

Solar Forward : Request for Community Partnership

in Hosting a Solar Electric (PV) System

1 Introduction

The City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) established the Solar Forward program as a pilot to test interest in community-based development and funding of solar electric systems (i.e., “community solar”). Solar Forward uses a combination of grants, crowdfunded community donations and an electric utility incentive program to pay for construction and development of PV projects on publicly-owned buildings such as community centers, schools or other important community structures.

Solar Forward has already successfully completed one project, a 10 kilowatt array at Southwest Community Center, in partnership with Portland Parks and Recreation. A second project at Oliver P. Lent Elementary School is under development, in partnership with Portland Public Schools. Construction is anticipated for summer 2014.

BPS is now seeking expressions of interest from qualified parties that want to host the next PV system as part of the Solar Forward program. This will be the third, and very likely the final, PV system installed under the Solar Forward program.

BPS is seeking prospective site hosts with the interest in and capability to host, own, and operate a PV array on their property. Qualified parties are limited to public and non-profit sector organizations and entities.

It is not expected that prospective site hosts will contribute financial resources to the installation of the PV system. BPS will coordinate the application of relevant incentives for the project, with the intention of submitting an application for the Oregon Volumetric Incentive Rate (VIR) program.

Responses to this Request for Community Partnership (RFCP) are due no later than March 21, 2014.

2 Qualifications

Below is a list of criteria that are necessary for successful implementation and partnership in a Solar Forward project.

2.1 Respondent Qualifications

Physical location: within the City of Portland. BPS prefers diverse locations, with a focus on historically underserved communities.

Organizational eligibility: public sector (e.g., public schools, City of Portland facilities, Multnomah County buildings) and non-profit organizations.

2.2 Site Qualifications

The suitability of the proposed site is a threshold qualification for consideration in the Solar Forward program. The site must have the following characteristics:

Ownership. The prospective site host should be the legal owner of the property. The electric utility account should be held by the prospective site host.

Roof Area. Approximately 1,000 square feet of clear, unobstructed area is needed to install 10 kilowatts of PV modules. This area does not need to be contiguous, but must be free of rooftop mechanical equipment, skylights, or other obstacles that would shade or interfere with mounting the PV modules

Electrical Load. The proposed site should have an annual electrical load of at least 10,000 kWh in order to maximize the benefit of the solar energy.

Solar Access – The roof area should be unobstructed to the south, with no trees or vegetation that would shade the PV array currently or in the future. The site can be evaluated for exact solar resource upon review, and a detailed solar resource assessment is not necessary.

Roof life and slope. The roof should have at least 15 years of useful life, as documented by either knowledge of the age of the current roof, a roof warranty, or evaluation by a professional roofer. Almost any roof material, including asphalt shingles, standing seam metal, and membrane roofs are suitable for solar installation. The roof should have good drainage, and no noticeable pooling or other issues with the roof surface. While flat roofs are acceptable, a south facing roof plane is preferred.

Building structure. The building and roof structure should be adequate to support the weight of the PV modules. While PV modules only add 4 pounds per square foot on average, there should be no known structural or seismic issues with the building. A more thorough structural analysis may be required, but preliminary verification with building and facility staff regarding adequacy of the structure is helpful for successful site selection.

Visibility. In order for the maximum community-awareness benefits of Solar Forward to be realized, the PV array should be visible. Ideally, a proposed site would be visible to the public from accessible roads or walkways adjacent to the facility.

Ground-mounted options. Solar Forward would also consider installation sites that are ground-mounted rather than roof-mounted. If ground-mounted, the site should be level, secure, and free of shading.

2.3 Organizational Capacity Qualifications:

The PV system will be owned and operated by the selected site host. The funds to construct the system will come from the Solar Forward fund, but the selected site host will be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the system, and will receive an ongoing reduction of their energy costs at the site. Continued operation of the system is beneficial to both the selected site host and Solar Forward, which will receive the utility incentive payments based on the electricity production of the PV system.

Project Champion. Solar Forward's crowdfunding model works best when partnered with an organization that is energetic and supportive of the project goals. Past experience has shown that an internal project champion is highly beneficial to ensure the success of the project. Responses to this RFCP should identify a clear leader within the prospective site host organization who will be responsible for promoting the Solar Forward program and coordinating aspects of the site development.

Outreach. Solar Forward prefers that the project be used as an opportunity for community engagement, both in fundraising and in clean energy awareness. During the Solar Forward fundraising period, there will be opportunities for collaborative media and outreach regarding the value and benefits of solar energy. Opportunities for signage and ongoing awareness of Solar Forward and donor's roles in funding the PV system are expected.

Prospective site hosts should be prepared to work together with BPS to develop and build on relationships in their community to support the development of the Solar Forward PV project. An understanding of the local neighborhood, associated leaders in business and community, and the desire to spread the word and participate in fundraising goals is critical to the success of Solar Forward. Coordination with BPS in marketing and media will be required as the project progresses, and communications both within the organization and in the community are essential. Demonstrated success in other collaborative fundraising efforts is also beneficial to the Solar Forward program.

3 Expectations, Process and Timeline

Based on the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 5, BPS will select one site host. BPS will work with the selected site host to negotiate an interagency agreement (IA) with the intent of hosting and operating one PV project.

