

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
NEPA DETERMINATION**



RECIPIENT: Blue Earth County, MN

STATE: MN

PROJECT TITLE : Blue Earth County Energy Efficiency Project

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
	DE-EE0010123	GFO-0010123-001	GO10123

Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Policy 451.1), I have made the following determination:

CX, EA, EIS APPENDIX AND NUMBER:

Description:

A9 Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination

Information gathering (including, but not limited to, literature surveys, inventories, site visits, and audits), data analysis (including, but not limited to, computer modeling), document preparation (including, but not limited to, conceptual design, feasibility studies, and analytical energy supply and demand studies), and information dissemination (including, but not limited to, document publication and distribution, and classroom training and informational programs), but not including site characterization or environmental monitoring. (See also B3.1 of appendix B to this subpart.)

B5.1 Actions to conserve energy or water

(a) Actions to conserve energy or water, demonstrate potential energy or water conservation, and promote energy efficiency that would not have the potential to cause significant changes in the indoor or outdoor concentrations of potentially harmful substances. These actions may involve financial and technical assistance to individuals (such as builders, owners, consultants, manufacturers, and designers), organizations (such as utilities), and governments (such as state, local, and tribal). Covered actions include, but are not limited to weatherization (such as insulation and replacing windows and doors); programmed lowering of thermostat settings; placement of timers on hot water heaters; installation or replacement of energy efficient lighting, low-flow plumbing fixtures (such as faucets, toilets, and showerheads), heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, and appliances; installation of drip-irrigation systems; improvements in generator efficiency and appliance efficiency ratings; efficiency improvements for vehicles and transportation (such as fleet changeout); power storage (such as flywheels and batteries, generally less than 10 megawatt equivalent); transportation management systems (such as traffic signal control systems, car navigation, speed cameras, and automatic plate number recognition); development of energy-efficient manufacturing, industrial, or building practices; and small-scale energy efficiency and conservation research and development and small-scale pilot projects. Covered actions include building renovations or new structures, provided that they occur in a previously disturbed or developed area. Covered actions could involve commercial, residential, agricultural, academic, institutional, or industrial sectors. Covered actions do not include rulemakings, standard-settings, or proposed DOE legislation, except for those actions listed in B5.1(b) of this appendix. (b) Covered actions include rulemakings that establish energy conservation standards for consumer products and industrial equipment, provided that the actions would not: (1) have the potential to cause a significant change in manufacturing infrastructure (such as construction of new manufacturing plants with considerable associated ground disturbance); (2) involve significant unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (such as rare or limited raw materials); (3) have the potential to result in a significant increase in the disposal of materials posing significant risks to human health and the environment (such as RCRA hazardous wastes); or (4) have the potential to cause a significant increase in energy consumption in a state or region.

B5.16 Solar photovoltaic systems

The installation, modification, operation, and removal of commercially available solar photovoltaic systems located on a building or other structure (such as rooftop, parking lot or facility, and mounted to signage, lighting, gates, or fences), or if located on land, generally comprising less than 10 acres within a previously disturbed or developed area. Covered actions would be in accordance with applicable requirements (such as local land use and zoning requirements) in the proposed project area and would incorporate appropriate control technologies and best management practices.

B5.19 Ground source heat pumps

The installation, modification, operation, and removal of commercially available smallscale ground source heat pumps to support operations in single facilities (such as a school or community center) or contiguous facilities (such as an office complex) (1) only where (a) major associated activities (such as drilling and discharge) are regulated, and (b) appropriate leakage and contaminant control measures would be in place (including for cross-contamination between aquifers); (2) that would not have the potential to cause significant changes in subsurface temperature; and (3) would be located within a previously disturbed or developed area. Covered actions would be in accordance with applicable requirements (such as local land use and zoning requirements) in the proposed project area and would incorporate appropriate control technologies and best management practices.

Rationale for determination:

DOE is administering Congressionally Directed Spending to Blue Earth County, MN for energy efficiency and renewable energy measures at various municipal locations throughout the county. Proposed measures include the design and installation of electric vehicle charging stations, also known as electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE), a photovoltaic system, a geothermal system, along with lighting, heating and cooling system upgrades. Specific activities at each location would include:

Blue Earth County Historic Courthouse – 204 South 5th Street Mankato, MN

- Upgrade interior building controls and monitoring by replacing pneumatic thermostats with electronic digital thermostats that include a display and allow for adjustments of the air handling units. The new thermostats would be in the same locations as the current ones are located.
- Installation of radiation heat controls behind the existing radiation covers so the new controls which would not be visible to the public.
- Replacement of interior florescent lighting with LED lighting throughout building. All lighting retrofits would be performed on fixtures that have previously undergone a lighting upgrade and are not original light fixtures to the courthouse.
- Installation of electronic damper actuators for the outside, return, and relief dampers located within the air handling unit for control and monitoring of the heating and cooling system. The damper actuators would be installed within the air handling unit and would not be visible to the public.
- Removal of existing valves, controls, and devices associated with the pneumatic equipment for the existing heating and cooling system. The items to be removed are located in the mechanical rooms and are not visible to the public.
- Design and installation of a Level 2 EVSE in front of the courthouse. The EVSE would be installed on a sidewalk adjacent to the parking lot and would require trenching through the parking lot, curb, sidewalk, and landscaped grass without the removal of any trees. Installation would occur on previously disturbed ground. The trenched area would be returned as close as possible to its original condition once the installation is completed. Since the courthouse is on the National Register of Historic places, the EVSE installation must be reversible, use only non-permanent techniques for installation, use the lowest profile EVSE reasonably available that provides the necessary charging capacity; placement must be in a minimally visibly intrusive area; use colors complementary to surrounding environment, where possible, and would be limited to the current electrical capacity.

