

# Clean Energy Resource Development and Incentives:

The Build Ready Program Annual Progress Report  
January 1, 2024–June 30, 2025

Final Report | August 2025



**NYSERDA**  
New York State Energy Research  
and Development Authority

**50 YEARS** 1975-2025

## **NYSERDA's Mission:**

NYSERDA catalyzes New York's clean energy transition.

### **Our Vision:**

Clean energy that supports a healthier and thriving future for all New Yorkers.

### **Our Promise to New Yorkers:**

NYSERDA serves New York State as a trusted and credible resource for energy information, policies, and programs, through objective analysis and planning, innovative solutions, and impactful investments that are valued by New York residents and businesses.

# **Clean Energy Resource Development and Incentives: The Build-Ready Program Annual Progress Report**

**January 1, 2024–June 30, 2025**

*Final Report*

*Case 15-E-0302*

Prepared by:

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Albany, NY

August 2025

# Abstract

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The *Build-Ready Program Annual Progress Report* is intended to inform the Public Service Commission (PSC), State agencies, market participants, and other interested parties on the progress of the Build-Ready (BR) Program. More specifically, this report provides information on progress made in achieving the Build-Ready Program's stated goals and objectives as described in the Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act, the PSC Order approving the Build-Ready Program, and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) Build-Ready Implementation Plan. This report also provides an update on the Build-Ready Program's commitments and cumulative expenditure of funding. The reporting period for this report is January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

# Keywords

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Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act (the Act), assessment, auction, battery energy storage system (BESS), Build-Ready Budget Amendment, Build-Ready Program's Implementation Plan, Build-Ready Program, Build-Ready Project, challenging, clean energy, clean energy development, cost modeling study, development, distributed generation (DG), distributed energy resources (DER), Host Community Agreement, host community benefits, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), nonviable, origination, payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT), pipeline, portfolio, project development, Public Service Commission (PSC), renewable energy, renewable energy project, request for information (RFI), screening, site, solar photovoltaic (PV), statewide transfer study, underutilized, viable.

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

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the Act	Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
BR	Build-Ready
CEF	Clean Energy Fund
CESIR	Coordinated Electric System Interconnection Review
CIA	Critical Issues Analysis
DER	Distributed Energy Resources
DG	Distributed Generation
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
EV	electric vehicle
GIS	Geographic Information System
IDA	Industrial Development Agency
ISC	index storage credit
kV	kilovolts
LBMP	location-based marginal price
LIPA	Long Island Power Authority
LLC	Limited Liability Company
MIPA	Membership Interest Purchase Agreement
MOU	memorandum of understanding
MW	megawatts
MWac	megawatts, alternating current
NPV	net present value
NYSEG	New York State Gas & Electric
NYSEIA	New York Solar Energy Industry Association
NYSERDA	New York State Energy Research and Development Authority
O&R	Orange & Rockland Utilities, Inc.
the Order	PSC Order Approving the Build-Ready Program
PILOT	payment-in-lieu-of-taxes
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSEG-LI	Public Service Enterprise Group—Long Island
PV	photovoltaic
RECs	Renewable Energy Certificates
RFI	request for information

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# Executive Summary

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The *Build-Ready Program Annual Progress Report* informs the Public Service Commission (PSC), other State agencies, market participants, and interested parties on the status of the Build-Ready Program (the Program). More specifically, this report provides information on progress made in achieving the Build-Ready Program's stated goals and objectives as described in the Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act (the Act), the PSC Order Approving the Build-Ready Program (the Order), and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) Build-Ready Program Implementation Plan. This report also provides an update on Build-Ready's commitments and cumulative expenditure of funding as of June 30, 2025.

Since 2023, Build-Ready has prioritized originating new sites and advancing existing sites through origination, into development, and auction. Notably, in 2024, the Act was amended through New York State's 2025–2026 budget process (Build-Ready Budget Amendment). The Build-Ready Budget Amendment updated the Build-Ready Program to:

1. Prioritize dormant electricity generation sites alongside previously developed sites
2. Prohibit site development on agricultural land,<sup>1</sup> except for interconnection equipment required to connect the project to the electrical grid
3. Permit bulk energy storage system projects on Build-Ready sites.

