Request for Energy Proposals Montgomery County, Maryland Oaks Landfill Solar Photovoltaic Project



September 27, 2019 **Montgomery County, Maryland**



I. Overview and Background

Consistent with Montgomery County's goal to achieve zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2035, the County is focusing on improving greenhouse gas emissions through broader use of clean energy. This will be accomplished by incorporating changes to the transportation modes with focus on transit and more electric vehicles and focusing on modifying existing buildings and striving for net zero emissions in the design of new buildings. To this end, the County is seeking expressions of interests and qualifications to develop a landfill solar project on the County's closed Oaks Landfill site. To best utilize the County's land resources, the County strongly believes in utilizing brownfields and the built environment first before greenfield projects.

The County is specifically seeking a third party to design, install, own, operate and finance a solar energy project hosted on the County's Oaks landfill. Montgomery County's Department of General Services coordinates the County's energy purchases while the Department of Environmental Protection is the custodian of the County's waste reduction activities and sites.

The County anticipates the project will consist of, at a minimum, one 2 MW aggregate net metered (ANEM) solar photovoltaic system to supply County government operations and two 2 MW community solar projects designed under the state's low-and-moderate income portfolio. The County is open to alternative configurations using a mix of net metered, community solar and electricity to grid configurations; however, vendors proposing alternatives will need to clearly justify why their proposals are superior in terms of financial benefits to the County, community benefits and equity considerations. The County is open to advanced technologies such as energy storage to the extent they can provide financial, resiliency or community benefits. The selected Offeror or Offerors will have the opportunity to expand the system should state regulations permit expansion or a waiver or similar permission be granted by the utility or their regulators.

This RFEP is organized as a pre-qualification where proposals will be reviewed. The County will request detailed project and cost/value proposals from the highest-ranking Offerors. All respondents to this RFEP should provide turn-key systems and a single point of contact for all site operations. This includes teams of developers, financiers and subscription organizations.

II. Anticipated Scope:

The scope includes the development, financing and operation of a complete solar photovoltaic system on the Oaks Landfill site. This includes at a minimum:

A. Pre-Project:

- Securing all land use approvals, utility interconnections, permits and other required approvals from state, local and utility representatives and the Maryland Public Service Commission;
- Developing all preliminary drawings, design and other necessary components for review and approval by the County. All vendors can presume that the system will be

- ballasted or floating on the landfill cap with no penetrations or digging within the capped areas;
- Facilitate all necessary meetings with internal and external stakeholders to address specific concerns regarding site use, community compatibility and other aspects that may be of concern. Provide all information, drawings, photos and renderings as needed;
- Provide a detailed project timeline and plan clearly outlining key milestones and timelines including design, planning, permitting, execution and commercial operation; and
- Secure firm commitments for project financing within 30 days of notice of award.

B. <u>Project Development:</u>

- Provide complete solar photovoltaic systems as designed and negotiated between the selected Offeror and County, including any connections to the grid, required distribution system upgrades, fencing and security provisions;
- Provide detailed bi-weekly meeting and monthly reports on progress to the County including achievement of milestones, issues and other impacts;
- Post signage, visible to the general public, clearly outlining the purpose of the project and environmental benefits;
- Exercise care to minimize sound, dust and disturbance from site access, to the community;
- Plan any interruptions to on-site operations to coincide with periods specified by the County; and
- Ensure project groundcover and site is restored to pre-project conditions.

C. Commissioning and Continued Operations:

- Provide the County a complete commissioning manual in electronic format including the system design, components, cutsheets of components, operating characteristics, electrical diagrams, permit documents and relevant environmental documentation;
- Commission and test the system for operations using only revenue grade metering,
- Provide all necessary maintenance to ensure continuous operations;
- Ensure a minimum of 98% up time per fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). The County may negotiate penalties for systems that fail to deliver this capacity factor;
- Provide power to the County via ANEM for its facilities or if a grid supply system is specified to the PJM subaccount of the County's choice. Community solar project should provide subscription services;
- Secure adequate subscriptions from low-and-moderate income community solar program participants for community solar photovoltaic systems;
- Ensure community engagement and for any community solar project ensure that the surrounding community (approximately a 5-mile radius) is aware of the opportunity to subscribe; and
- Provide a user friendly 24/7 web-based data link and site telemetry to communicate ongoing production and environmental benefits. A dashboard will be provided suitable for display on public websites.

