March 19, 2013
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Request For Information (RFI2013PV)

Carport/Parking, Ground Mounted and Roof Mounted Solar Photovoltaic (PV) System Deployment

THIS IS NOT A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS.

RFI Reply Due Date: APRIL 15, 2013
Workshop Registration Due Date: MARCH 29, 2013
RFI Workshop: APRIL 1, 2013

PURPOSE: The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) issues this “Request for Information” (RFI) to gather information from interested vendors to continue developing preliminary plans regarding the potential acquisition of Solar Photovoltaic (PV) services. NYSDOT is also seeking to identify possible financing alternatives available for installation of Carport/Parking, Ground-Mounted, and Roof-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Systems at sixteen NYSDOT facilities. In addition NYSDOT is seeking to identify additional possible appropriate site locations. Information pertaining to ideas, high level concepts, design issues, procurement issues and practical knowledge gained from any relevant solar (PV) system installation is being sought.

BACKGROUND: NYSDOT is in the preliminary planning stages for a possible procurement to install and/or benefit from the installation of solar (PV) systems at potential NYSDOT locations in Erie, Niagara, Chautauqua and Cattaraugus Counties. NYSDOT has determined that sixteen transportation maintenance facilities in these four counties may be suitable for Carport/parking, Ground- and/or Roof-Mounted Solar (PV)
Systems, or a combination thereof. This RFI is being conducted in order to pursue the goals of the Governor’s Executive Order 88 Directing State Agencies and Authorities to Improve the Energy Efficiency of State Buildings. This is the Build Smart NY Initiative, an initiative to reduce energy consumption in state buildings by 20% in the next seven years.

**INFORMATION SOUGHT:** NYSDOT is aware of three potential financing methods, System Purchase, System Lease, or Power Purchase agreement, and is seeking information about which of these finance methods are available from system providers that would be most cost effective and about how such a project can be revenue positive, neutral and/or negative to the State.

NYSDOT is considering the possible development and release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) to procure a contractor to design, procure and install solar (PV) systems, or possible development and release an Invitation for Bids (IFB) for a Power Purchase Agreement to allow for a provider to design, procure, install and operate solar (PV) systems. **Should NYSDOT intend to procure, this will be a pilot project.** The intent and expectation is that the solar (PV) systems will provide a reliable source of renewable energy over the system service life, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, reduce our facilities’ overall energy costs, and maximize the return on investment. This project has potential expansion to other NYSDOT facilities across the State. This pilot solar project will test the economies of scale.

NYSDOT is specifically seeking information pertaining to the following:

1. A feasibility determination for the sixteen selected facilities (see *Attachment 1*). The suitability of each proposed site and whether the mounting type would be cost effective. To assist in determining site feasibility, a summary table showing the last three (3) years of energy usage (kWh) and Cost for each site is provided as *Attachment 2*. Further, NYSDOT is seeking the feasibility of other recommended NYSDOT facilities within Region 5’s area in Western New York.

2. An estimated range of installation cost (to the nearest $50,000) of the entire build out of all feasible sites, with estimates for each location, and the variables affecting the possible range of installation cost, under the following three (A, B & C) scenarios:

   A. **PURCHASE BY NYSDOT:** All system components, including solar (PV) panels, DC/AC inverter(s), interconnection meter (if feasible), support hardware (i.e. wiring, mounts, brackets) were purchased in full upon contract execution, installed by the third party provider, and operated/maintained by NYSDOT.

   B. **LEASED BY NYSDOT:** All system components, including solar (PV) panels, DC/AC inverter, interconnection meter (if supported by estimated consumption), support hardware (i.e. wiring, mounts, brackets) were leased from, installed, and maintained by a third party provider, the range of lease term (months or years) that could be provided, and whether any up front installation costs would be required.

   2
C. NO POSSIBLE COST TO NYSDOT: NYSDOT offered the selected sites for lease and use by the solar (PV) system provider, and entered into a Power Purchase Agreement, with said provider. The range of agreement terms (in months or years) that could be provided, the range of possible kWh cost of the solar energy produced to NYSDOT, the possible value of lease payments to NYSDOT over the lease term, and whether a system purchase balloon payment could be feasible at the end of the contract term at each site, and what could be the possible price range of said balloon payment.

3. A description of any programs that might be used that are provided by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA).

4. A discussion of whether a return on investment could be realized if the system were purchased and/or leased at each facility. And/or whether the particular sites, or the full build out of all systems as whole, could or would be better served by a Power Purchase Agreement.

5. An explanation of the inspection, licensing/permitting requirements or other agreements, and costs that would be required of NYSDOT in order to install interconnection meters where they would be feasible.

6. Long-range implications of undertaking such a project as is, plus implications via revisions to 1 through 4 above, should this pilot project be expanded to include an assessment of all NYSDOT facilities statewide.

NOTE: All responses to this RFI become the property of NYSDOT. NYSDOT will protect confidential and proprietary information from disclosure to the extent permitted by the Freedom of Information Law (“FOIL”), Article 6 of the Public Officers Law. If a respondent believes information included in their response is confidential and proprietary, they should identify those page(s) of their proposal which contain such information as “confidential and proprietary”. Additionally, respondents need to explain the reason(s) why this information should be considered exempt from public disclosure under FOIL. The identification of pages and the reasons for exemption should be included in the Executive Summary of your response.