The following summarizes the Build-Ready Program's activities from January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

Highlights include:

- **Completed Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Site Origination and Development**  
In 2024 and 2025, Build-Ready identified, screened, and rescreened 263 sites, including landfills, brownfields, parking lots, dormant electric generators, closed prisons, and existing commercial and industrial properties. However, none of the sites were viable for Build-Ready projects, and they did not progress. The Build-Ready Program continued its project development efforts, advancing three Distributed Generation (DG) projects through development into auction and completed development of a statewide database and mapping tool that includes all sites identified since 2020.

- **Developed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Origination Strategy**  
Based on the Build-Ready Budget Amendment, in late 2024, Build-Ready launched a standalone BESS origination effort. This effort included developing a BESS site screening tool, conducting a statewide transfer study and production cost modeling study to inform BESS siting, updating a financial model to evaluate BESS projects, creating a top-ranked BESS sites list, and issuing a request for information (RFI) to gather feedback on Build-Ready's role in the BESS market.
- **Completed Build-Ready Auction and Launched Second Solicitation**  
The Build-Ready Program completed its first auction with the Build-Ready (BR) Benson Mines Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Project. In 2025, the Build-Ready Program finalized the award, sale, and transfer of the project to CleanCapital's project company, Five Ponds Solar LLC. Five Ponds Solar LLC entered into a Membership Interest Purchase Agreement (MIPA) to acquire the project, a 20-year agreement to sell Tier 1 Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) generated by the BR Benson Mines Solar PV Project (REC Agreement) to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). The Build-Ready Program also initiated its second auction for three DG projects in Niagara County. Build-Ready expects this RFP to be complete by the end of 2025.

# 1 Background

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The Act established the Build-Ready Program<sup>2</sup> and directs NYSERDA to identify, assess, and facilitate the development of suitable sites for renewable power-generating facilities, prioritizing “previously developed sites” and “existing or abandoned commercial sites,” such as brownfields, landfills, disused, or underutilized sites. Build-Ready must also provide benefits to host communities.

In October 2020, the Public Service Commission (PSC) issued an order formally approving Build-Ready.<sup>3</sup> The PSC Order Approving the Build-Ready Program (Order) reiterates that Build-Ready will prioritize:

1. Advancing renewable energy projects on previously developed and existing or abandoned commercial sites
2. Providing benefits to host communities

In January 2021, NYSERDA submitted the Build-Ready Program’s Implementation Plan, formalizing the processes and procedures Build-Ready will follow for site prospecting, project development, and project auction and transfer.<sup>4</sup>

Over the last year and a half, Build-Ready has implemented the Plan by advancing feasible sites through origination, project development, and completing its first project auction for sale and transfer.

The Order requires NYSERDA to submit an annual report on the Build-Ready Program by April 1, 2021, and annually thereafter. The report must summarize:

1. A comparison of actual versus planned achievements in the previous year
2. Planned activities and targets for the coming year
3. A financial summary of proceeds, net of program and administration expenses
4. An update on the use and status of Clean Energy Fund (CEF) cash balances
5. A progress report on the current project portfolio
6. A list of auctioned sites and the names of the awarded bidders
7. Renewable energy production from auctioned sites
8. Host community benefits delivered

The 2024 Annual Report was initially due on April 1, 2025. Build-Ready requested and received an extension, granted on April 3, 2025, from the Commission’s Secretary, the Honorable Michelle L. Philipps, to file the Annual Report by September 1, 2025.

This fourth Annual Report fulfills NYSERDA's reporting requirement and documents progress made in implementing the Build-Ready Program from January 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. The report covers the following topics:

- Section 2 reviews the Build-Ready site origination and pipeline status.
- Section 3 discusses projects under development.
- Section 4 provides an update on the first Build-Ready auction.
- Section 5 presents the current use and status of funding.
- Section 6 discusses the future of the Build-Ready Program

## 2 Build-Ready Site Origination and Pipeline

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Since 2023, Build-Ready has prioritized originating new sites and advancing existing sites through origination and into development. Notably, in 2024, the Act was amended through New York State’s 2025–2026 budget process (Build-Ready Budget Amendment). The Build-Ready Budget Amendment updated the Program to:

1. Prioritize dormant electricity generation sites alongside previously developed sites
2. Prohibit site development on agricultural land,<sup>5</sup> except for interconnection equipment required to connect the project to the electrical grid
3. Permit bulk energy storage system projects on Build-Ready sites

The following section provides more detail on Build-Ready’s origination activities.

