

## **The Clean Energy Choice Solar Bonus Challenge**

### **What Exactly Does the Municipality Earn?**

When your municipality qualifies for the Clean Energy Choice Community Solar Challenge, your municipality receives \$25,000 in Clean Energy Choice funds for the purchase of a 2kW solar installation (\$15,000 in bonus funds and \$10,000 from your town's Clean Energy Choice account). Your city/town will receive both funds for photovoltaic hardware and free consulting services including:

- A 2 kW photovoltaic solar energy system capable of producing approximately 200kW hours per month, or 2,400kW hours per year. This is equivalent to 40% of an average household's monthly electricity usage.
- A real time solar energy system data collection and reporting system, called a Data Acquisition System(DAS) to provide system owners and MTC with information concerning the amount of kilowatt hours of electricity being generated. The DAS also provides basic meteorological information such as wind speeds and temperature. Depending on the DAS model selected, data reported by the DAS can be sent to a specially installed monitoring station in the building, or can be accessed on any computer connected to the internet.
- 10 hours of professional technical consulting services from MTC's consultant to assist with tasks that may include: help developing feasibility studies, procuring contractors and installers, and project management.

### **What Are the Benefits for a Municipality?**

Most cities and towns that have put their Clean Energy Choice matching grants toward solar energy systems have installed them on school buildings and libraries. Although 2kW of solar energy will generate only a small portion of a public building's electricity use, installing a renewable energy system on a highly visible, community oriented facility provides more than just reduced energy costs. A solar energy system can be a symbolic first step for a town, showing a commitment to growing a sustainable, healthy community. Above all, installing a renewable energy system at a school or library is a powerful and inspirational educational resource. By studying a solar energy system up close, with data and results from their own school building, students can gain a stronger and more meaningful understanding of renewable energy and its potential for the community.

### **What are the Maintenance Requirements?**

There should be no need for any funding for maintenance in the first 5 years on the PV panels and electrical equipment because all components should be under warranty. Any labor charges related to replacing defective components should be covered under a service contract with the installer. Municipalities are encouraged to negotiate extending the service period to at least 5 years if the installer's standard service contract does not offer that coverage.

While 2kW PV systems generally require very little service, the AC/DC inverter component may eventually need to be replaced. This component normally comes with a 10 year warranty. Over the projected 25 year life of the PV panels, it should be expected that an inverter that exceeds its ten year warranty will need to be replaced at least once for a cost currently estimated to be \$3000 for a 2kW system. Cities and towns may wish to obtain extensions to service and parts warranties for the inverter, which are often available from installers.