7.0 MW of power depending on water flow. Additional capacity could be provided with new technologies such as solar, combined heat and power (“CHP”), new distribution assets, storage, and other new electric infrastructure to allow the proposed microgrid to operate during normal and emergency conditions.

Microgrid technology is an innovative example of the Christie Administration’s commitment to its Energy Master Plan policies to improve energy resiliency. The City of Paterson submitted an application for the Great Falls Eco-Energy Resiliency Project along with core partners that include Passaic County and the City of Paterson School Board. Potential partners include the US Government Service Administration (GSA), Saint Joseph’s Medical Center and the Children’s Hospital.

“We are very pleased to have received this grant, and excited of the possibilities of providing energy power especially in moments of natural devastation,” said Mayor Jane E. Williams-Warren. “The

Great Falls have been at the center of innovation and economic development for over two hundred years, it is fitting that today we are able to propose its power again as an important hydroelectric resource, for our city and the region.”

The critical facilities that would be served by the proposed microgrid include Paterson City Hall, Health and Human Services – Community Development Office, Paterson Recreational Offices, Paterson Fire Department Headquarters, Paterson Police Department, Paterson International High School, JFK High School, Passaic County Jail, Passaic County Courthouses, Passaic County Administration Buildings and Passaic County Social Services. Other potential critical facilities include Hinchliffe Stadium, the US GSA Federal Building, Saint Joseph’s Medical Center and Children’s Hospital.

In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, the Christie Administration made it a priority to improve energy resiliency and the emergency preparedness and response of the utility companies. The [2015 Energy Master Plan Update \(EMP\)](#) contained a new section on hardening and improving utility infrastructure resiliency which supports the establishment of Distributed Energy Resources (DER) such as microgrids to improve the grid’s resiliency and reliability in the event of a major emergency.

Microgrids are mini grids powered by onsite distributed generation that provide electric, heat and cooling to critical facilities such as a hospital, public safety headquarters, town halls, schools and other buildings that can serve as emergency shelters during a crisis which are located in a small geographic area. These smaller grids, operating on their own, “islanded” from the main power grid, can separate and protect themselves from any problems with the main grid and keep vital services in place.

The Board established a Town Center Microgrid Feasibility Study program to fund all 13 applications at a total cost of \$2,052,480. The program was developed to provide incentives for local and state government agencies to study the feasibility of Town Center DER microgrids. The Board is providing approximately \$170,000 in funding for the Paterson feasibility study, which should be completed in approximately twelve months.

The Board approved funding for applications submitted by: Atlantic City, Camden County, Cape May County MUA, Galloway Township, Highland Park, Hoboken, Hudson County, Middletown Township, Montclair Township, Neptune Township, Paterson, Woodbridge Township, and the State of New Jersey Department of Treasury with the partners Mercer County, Mercer County Improvement Authority and Trenton.

Information regarding the board’s approval of the 13 applications for feasibility studies is below: www.state.nj.us/bpu/newsroom/announcements/pdf/20170630_MicrogridFeasibilityStudies.pdf