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Town of Clay is awarded \$150,000 and Earns Clean Energy Community Designation for its Commitment to Cut Costs and Reduce Energy Consumption

The Town of Clay today announced it has been designated a Clean Energy Community by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), recognizing its leadership in reducing energy use, cutting costs and driving clean energy locally.

Announced by Governor Cuomo in August 2016, the \$16 million Clean Energy Communities initiative supports local government leaders across the state by providing grants to eligible municipalities to implement energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable development projects in their communities. Clean Energy Communities advances the Governor's Reforming the Energy (REV) strategy by demonstrating the importance of communities in helping New York reach its Clean Energy Standard mandate of having half of the state's electricity coming from renewable energy resources by 2030.

The Town of Clay received the designation for completing four of 10 high-impact clean energy actions identified by NYSERDA as part of the Clean Energy Communities initiative. In addition, the designation gave the Town of Clay an opportunity to apply for \$150,000 toward additional clean energy projects, with no local cost share. The Town has decided to use these funds towards converting streetlights to LED technology.

Town of Clay Supervisor Damian Ulatowski said, "I am pleased to partner with NYSERDA as that relationship helps Clay residents share in the Town's commitment to clean energy. This program will reinforce what Clay has already done to embrace green technology as the town continues to pursue alternatives that affect the bottom line with any savings going directly to the Clay taxpayer. This is one program in a long line of initiatives that I have brought to the Town and by far will be the most visible as this project will shine new light on the Clay community."

"I applaud the Town of Clay for its actions incorporating renewable energy into the core of its operations to help cut costs and reduce energy consumption," said Alicia Barton, President and CEO, NYSERDA. "Local communities across the state play a vital role in driving Governor Cuomo's nation-leading commitments to reduce greenhouse gases, thereby ensuring a cleaner, greener New York."

To earn the Clean Energy Community designation, the Town of Clay completed the following high-impact clean energy actions:

- **Installed an electric vehicle charging station** at the Town Hall.
- **Completed energy code enforcement training** on best practices in energy code enforcement for code compliance officers and other municipal officers.

- **Streamlined the local approval processes** for solar projects through adoption of the New York State Unified Solar Permit.
- **Performed energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades** to municipal buildings to achieve 10% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Cities, counties, towns and villages that complete at least four of 10 high-impact clean energy actions are designated Clean Energy Communities and are eligible to apply for funding of up to \$250,000 with no local cost share and the option of receiving up to 25 percent paid in advance to support additional clean energy projects. At least two of the four actions must have been completed after August 1, 2016. NYSERDA is accepting applications for funding on a rolling basis through September 30, 2019 or until funds are exhausted, whichever comes first. Funds are being provided through the Clean Energy Fund and the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

Additional clean energy action items communities can take to achieve designation include:

- **Participating in a community-based Solarize campaign** to reduce solar project costs through joint purchasing.
- **Implementing Community Choice Aggregation (CCA)** so residents can gain greater choice and control over energy use a group.
- **Adopting a benchmarking policy** to track and report the energy use of the Town's municipal buildings.
- **Earning Climate Smart Communities Certification** through the Department of Environmental Conservation for developing a comprehensive program to reduce its carbon footprint and improve the environment.
- **Establishing an Energize NY Finance Program** that enables long-term, affordable Property Assessed Clean Energy financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects at commercial buildings and not-for-profits.
- **Converting** streetlights to energy efficient LED technology.

Once all funding is exhausted for large or small/medium categories in a region, local governments designated a Clean Energy Community are eligible to apply for a \$5,000 grant, on a first-come, first-serve basis until such funds are exhausted.

Clean Energy Community Coordinators are also available at no charge to help communities to develop and prioritize clean energy goals, access easy-to-use resources such as guidance documents and case studies, and take advantage of available funding and technical assistance opportunities.

The Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNY RPDB) provided assistance as regional coordinator in earning CEC designation and access to one of the available grants. The CNY RPDB is available to provide similar assistance to other municipalities in CNY that wish to pursue any of the ten high-impact actions. Please contact Chris Carrick, Energy Program Manager, at 315-422-8276 x1213 for more information.

For more information on Clean Energy Communities, visit www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec. Local government officials or employees can find contact information for their respective coordinator [here](#) for assistance navigating the program.