

# NEW YORK STATE CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES

## Green Purchasing & Cooperative Purchasing: Opportunities for Cost-Savings and Greenhouse Gas Reduction

### Background

Green purchasing is the act of purchasing products/services whose environmental impacts have been considered and found to be less damaging to the environment and human health when compared to competing products/services. Environmental and social considerations are taken with equal weight to the price, availability, and performance criteria that municipalities use to make purchasing decisions. Green purchasing also includes the gradual and ongoing process in which an agency continually refines and expands the scope of its efforts to select environmentally sound, healthy and safe products and services.

Cooperative purchasing helps to leverage economies of scale by providing discounted products and services to a consortium of local governments. Intergovernmental cooperation can result in significant cost-savings for all parties involved, while also providing benefits on a regional scale. The goal of the cooperative purchasing is to combine the resources and purchasing power of governments to jointly negotiate advantageous contract terms at the lowest possible price.

### Benefits

- Significantly improve impacts on the overall quality of human health and the environment
- Cost-savings due to economies of scale, lower overhead and reduced liability and administrative costs.
- Provide a healthier environment for the public, workers and employees through cleaner and healthier facilities, reduce exposure to cleaners, solvents, paints, and other hazardous materials
- Leverage positive publicity and promotion potential

### Local Initiatives

The Long Island Purchasing Council (LIPC) was formed in 2010 and currently includes Nassau and Suffolk Counties, as well as the Town of Oyster Bay and the Town of Brookhaven. The consortium has leveraged the potential of group purchasing for many different types of products, including wastewater treatment equipment, emergency medical supplies and office equipment. Expansion of the LIPC would introduce greater cost savings and new opportunities for large capital investments, such as cooperative purchasing of municipal fleet vehicles. The LIPC website (<http://www.lipurchasingcouncil.org>) provides a model resolution and additional background information for municipalities interested in participating in this innovative program.

*New York State Climate Smart Communities is a program of the state departments of Environmental Conservation, State, Transportation, Health, Energy Research and Development Authority; and Public Service Commission.*



## Resources/Case Studies

- *King County Environmentally Preferable Purchasing and Practices Policy:*
  - King County's EPP Policy (KCC 18.20), originally established in 1989, was updated in 2011 to include revisions for paper reduction and purchase of 100 percent recycled-content paper, electronics recycling and reporting requirements. For more information, please visit [http://www.kingcounty.gov/council/legislation/~media/Council/documents/Clerk/CodeFiles/2--KCCCode\\_PDF/21\\_Title\\_18.ashx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/council/legislation/~media/Council/documents/Clerk/CodeFiles/2--KCCCode_PDF/21_Title_18.ashx).
- *Revolving Energy Fund & Municipal Utility Surcharge*
  - The Energy Fund has been used to fill financing gaps, purchase and install more efficient equipment, and to subsidize on-site energy generation projects with long payback periods. For more information, please visit <http://californiaseec.org/documents/best-practices/best-practices-alameda-county-ac-fund>.
- *Suburban Purchasing Council (135 municipalities in Chicago area)*
  - The Suburban Purchasing Cooperative is a joint purchasing program representing 135 municipalities and townships in the Chicago region. Municipalities, Townships, Counties, Park Districts, Libraries, School Districts and Non-Profit Organizations are all eligible to participate in the SPC joint purchasing program. For more information, please visit: [http://www.nwmc-cog.org/SPC-Documents/SPC\\_Booklet2.aspx](http://www.nwmc-cog.org/SPC-Documents/SPC_Booklet2.aspx).
- *Municipal Leasing: An Alternative Approach to Minimize Capital Costs*
  - Leased vehicles can reduce front-end capital costs and allow communities to maintain modern, fuel-efficient fleets. The New York State Office of General Services offers a wide range of vehicles for lease available through State Contracts: [www.ogs.ny.gov/purchase/spg/lists/gp\\_404.asp](http://www.ogs.ny.gov/purchase/spg/lists/gp_404.asp).
  - The Association for Governmental Leasing & Finance website provides answers to *Frequently Asked Questions About Tax-Exempt Municipal Leasing*: <http://www.aglf.org/faq>.

For more information on Climate Smart Communities: [www.dec.ny.gov/energy/50845.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/50845.html)  
For assistance from Cameron Engineering & Associates, LLP - an independent contractor to NYSED:  
please contact [CSC@cameronengineering.com](mailto:CSC@cameronengineering.com)

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