D. End of Service Life:

- Decommission and remove the system, repower and extend the contract or sell the system to the County at independently assessed fair market value. All options will be at the County's sole discretion.

E. County Responsibilities:

- Provide a site license agreement or land lease as needed;
- Purchase electricity, via a solar power purchase agreement, at the negotiated or specified rate from the ANEM system for the 15, 20 or 25 years at its discretion;
- The County may opt for a portion of the generation of the community solar system to the limits specified by MD PSC regulations (https://www.psc.state.md.us/community-solar-regulations-finalized/);
- The County does not anticipate providing any upfront capital for the project;
- In the case of multiple awards, the County will apportion the site at its discretion with the areas providing the best solar insolation and easiest development to the highest scoring Offeror; and
- Determine at project initiation if the County wants to purchase renewable energy credits from the project.

III. Administration of the Request for Expression of Interest

A. Site Information:

Description:

Oaks Landfill, 6001 Olney-Laytonsville Road, Olney, Maryland 20882

Size/Physical Characteristics

Current Operations: The site is a closed and capped landfill. The landfill is the responsibility of the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection, Recycling and Resource Management Division. The Oaks Landfill is approximately 545 acres with a capped footprint of 170 acres. It is anticipated that the capped portion will be used for the ballasted solar project. This County-owned site is located at 6001 Olney-Laytonsville Road, Olney, Maryland. The landfill received mixed municipal solid waste (MSW) from June 1982 until the Spring of 1995.

Starting in 1995 the landfill received only ash residue and non-processible materials until 1997. By the time the landfill closed in 1997, over 7 million tons of waste had been placed within the disposal footprint. The Oaks Landfill has a leachate pretreatment facility and a gas management facility that will continue to be operated throughout the 30-year post-closure maintenance period. A 2.4-megawatt (MW) landfill gas-to-energy facility started operation in mid-2009 and is winding down production.

Anticipated project

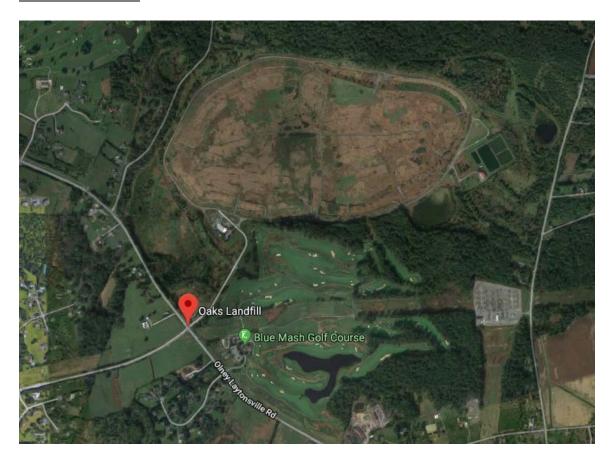
- Install a 2-megawatt (MW) aggregate net metering project on the Oaks Landfill to power County operations.
- Install 2x2 MW of community solar which would support clean energy subscriptions by Pepco customers, the County could subscribe to a portion of the power.

Acreage: 170-acre cap for solar.

Site Considerations

- There are multiple plot sections on the landfill.
- It is anticipated that the 170-acre cap will be the location for the proposed solar systems. The cap is shown on the map below.

B. Site Overhead View:



IV. Administration of the Request for Energy Proposals

A. <u>Submission Information:</u>

Each submittal should include a single point of contact (including name, title, phone number and email address), a cover letter and concisely address the four areas below considering the detail provided.

Qualifications:

- Solar, community solar, renewable energy and distributed energy experience.
- Experience of organization and project management team implementing, maintaining and operating similar projects for prolonged periods of time.

- Proven ability to negotiate and work with electric and other utilities.
- Experience obtaining grants, rebates and other funds to reduce the cost of systems.