To further support the information and requirements gathering needed to develop a possible NYSDOT Solar (PV) RFP or Solar (PV) IFB, the Department will also conduct a one-day workshop open to the public, as described below, for system providers and all interested parties.
REGION 5 SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) WORKSHOP: To gather the information necessary to develop a possible NYSDOT Solar (PV) RFP or Solar (PV) IFB, a Solar (PV) Photovoltaic System Providers Workshop will be held:

- **When:** April 1, 2013 from 1:00 – 4:00 PM
- **Where:** NYSDOT Region 5, 100 Seneca Street. Buffalo, New York.

- **Workshop Objectives:**
  - Inform interested vendors about the site selection process used for determining the selected sites for solar (PV) systems
  - Increase common understanding among potential vendors and NYSDOT about site specific issues, financing methods, and operating costs.
  - Gather potential requirements for a Solar (PV) RFP or Solar (PV) IFB from interested vendors.
  - Talk about other possible pilot project goals and objectives, including participation opportunities for Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises.

The purpose of the Workshop is to engage interested parties in a general discussion of the feasibility of the solar installation locations proposed, the feasibility of the three types of mounting (parking/carport, roof mounted, ground-mounted) proposed at the selected facilities, and what methods of financing (system purchase or lease, or Power Purchase Agreement) would be available to NYSDOT. The input being sought at this event is intended to inform the development of a scope of services that are being developed for a Solar (PV) System RFP, or Solar (PV) System IFB.

The Workshop is explicitly intended to gather third party input, some of which may ultimately be reflected in a Solar (PV) RFP or Solar (PV) IFB. The Workshop is not intended to preview other aspects of a Solar (PV) RFP or Solar (PV) IFB, and it is not an informational session oriented to potential bidders on a Solar (PV) RFP or Solar (PV) IFB. The Solar (PV) RFP or Solar (PV) IFB may be developed as a collaborative product of NYSDOT and another participating state agency to support a range of agency-to-agency operational or planning objectives. Further, this Workshop is not intended to address NYSDOT or State of New York policies and practices pertaining to the purchase or lease of products or services. It is focused on technical, financial and programmatic requirements that would enhance, and allow NYSDOT to progress, a Solar (PV) System RFP or Solar (PV) IFB.
REGISTERING FOR WORKSHOP

For security purposes, **all attendees must register to attend this Workshop.** The **deadline for registering is COB March 29, 2013.** Although it is not anticipated to be an issue, registration may be limited by the space available at the Workshop location. **To register, please email the Registration Information below to:**

Frank.Billittier@dot.ny.gov

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Region 5 Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Workshop  Registration Information

Name: _____________________________  Job Title: ___________________________

Company: ___________________________

Email Address: _______________________Phone: ______________________________

Mailing Address:
________________________________________________________________________

NYSDOT reserves the right to reschedule the workshop. If the workshop needs to be rescheduled, all registered parties will be notified.

If you are **unable** to attend the Workshop, but would like to provide input related to the discussion topics listed please submit your input and feedback via email by April 1, 2013 to: Frank.Billittier@dot.ny.gov. Contact Frank Billittier by email or phone (716) 847-3333 with any questions regarding this workshop.
RFI REPLY INSTRUCTIONS: Interested firms are encouraged to submit a notice of interest on company letterhead along with the requested information below. Information pertaining to ideas, high level concepts, design issues, procurement issues and practical knowledge gained from any relevant solar (PV) system installation is being sought. NYSDOT requests delivery of any responses, no later than COB Monday, April 15, 2013, to further progress its solar PV pilot project. While respondents are requested to limit the main body of their responses to a dozen pages or less, to grant additional flexibility, the limit of the total number of pages is up to two dozen. Additional information may be attached, if such information is self-contained and publically available (i.e., brochures, schematics, specifications, price lists, etc.). Please include an Executive Summary of no more than two pages with your response.

E-MAIL RFI RESPONSES TO: patricia.rumore@dot.ny.gov. Please include your name, organization, telephone number, e-mail address, and mailing address in your cover e-mail. Address all questions regarding this RFI to: patricia.rumore@dot.ny.gov.

In addition, this RFI and its attachments (as well as any future updates, changes, announcements, etc.) will be posted to NYSDOT’s website at: www.dot.ny.gov/business.

In the case where there is a brochure that cannot be emailed, it can be mailed to Patricia Rumore, at the address below:

   New York State Department of Transportation  
   Contract Management Bureau  
   50 Wolf Road  6th Floor  
   Albany, NY  12232  
   Attention:  Solar RFI (Patricia Rumore)

RFI DEADLINE

NYSDOT requests delivery of any RFI responses, no later than COB Monday, April 15, 2013, to further progress its solar PV pilot project.

RFI RESPONSE CLARIFICATIONS: The Department may seek additional information (clarifying or otherwise) following the receipt and consideration of RFI Responses. This may be through phone discussions, meetings or correspondence, and may be with an individual respondent, a subset of respondents, or all respondents.

ATTACHMENTS
Attachment 1 – Maps of sixteen NYSDOT transportation maintenance facilities (Zip file)  
Attachment 2 – Excel Summary of three years of energy cost and usage for each location

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