### 2.1 Site Identification and Screening for Large-scale Solar Photovoltaic Projects

In 2024 and the first half of 2025, Build-Ready continued identifying and screening potential large-scale solar PV project sites using origination strategies detailed in previous annual reports.

These strategies include:

1. Targeting areas with lower interconnection risk<sup>6</sup>
2. Working with key channel partners
3. Developing solar PV parking lot canopy projects paired with battery energy storage systems (BESS) and electric vehicle (EV) chargers
4. Aggregating distributed solar PV projects into one larger project
5. Clustering projects around anticipated Build-Ready interconnection investments<sup>7</sup>

In 2024 and 2025, Build-Ready screened and rescreened 263 additional sites totaling 480 since 2020.

These sites included landfills, brownfields, parking lots, dormant electric generators, closed prisons, and existing commercial and industrial properties. However, none of the sites were deemed viable for Build-Ready projects and did not progress into development. The most common challenges were:

- **Insufficient buildable area:** Build-Ready projects typically require at least 35 buildable acres.<sup>8</sup> Constraints such as wetlands, agricultural activity, or significant forest cover, among others, often limit development potential.
- **Lack of landowner interest:** Some landowners declined to pursue renewable energy development.
- **Private developer activity:** If private developers had already pursued a site, Build-Ready exited per policy to avoid competition with the private market.

- **Nonviable interconnection:** Distance to the grid, limited hosting capacity, and high costs made interconnections infeasible for some sites due to congestion, deliverability, and other concerns.
- **Environmental constraints:** Significant environmental issues, including wetlands, made certain sites unsuitable.
- **Agriculture district/activities:** Agricultural district sites or those with significant agricultural activity could not be used.
- **Potential nonenergy use:** Sites considered for commercial development were ruled out.
- **Economic viability:** A combination of the above factors made some sites too expensive to develop and not economically viable.

Table 1 represents the cumulative number of Build-Ready sites that were screened, rescreened, and closed since the beginning of the program to June 30, 2025, as well as the primary reason each site did not move forward. Some sites may not have advanced due to multiple reasons.

**Table 1. Primary Challenges to Advancing Build-Ready Sites (2020-June 2025)**

Primary Challenge	Cumulative Number of Closed Sites
Lack of Landowner Interest	91
Potential Nonenergy Use	46
Private Renewable Energy Developer Interest	40
Insufficient Buildable Area	166
Nonviable Interconnection	64
Environmental Issues	22
Agricultural District/Activity	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>480</b>

Despite the lack of viable sites, Build-Ready gained valuable insights into the challenges of advancing renewable energy projects. Build-Ready shared these lessons learned across NYSERDA and with other State agencies to help the State better understand and address barriers in clean energy development.

### 2.1.1 Solar Photovoltaic Parking Lot Canopy Origination

Build-Ready continued pursuing solar parking lot canopy projects at public and private higher education institutions, State-owned, and municipal properties. Build-Ready also explored resilient hybrid systems combining solar PV, battery storage, and EV chargers to meet growing EV charging demand.

As discussed in the 2023 Annual Report, Build-Ready screened parking lots across the State, focusing on sites with more than 9 acres of available buildable area. Build-Ready identified 55 potential parking lot sites, prioritizing those at government-owned properties and higher education institutions. Build-Ready engaged with landowners to secure support for business use cases and technology configurations. Build-Ready conducted initial feasibility assessments for six sites but found them to be not financially viable.

### **2.1.2 Dormant Electric Generator Sites**

Following the expanded authority by the Build-Ready Budget Amendment, Build-Ready reassessed 90 dormant electric generator sites for large-scale solar PV or BESS project suitability. While no viable solar PV projects emerged, 32 sites showed potential for stand-alone BESS projects. Build-Ready evaluated these sites and included them in the BESS Top Sites List.

Two sites progressed to landowner discussions. Despite several productive discussions, the landowners ultimately chose not to move forward. The findings from the Build-Ready dormant electric generator assessment were shared across other NYSERDA programs to inform and advance additional clean energy initiatives in New York State.

## **2.2 Battery Energy Storage System Origination**

Based on the Build-Ready Budget Amendment, Build-Ready launched a standalone BESS origination effort in late 2024. This effort consists of several components discussed in the following sections.

