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Article- Large Scale Renewable Energy in Clearview

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In the summer of 2013 the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) embarked on the development of a competitive process for the procurement of large scale renewable energy projects within the Province. Project types that are included under this procurement process include wind, solar, and bio-gas projects generally 500 kW or greater. Smaller renewable energy projects are handled under the FIT and microFIT programs.



The first step in the procurement process was to identify those applicants that would be deemed 'qualified' and eligible to move through to the procurement process. A list of qualified applicants has been identified by the OPA.

The OPA and the Independent Electricity System Operator (ieso) merged on January 1, 2015. The bodies are now identified under the ieso banner.

At the end of 2014 the draft documents for the Request for Proposals (RFP) stage of the procurement process were published and a commenting period was executed. The final documents were published March 10, 2015. The RFP submission stage is now open to qualified applicants, with the final proposal submission deadline being September 1, 2015.

Visit www.ieso.ca for more technical detail about the RFP process and the published documents.

The Township Community Planning and development Department has received several inquiries about the placement of large scale renewable energy solar projects on private lands within the Township. At this time, no

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inquiries concerning any other type of energy source (e.g., wind, bio-gas) have been received. After receiving these inquiries and learning about the large scale renewable energy RFP, it became apparent that the Township was in need of a protocol and application form to deal with these proposals in a standardized manner.

In response to this need for policy structure, the Community Planning and Development Department developed a draft application form, process protocol, and location criteria for managing large scale renewable energy proposals in the pre-consultation and formal application stages. These documents were taken forward to Council for consideration on March 23, 2015. The draft documents were proposed to apply to projects under the present IESO RFP and any other large scale development being proposed on public or private lands in the Township. These documents were also intended to be applicable to all types of energy sources, including but not limited to: wind, solar, and bio-gas.

Township Council approved the large scale renewable energy application form, process protocol, and location criteria, as presented by the Planning Department, at its meeting on March 23, 2015.

The process protocol and the application form were developed generally based on existing practices and requirements that apply to applications under the Planning Act. The Planning Act exempts renewable energy projects from consideration under provincial plans and policy statements under Sec. 62.0.2; however, for the purposes of public consultation, the Act lays out an established process and appropriate model for engagement.

IESO has placed a notable emphasis on community engagement in its RFP. In the approvals process, a proponent is given points for various initiatives taken to engage with a host community or for getting Council endorsement. The protocol speaks to the matter of points procurement, and notes that a proponent must state an intent to earn points or credit for all meetings and consultation opportunities.

In order to streamline administration of the application and consultation process, Council identified a staff delegate to manage engagement requests. The delegate will not have any endorsement or 'approval' authority, and all



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applications would ultimately be brought forward to Council just as Planning Act applications are now. The Director of Community Services, in consultation with the CAO, was identified as Council's delegate to manage ongoing engagement requests.

An important component of the protocol is the criteria for locating large scale renewable energy projects. The location criteria is proposed to apply to all types of projects on public and private lands, and is based on principles of good land use planning. The location criteria is centered upon the preservation of prime agricultural lands and upon the diversification of underused or contaminated lands.

Following adoption by Council on March 23, 2015, the protocol, location criteria, and application were brought into force and effect. These documents can now be used to assist project proponents in moving forward with their due diligence and RFP approvals process. The content of these documents represents Council's specific criteria for large scale renewable energy projects proposed within the Township.

Link to: [Large Scale Renewable Energy Protocol and Location Criteria](#)

Link to: [Large Scale Renewable Energy Application](#)