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## PRESS RELEASE

### City of Fitchburg Receives Special Recognition Award for Demonstrating Solar Excellence

**Fitchburg, WI** - The City of Fitchburg is pleased to announce its recent recognition as a solar-friendly community by SolSmart, a national program funded by the U.S. Department of Energy. The City of Fitchburg has received “Bronze” level designation under the program, which recognizes cities that foster solar energy use and remove obstacles to solar development at the local level.

The city reviewed permitting, inspection, planning, and zoning processes that will help solar companies, businesses, and residents reduce the costs of installation. These efforts also increase the efficiency of local processes related to solar development, which may save our local government time and money.

“With no-cost technical assistance and guidance, working with SolSmart was a wonderful opportunity for the City to review and streamline a permitting process we are already administering. This helps us better serve the city’s residents by making it easier to find information on a new solar resources webpage and increasing efficiencies in the review process,” said Sonja Kruesel, the City’s Planner and Zoning Administrator.

In addition to achieving SolSmart Bronze designation, Fitchburg, WI was presented with a Special Recognition Award by SolSmart. The SolSmart Special Recognition Award celebrates and shines a light on communities that have gone above and beyond – earning at least 60% of the total points available in the Inspection criteria category.

“Renewable energy and energy conservation is important to the Fitchburg Building Inspection Department,” said John Crook, the City’s Building Inspection Manager, “We lowered the permit fees to help reduce the upfront cost of solar arrays for installers, plus it helped us simplify our fee schedule for our residents interested in renewable energy.”

Fitchburg is the third community in Wisconsin to achieve Bronze designation, joining four gold designees and two silver designees recognized by SolSmart in the state. As a bronze designee, Fitchburg now has the opportunity to earn additional points – by further defining planning and zoning regulations, engaging utilities, and continuing community outreach.

SolSmart is a national designation program, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office through the Solar Powering America by Recognizing Communities (SPARC) initiative, designed to recognize communities that have taken key steps to address local barriers to solar energy and foster the growth of mature local solar markets. For more information about SolSmart, please visit the website: <http://www.solsmart.org/>

For more information about Solar Resources, please visit the City of Fitchburg website: <http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/2554/Solar-Resources>