

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



RECIPIENT: Children's Community Development Center

STATE: CT

PROJECT TITLE : Solar Panels at Childcare Center

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number Procurement Instrument Number NEPA Control Number CID Number
DE-EE0010814 GFO-0010814-001

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.)

B5.16 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.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to administer Congressionally Directed Spending to the Children's Community Development Center (CCDC) to develop and install a solar photovoltaic (PV) power system at a non-profit early childhood care and education center in Westport, CT. The facility is owned by the Town of Westport and managed by The Parent Child Center, Inc.

The proposed installation would involve a single parking lot canopy structure topped with commercially-available PV panels. The dimensions of the top of the canopy would be approximately 63 feet by 121 feet. In order to meet the facility's annual energy demand, the electrical rating of the system would be 108 kW AC/135 kW DC. Initial project activities would include the selection of a 3rd party solar developer to complete a final design of the system as well as order and obtain required materials such as panels, inverter(s), canopy structures, and other electrical and mechanical infrastructure. The contractor would also be responsible for performing the installation and associated site preparation activities.

Since CCDC plans to employ a solar carport, ground disturbance related to the proposed system would be limited primarily to the facility's existing parking lot. The canopy structure would be supported by 3-4 steel beams driven into the asphalt and secured in place by concrete footers. To ensure optimal energy production from the panels, some areas of overgrown vegetation on the south side of the array would be removed, but all work would occur on land that was previously disturbed. The facility is in a developed suburban district and is not within or adjacent to floodplains, wetlands, or historic properties. The system would be installed at the back of the building and not visible from the street.

No change in the use, mission, or operation of childcare facilities would arise out of the proposed project. Construction work would be scheduled to occur during periods of building closure or limited use (i.e., weekends and summer months when attendance is lowest) to minimize noise impacts and disruption to childcare programs.

The project location is regulated by the CT Office of Early Childhood and local health department. The proposed project would require review and permitting by various town authorities and publicly elected boards, including the Town of Westport Building and Public Works Department. Building permits along with any other necessary permits, licenses and/or authorizations would be obtained by CCDC prior to construction.

DOE has considered the scale, duration, and nature of proposed activities to determine potential impacts on resources, including those of an ecological, historical, cultural, and socioeconomic nature. DOE does not anticipate

impacts on these resources which would be considered significant or require DOE to consult with other agencies or stakeholders.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Notes:

Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO)
Review completed by Whitney Donoghue on 12/5/2023.

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:  _____ Date: 1/10/2024
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