



# CITY OF MONTPELIER, VERMONT

*- The Smallest Capital City in the United States -*

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## **Request for Proposals (RFP) Group-Net-Metered Photovoltaic Electricity Generation**

Issued by the City of Montpelier, Vermont  
Department of Planning and Community Development

### **1. Objective, Background, and Assumptions**

Montpelier seeks, through the fruition of this project, to take significant steps toward its recently adopted net-zero energy goal. The City of Montpelier, Vermont (“the City”), in collaboration with its Energy Committee is seeking to offset 70% of the City’s municipal electric metered usage with locally produced net-metered solar power. We anticipate that this will roughly require two 500 kW AC installations. To this end, the City seeks a qualified individual or firm to own and operate solar facilities which will sell net metered power to the City to offset City usage.

The City is making its “stump dump” site available (see attached description of this site) for solar development. The City is also interested in proposals to develop solar on privately owned land within the Green Mountain Power service territory, with a preference for installations located within Montpelier city limits. The City will only entertain proposals for a combination of installations totaling 1000 kW AC.

The City is assuming that any such development will be done at no immediate cost to the City through a solar purchase agreement (similar to a power purchase agreement) and will be done with the understanding that the developer will provide the City with electric output from said development at a lower rate than currently experienced.

Consistent with Montpelier’s net-zero goal, the City requires that all renewable energy credits (RECs) associated with project are retired in the City’s name.

The City will not be responsible for expenses incurred in preparing responses to this RFP and such costs should not be included. The City will only entertain proposals that have no maintenance costs to the City while it is owned by the developer.

The City is interested in options to purchase the installation(s) between years seven and ten. If the City opts to purchase the system(s), we expect a sufficient transfer of knowledge of the system in order to operate and maintain the system.

## **2. Information Requested**

### **A. Development Approach**

Please describe your approach to and past experience developing solar net-metered projects similar to the project you are proposing. Include details about obtaining necessary permits, interconnection agreements, working with the local utility, coordinating with city officials, and engaging the community.

### **B. Equipment and Installation Details**

1. How many kW DC would you install at the stump dump, and at any additional location.
2. What are you using as an output ratio, and what is the efficiency of your panels?
3. Provide detailed calculations to demonstrate how your array will meet the City's 1000 kW goal.
4. What panel manufacturer do you expect to use for this project? What is the degradation rate of their panels?
5. Who is your installer?
6. What is the "output" of the Stump dump location per your calculations and site assessment.
7. Describe your projected timeline, particularly when would you to expect break ground, using the Council's approval vote as the starting date. What milestones will be key in your critical path to reach your project ground breaking date?
8. Provide a general description of the environmental impacts, such as tree clearing or trimming, land excavation, development of access road, amount of new impervious area, and other impacts you anticipate at the Stump Dump or any other location you intend to use.

### **C. Financial Proposal**

1. Provide the terms of your solar purchase agreement including length of agreement, cost per kWh to the City, and assumptions about the value of net-metering credits over time.

### **D. Ongoing Operation and Maintenance**

Provide any information or describe any services related to:

1. Ongoing operations and maintenance needs of the system(s).
2. Identify party responsible for ongoing O&M.

### **E. Risk Management**

1. What does your warranty cover?
2. Identify the warranty provider and what the warranty covers for the panels, inverters, and other equipment. Specify coverage of materials, labor, and/or installation, and provide a description and analysis of any applicable manufacturer and install warranty provisions.
3. What is the design life of all critical operational components?
4. Identify the guaranteed output of the solar panels over the course of the project lifetime.
5. For privately-owned parcels, please include information regarding ownership, location, willingness of owner to enter into public/private agreement, and expected timeframe for development. Do you have site control? Is the site(s) in Montpelier?

6. Indicate whether the firm has current professional liability insurance and the extent to which the firm is covered for group or individual liability. Absence of professional liability insurance shall not by itself be a reason for non-selection; however, in combination with other factors, it may be an element of the selection process.