### **2.2.1 BESS Site Screening Tool**

Build-Ready developed an Excel-based tool that combines qualitative and quantitative methods to screen and score sites for BESS viability. The tool helped Build-Ready prioritize sites for further assessment. The first set of screening criteria consists of pass/fail factors, including site location (e.g., in an agricultural district or flood plain), buildable area size, injection and withdrawal capacity, site characteristics (e.g., presence of old growth forest or historical or cultural resources), and presence of a local BESS moratorium. If a site passes through the first set of criteria, it progresses through three subsequent sets of weighted and scored criteria. These criteria factor in:

1. Cost issues, such as distance to interconnection and the complexity of the interconnection
2. Ease of development, such as whether existing Build-Ready partners are already involved in a site, the number of landowners, if third-party support is needed (e.g., land easement), and if any impacts exist to neighboring residential communities

3. Site and locational value, such as the ability to add solar, the extent to which congestion and market volatility are in play, existing or planned renewable energy generation, energy storage, transmission, or large-load build-outs at or near the site, and the overall potential scale of the project site.

Based on all these factors, the tool assigns a total score to each site. The tool helps the Build-Ready team prioritize sites for BESS development.

### **2.2.2 Statewide Transfer Study and Product Cost Modeling Study**

The Build-Ready team updated its existing statewide transfer study and production cost modeling study using NYISO's Annual Transmission Baseline Assessment, which included the 2024 Cluster Study projects. The transfer study identifies the maximum withdrawal and injection capacities of potential generation for all 34.5 kilovolts (kV) and above substations and transmission lines within the New York Control Area (Zones A-K). The production cost study identifies the location-based marginal price (LBMP) at each substation rated 69 kV and above across the State. The findings of this analysis help the team further prioritize potential BESS sites across New York State.

### **2.2.3 BESS Financial Model**

Build-Ready updated a financial modeling tool to forecast the net present value (NPV) and the index storage credit (ISC) strike price for potential stand-alone BESS projects.

### **2.2.4 BESS Top Sites List**

Build-Ready identified a list of sites from its site library to consider for BESS then used the BESS site screening tool, the statewide transfer study, and production cost modeling study results to further prioritize sites for origination.

### **2.2.5 BESS Request for Information**

In May 2025, the Build-Ready team issued a request for information (RFI) to understand the bulk energy storage market, specifically seeking feedback on:

- The value the Build-Ready Program can bring to the BESS market
- Prioritization of site types and development tasks for BESS projects
- The extent of project development that Build-Ready should undertake
- The optimal stage in the development cycle for auctioning Build-Ready sites if program were to complete a future competitive request for proposal (RFP)

The responses to the RFI provided the Build-Ready team with valuable feedback on the current state of the BESS market and Build-Ready's possible role. More than 10 respondents, most of whom were active in New York State, submitted responses. Respondents reported that competition with Build-Ready is inherent and unavoidable because all developers must compete for limited available resources (e.g., capacity on the grid, sites, incentives).

Respondents recommended that Build-Ready prioritize identifying technically and economically viable publicly owned sites and deprioritize identifying dormant electric generator sites or privately owned sites unless nominated to the Build-Ready Program.

Respondents also emphasized that if Build-Ready develops a BESS site, it should secure local permits or at least ensure a permitting pathway, provide an indication of the local jurisdiction's expectations for a payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) and the host community's expectations for a host benefit agreement. Respondents encouraged Build-Ready to auction sites in the early stage of development to allow flexibility for the ultimate owner to select the technology, identify the commercial strategy, and design the project. Respondents did not expect Build-Ready to initiate or complete the NYISO Cluster Study process prior to auctioning a site. However, respondents did note the importance of providing an incentive when auctioning a Build-Ready site, such as the Index Storage Credit.

### **2.2.6 Statewide Site Database and Geographic Information System Map**

As discussed in the 2023 Annual Report, Build-Ready completed a data normalization and mapping initiative focused on the organization, management, and maintenance of sites previously identified by the Build-Ready Program since its inception in 2020. As a result of this effort, Build-Ready now maintains an easily accessible and searchable statewide database with a corresponding mapping tool. Build-Ready continued adding new sites to this database in 2024 and 2025.

