Mayor Robert Correia today announced that Ameresco, Inc. has been awarded a contract to complete a citywide energy audit to identify energy improvements for the City of Fall River, projected to result in energy savings of 20% - 30%. Ameresco, Inc., an independent energy solutions company headquartered in Framingham, MA, is the largest independent comprehensive energy solutions provider in North America and has developed and implemented over $4 billion in energy improvements.

The contract is the implementation of the Mayor’s proactive approach to develop a comprehensive energy services program to improve the indoor environment in all city facilities while reducing energy use and the related environmental impact of all operations throughout the City.

“This will also provide an opportunity for local contractors, material providers, and workers to bid on energy improvement projects recommended by the audit, as long as they remain competitive,” Mayor Correia explained. He emphasized that the City will be able to implement recommended projects, upgrades, and improvements while the audit is being conducted rather than waiting until it is completed. “In other words, we will see demonstrated results sooner,” the Mayor added.

The energy audit and cost of improvements are paid for by energy savings guaranteed by Ameresco, a strategy called “performance contracting,” in which audits and
improvements are paid for over time from energy savings that are guaranteed by the energy services provider.

“I am very pleased to move forward with this energy savings program to identify and implement green strategies to cut our energy costs,” said Mayor Correia. “In Fiscal Year 2007, the City spent over $6.2 million on energy costs. With rising prices and a tough economy, it makes good sense for us to make cost-effective energy improvements in our facilities and explore new power sources such as solar, hydropower and wind turbines. This program allows us to save dollars on energy costs and protect the environment without raising taxes.”

Ameresco’s energy project will help the Administration fund energy efficiency and related environmental improvements in municipal facilities, school buildings, and assets throughout the community, including the potential installation of a wind turbine to power the wastewater treatment plant. The City has approximately thirty municipal buildings and thirty school buildings.

“This award offers an exciting opportunity for Ameresco to bring our skills in identifying cost-effective energy savings for local governments to work for Fall River,” said David J, Anderson, Executive Vice President of Ameresco, Inc. “We look forward to helping Fall River save money on energy costs and explore renewable energy sources in an effort to benefit the city’s taxpayers while improving the environment.”

In 2006, Massachusetts enacted new legislation to simplify the process available to local officials to bring the benefits of performance contracting to their communities. M.G.L. Ch25A, 11i provides for a streamlined Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process where public agencies can implement a customized menu of facility and infrastructure improvements without burdening their capital budget. The program is paid for by energy savings guaranteed by the company. In addition, energy services providers must provide a guarantee that a specified amount of energy savings will be achieved or they must reimburse the public agency for the shortfall amount.

Under the energy services contract, Ameresco, Inc. will provide a variety of services, including a comprehensive energy audit; the design and installation of systems or maintenance programs to conserve energy, such as installing or modifying equipment for heating, air conditioning, ventilation, lighting, water heating, etc. in city facilities. The company will also monitor and verify energy savings from the project. In addition to energy efficiency in existing facilities, Ameresco will work with the City to explore other methods to conserve energy, such as wind turbines, hydropower (including the use of a hydroelectric generator along the Quequechan River), solar energy as well as controls and equipment upgrades for municipal and school buildings, traffic and street lights, and hybrid vehicles.

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