



Department of Public Works
Engineering Division
Robert F. Phillips, P.E., City Engineer

City-County Building, Room 115
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
Madison, Wisconsin 53703
Phone: (608) 266-4751
Fax: (608) 264-9275
engineering@cityofmadison.com
www.cityofmadison.com/engineering

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City supports major rural solar projects, 40K panels to be installed

One of five new rural Wisconsin solar projects is scheduled to begin generating renewable energy in Argyle, Wis. by mid-June 2019. The City of Madison supports, in partnership with BluEarth Renewables and OneEnergy Renewables, five new solar array projects that will increase in-state solar capacity by 15 percent. The City has invested \$1.4 million into the \$18 million overall cost of projects.

The additional four solar projects will be installed in the Wisconsin communities of Cumberland, Elroy, Fennimore and New Lisbon.

In total, the five solar projects will add 40,000 solar panels to the region and will produce enough electricity to power for 2,500 average Wisconsin households. In addition, the projects have been designed to establish more than 50 acres of pollinator-friendly habitat, which will be planted, beneath the solar arrays.

The City's commitment and investment supports its 100 percent renewable energy goals, included in the "100% Renewable Madison Report." In March 2019, the City adopted a resolution that calls upon the City to use 100 percent renewable energy for all city operations by 2030, and for the entire Madison community by 2050. These five solar projects substantially advance the City's progress toward its 100 percent renewable energy and/net zero carbon goal.

By making this investment, the City will receive the renewable energy credits (REC's) created by the projects to offset carbon usage by the City. The RECs will be generated over the 25-year life of the projects and are a critical part in achieving the City's 100 percent renewable energy goal as outlined in the "100% Renewable Madison Report." One renewable energy credit is assigned to each megawatt-hour of electricity generated by these solar projects. RECs are highly regulated and certify that renewable energy was generated and distributed to the power lines that make electricity accessible to businesses and homes.

Partnerships

The City has been working with both OneEnergy Renewables and BluEarth Renewables to add the solar projects to the community. OneEnergy Renewables designed and developed the five solar projects and BluEarth Renewables acquired all five projects in December 2018. BlueEarth Renewables began construction of the projects in January 2019 and will own and operate the projects over their expected 25-year life. BluEarth Renewables is a leading, independent power producer that acquires, develops, builds, owns and operates wind, hydro and solar facilities across North America. OneEnergy Renewables is an innovative developer of community and utility-scale solar energy projects across North America.

Media Inquiries:

Hannah Mohelnitzky, City of Madison Engineering Division
Public Information Officer
608-242-6003
hmohelnitzky@cityofmadison.com

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