## **2.3 Conferences and Events**

In 2024, Build-Ready Program staff attended, presented, or served as panelists at several conferences to promote the Build-Ready Program, including the RE+ Northeast Conference, the New York Solar Energy Industry Association (NYSEIA) Annual Conference, New York State Energy Summit, the New York BEST Capture the Energy Conference, the Alliance for Clean Energy New York Annual Conference, the Battery Show North America, the Mohawk Valley Brownfield Redevelopment Summit, and the New York City Solar & Storage Installer Workshop.

In 2025, Build-Ready Program staff attended, presented, or served as panelists at several conferences to promote the Build-Ready Program, including: the NYSEIA Annual Conference, New York State Energy Summit, the New York BEST Capture the Energy Conference, the Alliance for Clean Energy New York Annual Conference, the Mohawk Valley Brownfield Redevelopment Summit, the National Grid Developers Conference, and the New York State Wetland Forum.

### 3 Build-Ready’s Development Portfolio

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Build-Ready’s project portfolio continues to evolve. Table 2 presents projects under active development, while Table 3 lists projects that were paused or terminated due to determining it was nonviable during development.

#### 3.1 Projects under Development

Build-Ready is actively developing three projects: Vincent Welch and Witmer 1 & 2 (Table 2). The sites were originally evaluated for large-scale solar development, but feasibility assessments revealed that the buildable areas for each project were smaller than initially anticipated. As a result, each was reduced to 5 megawatts, alternating current (MWac). The following section provides background information on the projects and a summary of completed development tasks.

**Table 2. Build-Ready Sites under Development**

County	Name	Site Type	Utility Territory	Tech	Project Study Area (Acres)	Buildable Area (Acres)	Total Estimated Capacity (MWac)
Niagara	Witmer 1 & 2	Landfill	National Grid	Solar	135	100	10
Niagara	Vincent Welch	Adjacent to Remediated Superfund Site	National Grid	Solar	41	30	5

##### 3.1.1 Build-Ready Witmer 1 and 2 Projects

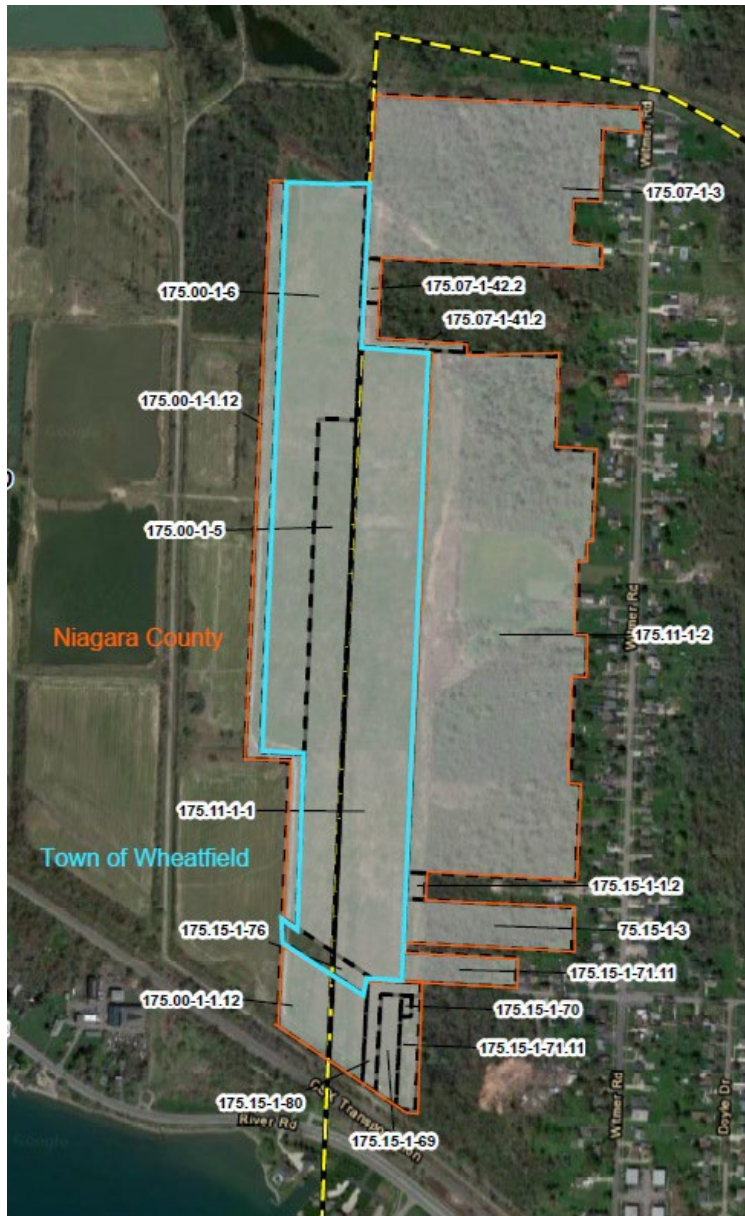
The BR Witmer 1 and 2 Solar PV projects are in the Town of Wheatfield and City of North Tonawanda, Niagara County, New York. These projects sit on a 60-acre capped landfill that operated from 1969 to 1976 and accepted municipal, industrial solid, and chemical waste. The 135-acre site comprises 16 parcels, with solar arrays expected to occupy about 65 acres. Two 5 megawatt (MW) projects are being proposed.

