

# ***Promoting Solar Power and Distributed Renewables In Orange County***

***How to Make Solar Power More Accessible for Citizens  
Discussion Presentation***

***Presentation by***

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# 1<sup>st</sup> - Streamline the Permit Process

- Encourage the Use of Online Permit Applications.
- Separate Application Stream So Solar Does Not Compete.
- Remove Extraneous Requirements.

## 1<sup>st</sup> - Streamline the Permit Process

- Examples of what not to do—NYC DOB asks for:
  - ***Photos of Meter***
  - ***Price Breakdown of System Components***
  - ***PTA4 Info for NYC Property Tax***

## 2<sup>nd</sup> – Establish Labor Standards and Buy American Requirement

- For any public job
- To ensure that Orange County Residents and American workers benefit.
- Compete on quality, not wages.
- Not just a good idea—it's the law.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> – Support New Sources of Finance Such As PACE

- Adopt Commercial PACE Financing Law
- Property Assessment for Clean Energy (PACE) allows for low-interest financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy.

## 4<sup>th</sup>—Lead by example, Go Green On County Buildings

- State financing for municipal solar.
- Low interest rates.
- An environmentally sound way to save taxpayer dollars.

## 4<sup>th</sup>—Lead by example, Go Green On County Buildings



### **E.G.: OCC PE BUILDING**

- Approx. 43,492 sq. feet total.
- 85% of roof is useable (15% obstructed).
- Could host a 535 KW system.

## 5<sup>th</sup>—Educate The Public and Building Owners

- Most energy users have limited information about recent developments.
- Municipal governments and local partners (such as the Chamber) have large networks and credibility.
- These groups can spread the good news and inform the public about ways to save.



## 6th—Consider Innovative Approaches To Changing Market

*New York State's Electricity System Is Changing. Government Should Try to Insure Public Benefits From the Change By:*

Increasing Renewable Energy Use;  
Fostering Energy Efficiency;  
Maximizing the Economic Benefits to Citizens

## *Range of Options*

1. Form A New Municipal Supply Utility:
2. Community Choice Aggregation: Supply Purchased; Supply Owned
3. Community Solar

## ***Form A “Supply-Only” Municipal Utility***

- No Condemnation Needed
- IOU must provide access to distribution
- Can own renewable energy resources to:
  - Meet County Needs
  - Create Jobs

## State Law Authorizes Formation of Municipal Supply Utility

- Under New York State Law (Municipal Law Sect 360), local governments have the power to establish a municipal utility.
- An authorizing resolution from the local legislative body (e.g. town board) and approval by a majority of voters in a referendum is required to create a municipal utility.

# *Option: Community Choice Aggregation*

## *What is Community Choice Aggregation? (CCA)*

- Local governments aggregate the buying power of customers within their jurisdiction to secure alternative energy supply contracts on a community-wide basis.
- Usually provide consumers choice of some sort: opt-out or opt-in
- Communities generally supplant, in part, the existing utility's market as electricity supplier, while still relying on the utility's delivery infrastructure.

## *CCA Is Growing As An Option*

- As of 2014, Community Choice Aggregation laws cover 25% of U.S. annual electricity demand in seven states.
- 1300 municipalities already have set up Community Choice Aggregation programs, serving 5% of Americans.
- Communities pick from supplier to meet their energy goals: lower electric rates, local jobs, and/or increased supply from renewable sources.

## *Pilot Program In New York State*

- PSC will allow Westchester municipalities, by resolution, to establish a program or join with other municipalities.
- Communities can competitively bid contracts for electric supply.
- Once community opts-in, customers may opt-out.
- Created in response to pressure from a consortium of Westchester municipalities.



## ***Option: Community Choice Aggregation + Own Supply***

- Bill proposed to New York State legislature (S-7087 and A-08883) to build on pilot program and extend Community Choice Aggregation to whole State.

# *Option: Community Solar*

## *Community Solar Comes In Several Forms*

- Community Solar is a form of group ownership of a solar power system
- The solar power system is funded through an investment or donation
- Community Solar provides power – kWh – to its participants
- There are a wide variety of Community Solar models across the country.

## *Community Solar has Many Benefits*

- Allows multifamily building residents and others to take advantage of the economic benefits of solar and access the incentive monies they funded through utility bill
- Improved economies of scale.
- Better project siting compared to roof top of apartment bldg
- Local job creation.

## Massachusetts Model: Virtual Net Metering

- 2008 Green Communities Act (GCA) establishes “virtual net metering” (or “community net metering”).
- Allow a customer with a qualifying project, who produces more power than they use, to transfer “net metering credits” to other ratepayers with the same utility and region.
- In states that do not have this, such as NY under the current law, the host for the solar energy system must have sufficient electric demand to match the system’s output.

## *New York Community Solar Legislation*

- A.9931-S.7727 would create community solar in NY.
- Utility customers could get credit against their usage for electricity produced by shared green facilities to which they subscribe.
- PSC would determine which regions would be eligible for community solar.
- Maximum subscription for length residential customers: 5 years.
- Maximum subscription length for non-residential customers: 10 years
- Maximum shared facility size: 2 MW.

# Summary

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- **2nd – Establish Labor Standards and Buy American Requirement**
- **3rd – Support New Sources of Finance Such As PACE**
- **4<sup>th</sup>—Lead by example, Go Green On County Buildings**
- **5th—Educate The Public and Building Owners**
- **6th—Consider Innovative Approaches To Changing Market**

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