#### **F. Purchasing Options**

1. The city desires a buy-out option at the beginning of any years seven through ten. The city desires the option to buy the project at "Fair Market Value." Such value would be determined at the time of exercise of the option, by a formula which multiplies the average annual production (in kWh) over the six years of operation by the GMP rate paid by the City at the end of year the year previous to the purchase option (in cents/kWh). That figure would be multiplied by a factor, bid by the developer. For example, if the average production of a 500 kW project were 760,000 kWh, and GMP's rate were 16 cents/kWh, and the option multiplier were 7.0, then the city's purchase price would be \$851,200. Please provide your bid factor.

2. Identify the system components included in the sale of the project? For example, is monitoring software included in the sale?

3. How will you transfer knowledge needed by the City to operate and maintain the system?

#### **G. Economic Benefits**

Provide any information or describe any services related to:

1. Economic multiplier effect benefit to City and State of Vermont.

2. Opportunities for community residents or private organizations to purchase panels at a discounted rate (optional).

#### **H. Knowledge and Skills**

1. Provide documentation of your team's (including developer, financier, installer, and other key team members) knowledge, qualifications, and experience of solar installation, public good certification, net metering, experience in municipal renewable energy projects.

2. Provide information about your team's experience managing complex development projects, including similar projects you have completed and which are commissioned and operating. Elaborate on your team's ability to meet project deadlines and milestones.

3. Provide a timeline for the engagement, including the appropriate starting and ending dates of project milestones, including certificate of public good, groundbreaking, and project completion.

4. Provide the names of three references drawn from past clients or associates, including a description of relationship to reference, address, e-mail, and telephone number for each.

Please include any other information you believe is pertinent to our selection decision.

### **3. Proposal Format**

In order to be considered, an original and three (3) copies are required from the proposing entity. Proposals must be received at the address below no later than August 29th, 2014 and should include the information requested in Section 2 of this RFP.

All proposals become the property of the City of Montpelier upon submission. The cost of preparing, submitting, and presenting a proposal is the sole expense of the proposer. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this solicitation, to negotiate with any qualified source, to waive any formality and any technicalities, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this request for proposals if it is in the best interests of the City. This solicitation of proposals in no way obligates the City to award a contract.

#### **4. Evaluation of Proposals**

The staff at the City of Montpelier and members of the City's Energy Advisory Committee will evaluate the proposals with regard to the proposed services, and the experience, and qualifications of the proposer and make a recommendation to City Council. Specifically, proposals will be evaluated based on optimized benefit to the City of Montpelier, while meeting the City's needs and assumptions, according to the following percentages. City Council will make the final decision.

- A. Development Approach (20%)
- B. Equipment and Installation Details (10%)
- C. Financial Implications (20%)
- D. Ongoing Operation and Maintenance (5%)
- E. Risk Management (15%)
- F. Purchasing Options (10%)
- G. Economic Benefits (5%)
- H. Knowledge and Skills (15%)

#### **5. Selection Process**

City staff will independently evaluate each proposal. The highest evaluated proposer(s) may be invited to discuss their proposal(s) and qualifications with staff prior to awarding the contract. The City of Montpelier will make the final consultant selection and reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to negotiate with more than one firm at the same time.

#### **6. Supervision/Project Team:**

The project will be administered by the City of Montpelier; supervision will be provided by the City.

#### **7. Estimated timeline**

RFP issued July 2014  
RFP responses due August 29th, 2014  
Final selection September 2014

Respondents should reply with information to:

Mike Miller, Director of Planning and Community Development  
City of Montpelier  
39 Main Street  
Montpelier, VT 05602-2950

[mmiller@montpelier-vt.org](mailto:mmiller@montpelier-vt.org)

802-223-9506 phone

802-262-6080 fax

RT P 8  
SOLA PANEL AREA

CITY DUMP RD

NEW SOLAR PANEL AREA

Perimeter: 4,970 Feet  
Area: 1,172,898 Square Feet

TRILUM HILL

ELM ST

BALLFIELD DR