Build-Ready has completed the following development milestones:

- Site control: Executed a memorandum of understanding (MOU)
- Real property: Completed title report
- Environmental: Conducted Critical Issues Analysis (CIA), wetlands and streams delineations, Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)
- Design and engineering: Developed initial site plans and electrical drawings

- Interconnection: Secured queue position via application to National Grid, received Coordinated Electric System Interconnection Review (CESIR) study, and paid 25% interconnection deposit
- Auction: Formed Limited Liability Companies (LLCs), completed RFI, and launched RFP

**Figure 1. Build-Ready Witmer 1 and 2 Solar Photovoltaic Project Site Plan**



### 3.1.2 Build-Ready Vincent Welch Solar Photovoltaic Project

The BR Vincent Welch Solar PV project is located in the City of Niagara Falls on underutilized city-owned property previously used for public housing. The site was cleared during the remediation of the adjacent Love Canal site. The PV system is currently designed as a 5 MWac project. The proposed solar array would occupy up to approximately 21.73 acres of the 42.37-acre project area. To avoid ground disturbance, the project anticipates using ballasted solar arrays. Build-Ready has completed the following development milestones:

- Site control: Executed MOU
- Real property: Completed title report
- Environmental: Conducted CIA, Wetlands and Streams Delineations, and Phase 1 ESA
- Design and engineering: Developed initial site plans and electrical drawings
- Interconnection: Secured queue position via application to National Grid, received CESIR study, and paid 25% interconnection deposit
- Host community engagement: Open house, survey, and direct mailing
- Auction: Formed LLCs, completed RFI, and launched RFP

**Figure 2. Build-Ready Vincent Welch Solar Photovoltaic Project Site Plan**



### 3.1.3 Request for Information and Request for Proposals for Build-Ready Witmer 1 and 2, and Build-Ready Vincent Welch

In March 2025, Build-Ready issued an RFI that included BR Witmer 1 and 2 and BR Vincent Welch to gauge private sector interest in purchasing the projects and to determine the preferred stage of development for acquisition. Build-Ready received 14 responses; 12 of the respondents had experience in a combination of DG solar project development, construction, ownership, and operations. Respondents expressed sufficient interest in purchasing the projects, even at an early stage of development. Based on this market confirmation, Build-Ready advanced the projects to the auction stage and launched an RFP in July 2025 (see Section 4).

## 3.2 Nonviable Projects

By the end of the 2023 calendar year Build-Ready had six projects advancing through development; however, issues were identified that rendered the projects non-viable for the Build Ready Program or other renewable development opportunities at this time. This section describes those projects and respective issues that made these projects nonviable at this time.

**Table 3. Build-Ready Sites Not Advancing**

County	Name	Site Type	Utility Territory	Technology	Project Study Area (Acres)	Buildable Area (Acres)	Total Estimated Capacity (MWac)
Tompkins	Caswell Road Landfill	Landfill	NYSEG	Solar PV + BESS	112	64	12.5 MW
Orange	Orange County Landfill	Landfill	O&R	Solar PV	420	12.5	2.5 MW
Herkimer	Charlestown Mall	Formerly contaminated site	National Grid	BESS	12	6	20 MW
Tompkins	Ithaca Tompkins International Airport	Airport	NYSEG	Solar PV	627	28	5 MW
Suffolk	Town of East Hampton	Landfill/ parking lot/ underutilized	LIPA and PSEG-LI	Solar PV and BESS	104	17	3.3 MW
Suffolk	Brookhaven Landfill	Landfill	LIPA and PSEG-LI	Solar PV and BESS	400	180	30 MW