Blue Earth County Justice Center - 401 Carver Road Mankato, MN

- Upgrade of all interior and exterior fluorescent lighting to LED lighting throughout the building by retrofitting the existing lighting fixtures to accommodate LED lighting, add control technology for occupancy sensors light sensors and light dimming capabilities.
- Design and installation of four Level 2 EVSEs with foundations in the Blue Earth County Justice Center parking lot. Although the path for trenching is not finalized, the installation would require trenching limited to the parking lot, curb, sidewalk, and landscaped grass without the removal of any trees. Installation would occur on ground previously disturbed. The trenched area would be returned as close as possible to its original condition once the installation is completed.

Mankato Library - 100 E Main St Mankato, MN

- Retrofit of all interior florescent lighting to accommodate LED lighting throughout the building.
- Installation of the electronic controls to better regulate and monitor the boiler heating system. The boiler controls would be installed on the boilers in the mechanical room and would not be visible to the public.
- Installation of four Level 2 EVSEs in the library parking lot. EVSE would be installed on a sidewalk adjacent to the library and the parking lot and would require trenching through the parking lot, curb, and sidewalk. Installation would occur on ground previously disturbed. The trenched area would be returned as close as possible to its original condition once the installation is completed. Since the library may be eligible for the National Register of Historic places: the EVSE installation must be reversible, use only non-permanent techniques for installation, use the lowest profile EVSE reasonably available that provides the necessary charging capacity; placement must be in a minimally visibly intrusive area; use colors complementary to surrounding environment, where possible, and would be limited to the current electrical capacity.

Blue Earth County Government Center - 410 S. 5th Street, Mankato, MN

- Installation of eight Level 2 EVSEs at the Blue Earth County Government Center. Six of the EVSEs would be located inside the parking garage in close proximity to the two EVSEs that would be located outside of the garage in the parking lot. The conduit for the electrical connection would run through the garage on the inside and bore through the side of the garage and the sidewalk to connect to the existing transformer. Trenching to the chargers on the outside of the garage would go through the side of the garage and under the sidewalk. All trenching would be limited to previously disturbed ground. The trenched area would be returned as close as possible to its original condition once the installation is completed.

Blue Earth County Public Works Campus – to be built at (restricted location - contact NEPA Specialist for information)

- The construction of the facilities at the Public Works Campus are not funded with DOE funds and would occur

regardless of the DOE funded measures. The DOE funded measures would include:

- o LED lighting and lighting controls
- o Design and installation of three Level 2 EVSEs, including upgrades to the electrical service to accommodate the charging stations. Installation would occur in the planned parking lot.
- o Design and installation of a roof mounted photovoltaic solar array not to exceed 155kW.
- o Design and installation of a closed loop geothermal system not to exceed 50 tons of capacity or an equivalent rated air source heat pump system. Installation would occur in close proximity to the proposed facility on ground that would be disturbed during the construction of the facility.

DOE has considered potential impacts on resources of concern, including those of an ecological, historical, cultural, and socioeconomic nature. DOE does not anticipate adverse impacts to these resources.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Include the following condition in the financial assistance agreement:

The electric vehicle supply equipment installations at the Blue Earth County Historic Courthouse, located at 204 South 5th Street Mankato, MN, and the Mankato Library, located at 100 E Main St Mankato, MN, must comply with the following requirements: the EVSE installation would be reversible, use only non-permanent techniques for installation, use the lowest profile EVSE reasonably available that provides the necessary charging capacity; placement must be in a minimally visibly intrusive area; use colors complementary to surrounding environment, where possible, and would be limited to the current electrical capacity.

Any changes to the project activities or locations are subject to additional NEPA review by DOE and are not authorized for Federal funding unless and until the Contracting Officer provides written authorization on those additions or modifications.

Notes:

Office of State and Community Energy Program – State Energy Program; Congressionally Directed Spending
This NEPA Determination requires legal review of the tailored NEPA provision.
NEPA review completed by Diana Heyder, 2/23/2023

FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATIONS

The proposed action (or the part of the proposal defined in the Rationale above) fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D. To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposed action has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:  **Electronically Signed By: Casey Strickland** _____ Date: 2/23/2023
NEPA Compliance Officer

FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION

- Field Office Manager review not required
- Field Office Manager review required

BASED ON MY REVIEW I CONCUR WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE NCO :

Field Office Manager's Signature: _____ Date: _____
Field Office Manager