Technical Approach:

- Approach meets the County's objectives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improves reliability and resiliency.
- Integration of advanced technologies to existing site conditions.
- Maintenance approach and minimizing level of effort of County staff.
- Options for expansion should state regulations/laws/policies change in favor of a large system.
- Other innovative approaches consistent with the County's mission.

Financial Approach:

- Ability to finance project as a public private partnership with a minimum of County capital contribution. Note that specific cost and pricing information will be requested from shortlisted bidders.
- Cost implication of approach.
- Ability to leverage tax credits, environmental credits and other grants or incentives to reduce project costs.
- Structure of cost proposals to County including a description of whether energy is provided via a power purchase agreement, wholesale power to a PJM subaccount. Clearly describing the benefits and merits to the County.
- Proposals including community solar systems should outline the subscription model, anticipated percentage of low- and moderate-income subscribers, how the overall rates will be set, and any land lease values proposed to the County.
- All responses must include a letter of intent from a financing partner.

Innovation and Community Stewardship:

- Engagement of local companies participating in County programs such as the local small business reserve program, minority female disabled owned business program, Certified B Corps or green business certification program in project team.
- Partnerships with job creation, workforce development and educational institutions.
- Other partnerships and efforts that improve the sustainability, equity or resiliency of the Montgomery County community.

Interviews may be scheduled with the highest scoring offerors.

All pre-qualification submittals must be provided no later than November 8, 2019 at 3:00 p.m. In order to reduce paper consumption, the County is accepting only proposals on electronic media. Proposals must be emailed to DGS.green@montgomerycountymd.gov and be less than 5 megabytes in size. Each email must clearly state RFEP – Oaks Landfill Solar. The anticipated schedule for the first and second phases of this RFEP is below.

Event	Date
RFEP Issued	September 27, 2019
Site Visit and Prebid Meeting	October 16, 2019 @ 10:00 a.m.
Deadline for Questions	October 25, 2019
Prequalification Proposals Due	November 8, 2019
Request for Final Proposals and Cost	December 2, 2019
and Price (Pre-qualified vendors only)	
Final Proposals Due (pre-qualified	December 20, 2019
vendors only)	
Anticipated Award Date	January 31, 2019

Written questions regarding the Request should be sent via email to dgs.green@montgomerycountymd.gov. All questions and the responses from the County will be posted on the Office of Energy and Sustainability's Website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dgs-oes.

B. Conditions and Limitations

This RFEP is being issued consistent with section 11B.04.01 – Electricity Procurement Regulations – Montgomery County Code of Regulations.

The County reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to reject any and all Submissions received in response to this Request, advertise for new Submissions or to accept any Proposal deemed to be in its best interest, to suspend negotiations, and to cancel this Request at any time, for any or no reason, prior to entering into a formal contract. The County further reserves the right to request clarification of information provided in Submissions submitted in response to this Request without changing the terms of this Request.

A Proposal submitted in response to this Request does not constitute a contract and does not indicate or otherwise reflect a commitment of any kind on behalf of the County or impose any binding obligations on the County or grant any rights to the any party making a submission. Furthermore, this Request does not represent a commitment or offer by the County to enter into an agreement with any submitter or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a Proposal to this Request. Furthermore, this Request does not commit the County to pay for costs incurred in the negotiation or other work in preparation of, or related to, a final agreement between the Selected Proposer and the County. Any commitment made by the County will be subject to State and County law.

The Submissions and any information made a part of the Submissions will become a part of the project's official files. The County is not obligated to return any materials submitted or received in response to this Request. This Request and the selected Offeror's response to this Request may, by reference, become a part of any formal agreement between the Submitter and the County.

If an Submitter contends that any part of its Proposal is proprietary or confidential and, therefore, is limited to disclosure under the Maryland Public Information Act, MD Code Ann. State Gov't §§10-611 et seq. (the "MPIA"), the Submitter must identify all information that is confidential or

proprietary and provide justification for why such materials should not be disclosed by the County under the MPIA. The County, as custodian of Submissions submitted in response to this Request for Available Industrial Sites, reserves the right to determine whether or not material deemed proprietary or confidential by the Submitter is, in fact, proprietary or confidential as required by the MPIA, or if the MPIA permits nondisclosure. The County will favor disclosure of all Submissions in response to any request for disclosure made under the MPIA.