### **3.2.1 Tompkins County: Caswell Road Landfill**

In 2024 the Build-Ready Program continued to advance the development of the Build-Ready (BR) Caswell Road Solar PV & BESS project in the Town of Dryden, Tompkins County, New York. The project was proposed on a capped landfill site that had been closed since 1985. Given the limited amount of acreage available, the proposed project was designed at 12.5 MWac solar PV and 2.5 MWac BESS. The project was proposed to connect directly to the New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG) Peruville substation.

In 2024, the main project activities focused on project design, site survey work, wetland delineation, State and federal agency coordination, and the pursuit of local jurisdictional approvals. Despite the late-stage development progress and close collaboration with the project site owner, Tompkins County-Caswell Road Landfill was determined to be non-viable, and development was halted in 2024. Ultimately, it was determined that the estimated substation interconnect cost plus the cost of the alternate generation tie routes were too costly and made the project no longer financially viable.

### **3.2.2 Orange County**

In 2022, the Build-Ready Program partnered with Orange County to explore the feasibility of a solar PV project on the County's landfill. Originally the Program investigated a 20MWac solar installation on both capped and uncapped areas within the landfill property boundaries. The initial large scale project design faced high interconnection costs as it would need to connect to a transmission line located over a mile away, across third-party lands, and would require costly infrastructure upgrades including a three-breaker ring bus.<sup>9</sup> These challenges made the larger project financially and logistically unfeasible.

Build-Ready then investigated a redesigned project as a smaller 5MWac solar PV project connecting to a nearby 13.2kV distribution feeder with sufficient electric capacity headroom. After additional losses of potential buildable area and corresponding reductions in project size, it was determined that the project was no longer financially viable.

### **3.2.3 Herkimer County**

In 2023, Build-Ready, in partnership with the Herkimer County IDA, started investigating 12 acres of land consisting of a superfund site located on the grounds of the former Charlestown Mall of Utica in West Frankfort/Utica. The project considered a 20MW standalone BESS project over concrete foundations left behind after the demolition of the previously occupied buildings.

Early progress was made with desktop studies and a site visit to better understand the scope of the work needed to assess the feasibility of the project. Work was completed to de-risk the existing site conditions and the interconnection. During the investigation, it was discovered that the project would require additional infrastructure investments including a three-breaker ring bus. The Build Ready team performed cost modeling for this scenario. The significant cost of the required three-breaker ring bus, the level of site preparation work expected, and the inability of the existing electric lines to host a large-scale BESS project lead the Build-Ready team to conclude that a project at this location was no longer viable and could not proceed.

### **3.2.4 Tompkins County International Airport**

At the end of 2023, Build-Ready entered into an MOU with Tompkins County and the Ithaca Tompkins International Airport to assess the viability of a large-scale solar PV and BESS project. Located in the Village of Lansing, Town of Lansing, and Town of Dryden, a 67-acre area northeast of the airport runway was identified as a potentially viable site. After the Build-Ready conducted environmental and interconnection studies, the team determined that the site would not support a viable large-scale project, and the design was downsized to 5 MWac. Build-Ready explored several design and interconnection iterations but ultimately concluded that the project was not economically viable. Build-Ready ceased development of the project.

### **3.2.5 East Hampton**

In 2023, the Build-Ready team entered into an MOU with the Town of East Hampton to evaluate the viability of various parcels identified in the town for solar PV and BESS. The sites identified for evaluation included Bull Path Road (19 acres), Montauk Transfer Station (27 acres), and Springs Landfill (79 acres), as well as several town-owned parking locations. After site evaluations, in-person visits, and financial modelling the sites were deemed largely non-viable because of difficult topography and size limitations.

### **3.2.6 Brookhaven Landfill**

During 2024-2025 the Build Ready team continued to evaluate multiple project configurations and interconnection routes to make the Brookhaven Landfill project successful. Build-Ready worked with the local utility to explore potential options to reduce the costs and make the project viable. It was determined that the project is not suitable as a Build Ready site and it was recommended that the site owner and the utility consider alternatives for this location at this time.

