

RANK

1 / 75

2019 CITY CLEAN ENERGY SCORECARD

Boston

No other city except Boston has ever held the top spot in an ACEEE city scorecard. Boston earned the highest score for buildings policies due to its stringent building energy code and the benchmarking and energy action requirements established by the Building Energy Reporting and Disclosure Ordinance. As it has in the past, Boston received a perfect score for the efficiency efforts of the energy utility serving the city and the work of Renew Boston. The city has also made efforts to increase the share of renewable energy in the grid mix. Despite its outstanding performance overall, Boston can still improve its scores, especially for community-wide initiatives. It has retained its ranking by redoubling its efforts to advance clean energy, and it will need to continue doing so to hold onto its top position in the future.

OVERALL SCORE

77.5 / 100



LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

7.5

3.5

9



COMMUNITY-WIDE INITIATIVES

9.5

4.5

16



BUILDINGS POLICIES

25.5

9

30



ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES

12.5

5.5

15



TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

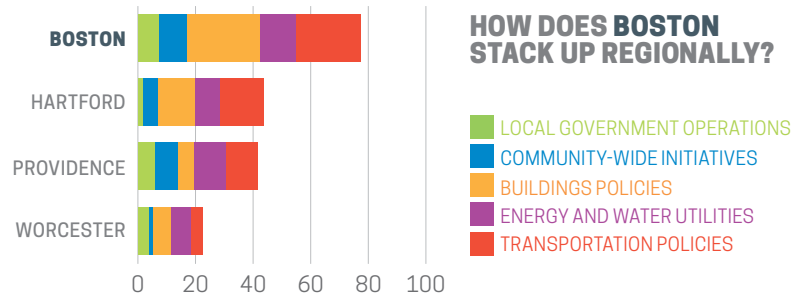
22.5

8.5

30

MEDIAN SCORE

MAXIMUM POINTS POSSIBLE



LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS (7.5 OF 9 POINTS)

Boston has several greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals and an energy-saving goal for local government operations. ACEEE projects the city to meet its goal to reduce GHG emissions 50% from 2016 levels by 2030. Boston sets LEED requirements for new public buildings, benchmarks energy use in all municipal buildings, and has retrofitted 14 over the past 5 years. The city also works to incorporate fuel-efficient vehicles into its fleet and has converted over 75% of its street lights to LEDs.

COMMUNITY-WIDE INITIATIVES (9.5 OF 16 POINTS)

Boston's GHG emissions reduction and renewable energy goals provide the vision for its clean energy efforts. ACEEE does not currently project the city will achieve its goal of reducing community-wide GHG emissions 50% by 2030, but we believe it will make substantial progress toward it. The city supports the development of district energy microgrid and CHP systems by requiring select projects to complete feasibility studies for them, and it has adopted zoning regulations supporting wind energy systems. To mitigate the urban heat island effect, the city aims to increase tree canopy coverage to 35% by 2030.

BUILDINGS POLICIES (25.5 OF 30 POINTS)

Boston adopted the Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code for commercial and residential buildings. The city drives clean energy investments in existing buildings through a combination of incentives and requirements. Boston's benchmarking ordinance for large commercial and multifamily buildings—the Building Energy Reporting and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO)—has a 90% compliance rate. Beyond benchmarking, BERDO's Energy Action and Assessment requirement also mandates an energy assessment or major energy action be conducted on buildings every five years. Building Operator Certification (BOC) course offerings and solar training for building inspectors help grow the clean energy workforce.

ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES (12.5 OF 15 POINTS)

Compared to other utilities, Eversource and National Grid show high savings for both electric and natural gas efficiency programs. Both utilities also offer comprehensive programs for low-income and multifamily households. Through Renew Boston, the city works closely with its utilities to promote energy efficiency. Boston is also taking steps to encourage decarbonization; these include pursuing a municipal aggregation agreement to develop more on-site solar, and submitting comments to the Public Utility Commission. Multiple efforts also aim to increase energy efficiency in water services and wastewater treatment plants.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES (22.5 OF 30 POINTS)

GoBoston 2030 sets a sustainable transportation vision for the city and adopts a goal of reducing regional vehicle miles traveled 5.5% below 2005 levels by 2020. Boston also aims to reduce transportation-related GHG emissions 50% from 2005 levels by 2030. It is one of only six cities to have reported measurable progress toward its GHG goal for transportation. The city also has several mode shift targets, including increasing transit, walking, and biking. Relative to systems in other cities, the transit system is well funded and accessible. Boston's inclusionary development policy includes incentives to encourage development of affordable housing in transit areas. Blue Bikes, the city's public bike-sharing system, offers discounted membership for qualifying residents including low-income households. Boston has not yet taken many actions to increase freight system efficiency.