Selection as a site host does not obligate Solar Forward to construct and build a PV system on that site.

Installation of the PV system is contingent on final site evaluation, achievement of fundraising goals, and utility interconnection agreements.

The proposed timeline for the project is as follows:

March 24-25, 2014 - Selection of site host. Responses to the RFP will be used to identify parties for further engagement. Successful respondents will be notified via email by March 18, 2014

March 28 -31 - Utility Information and Site Details. BPS will work with the site host to review documents required for the submission of the VIR incentive. This includes looking at account information, potential system layout, and solar access. BPS will coordinate with the site host to proceed with a VIR application and ensure the successful completion of an Interconnection Application.

April 1, 2014 – VIR Application. BPS intends to manage the application and reservation of the Oregon Volumetric Incentive Rate application and to pay all applicable fees for the reservation of a VIR. The reservation is based on a lottery system, and success is dependent on the total number of applications received by the utility. The Solar Forward project may still be able to proceed without the VIR, contingent on fundraising activities.

May-June 2014 - Negotiation of Interagency Agreement. An Interagency Agreement or an Intergovernmental Agreement will be negotiated between BPS and the successful respondent to guide the next phases of the Solar Forward project development. During this time there will also be a preliminary Interconnection Application filed with the utility in order to move the project forward and meet statutory requirements for the VIR, in the event it is secured.

June – December 2014 – Implementation and Project Development. In this phase an outreach and fundraising plan will be developed with the successful respondents and planning will begin for coordinating with BPS on both the community engagement and the development of the PV project. A Request for Proposals (RFP) will likely be issued for the construction of the system, with input from the successful respondent.

January – March 2015 – Final Design and Construction. It is anticipated that the system would be constructed and commissioned in Q1 2015.

April 1, 2015 – Last Date for Interconnection. The PV system must be online and interconnected by this date in order for the system to receive the VIR. Upon successful completion, a celebration or community recognition event of some sort would likely be planned.

4 Submission Requirements

4.1 Requirements : The following information must be included in the response to this RFCP:

a) Introduction

Provide a letter of introduction, including name and address of the respondent, and a brief summary as to the goals of the respondent's organization in partnering with Solar Forward.

b) Solar Forward Response Form

Provide the completed Solar Forward Request for Community Partnership Response Form

c) Photo and Aerial View of the Proposed Site

Respondents must provide an elevation-view photo and aerial overhead view of the proposed site, to assist in the evaluation of site suitability. These images can be from an online source such as GoogleMaps, but the proposed building or location of the PV array should be clearly indicated.

4.2 Submittal and Correspondence Contact

All correspondence and responses to this RFCP shall be submitted in writing to Andria Jacob, Program Manager. BPS may make answers to some or all of the inquiries available to all respondents.

Email submissions in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format are accepted and should be submitted to : Jaimes.Valdez@portlandoregon.gov

A hard-copy submission is not required, but if sent, must be in a sealed envelope addressed and delivered to :

Jaimes Valdez
City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
1900 SW 4th Ave. #7100
Portland, OR 97201

All submissions must be received on or before **March 21, 2014**. Submissions received after this date will not be considered.

5 Evaluation of Submissions- Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria for the review of submissions are as follows:

Evaluation Criteria (Based on Qualifications noted in Section 2)		Percentage of Evaluation
1	Respondent meets the physical location, diversity, and organizational eligibility qualifications.	30
2	Prospective site meets the Site Qualifications.	40
3	Respondent meets the Organizational Capacity Qualifications.	30

BPS wants to ensure the best possible outcome for this project and invites respondents to include in their submissions commentaries on opportunities and/or challenges related to the Solar Forward project. Respondents should also identify any specific constraints BPS should be aware of concerning its submission or the Solar Forward project in general.



Request for Community Partnership Response Form

Organization Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Name of Primary Contact: _____ Title of Primary Contact _____

Telephone: (____) _____ Email: _____

Address of Proposed Site: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

1. Please Briefly Describe Your Organization and Mission

[Empty text box for organization description]

2. Site Information

- Electricity Utility [] PGE [] Pacific Power
Site proposed [] Roof-Mounted [] Ground-Mounted
Roof Condition [] New [] Good [] Fair [] Replacement Planned
Roof Square footage _____ square feet
Are there any major structural problems with the proposed site? [] No [] Yes

3. Site Description - Please briefly describe the use of the site, general visibility of the prospective PV site to the public, and the site's exposure to the southern sun.

[Empty text box for site description]

4. **Organizational Capacity**

Name of Project Champion: _____ **Title of Project Champion** _____

Telephone: (____) _____ **Email:** _____

Please describe the Project Champion's role in the organization, the organization's prior experience in managing improvements or maintenance of the buildings at the proposed site.

Outreach and Community Engagement. Please describe your organization's existing connections in the local community. Provide a brief description of your organization's plans to support Solar Forward's goals around fundraising, education/awareness building and outreach.

5. **Attach images including an elevation and aerial view of the proposed site**

Please email or mail this form to:

City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
Jaimes Valdez
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Portland, OR 97201
Email : Jaimes.Valdez@portlandoregon.gov