## 4 Build-Ready Auctions

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In 2024, Build-Ready completed the RFP and transferred the BR Benson Mines Solar PV project, a 12 MWac solar facility located in St. Lawrence County, New York. The site, located on a former iron ore tailings pile, was awarded to CleanCapital's project company, Five Ponds Solar LLC. Once operational, the project is expected to generate enough renewable electricity to power up to 3,000 homes annually and become one of the largest solar projects in the Adirondack Park.

In 2025, the Build-Ready Program issued RFP (BRRFP25-1) to auction the BR Vincent Welch and BR Witmer 1 and 2 DG solar projects. Proposals will be evaluated according to published criteria. Pending selection, the projects will transfer to the awardee(s) through a Membership Interest Purchase Agreement (MIPA). The awardee(s) will complete development, design, and engineering, secure permits and interconnection, apply for State and federal incentives, and potentially finance, procure major equipment, construct, own, and operate the project(s).

## 5 Use and Status of Funding

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The Order approved a Build-Ready budget of \$71.8 million through 2025 and authorized the use of \$50 million of CEF cash balances to serve as an initial funding source. The Order and Program Implementation Plan also anticipated that Build-Ready would eventually become financially self-sustaining. It envisioned that proceeds from auctioned sites would be used to repay the CEF funds and, thereafter, reinvested back into the program to support the advancement of additional project sites. Table 4 summarizes the expended and remaining funds through June 30, 2025, and Table 5 provides a financial status report of the Build-Ready Program through June 30, 2025.

As displayed in Tables 4 and 5, Program expenditures increased in 2024 compared to 2023. This increase reflects Build-Ready's efforts to originate new sites, develop the portfolio, and complete the auction of the BR Benson Mines Solar PV project.

In 2025, Build-Ready's spending decreased. With few viable projects, Build-Ready spent less on origination and development activities, including technical consultants and system development. For the remainder of calendar year 2025, Build-Ready anticipates continued low spending on technical consultants and systems development.

Importantly, in 2025, Build-Ready brought in its first revenues from the auction of the BR Benson Mines Solar PV project (see Table 5, Site Disposition Fees). These funds will be used to repay the CEF. Build-Ready is also in the process of auctioning three DG solar PV projects, which will generate additional revenues if sold.

**Table 4. Build-Ready Program Funding and Spending from Program Inception through June 30, 2025**

Amount in thousands.

Category	Total Funding	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 (6/30/2025)	Cumulative Spending	Remaining Funding
Salaries and Overhead	\$13,500.0	\$26.9	\$1,420.1	\$1,244.6	\$1,776.1	\$1,934.7	\$925.8	\$7,328.3	\$6,171.7
Technical, Consultant, Legal Support, and System Development	\$57,500.0	\$220.5	\$1,526.0	\$999.6	\$1,889.7	\$2,604.9	\$845.3	\$8,086.1	\$49,413.9
New York State Cost Recovery Fee Expense	\$800.0	\$0.3	\$32.4	\$23.2	\$34.4	\$39.9	(\$16.1) <sup>a</sup>	\$114.0	\$686.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$71,800.0</b>	<b>\$247.8</b>	<b>\$2,978.5</b>	<b>\$2,267.4</b>	<b>\$3,700.2</b>	<b>\$4,579.5</b>	<b>\$1,755.0</b>	<b>\$15,528.4</b>	<b>\$56,271.6</b>

<sup>a</sup> The Cost recovery fee is recalculated on a quarterly basis over a fiscal year, based on a proportional allocation of expenditures.

**Table 5. Build-Ready Program Cumulative Financial Status Report**

Amount in thousands.

Category	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 (6/30/2025)	Total
<b>Revenues/Sources of Funds</b>							
Site Disposition Fees	—	—	—	—	—	\$3,420.00	\$3,420.00
Clean Energy Fund Resources <sup>a</sup>	\$247.80	\$3,354.00	\$2,878.90	\$3,605.30	\$2,871.10	\$2,102.90	\$15,060.00
Financial Backstop Guarantee	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Investment Income <sup>b</sup>	—	\$0.40	\$37.30	\$119.70	\$102.60	\$44.10	\$304.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$247.80</b>	<b>\$3,354.40</b>	<b>\$2,916.20</b>	<b>\$3,725.00</b>	<b>\$2,973.70</b>	<b>\$5,567.00</b>	<b>\$18,784.10</b>
<b>Expenses/Use of Funds</b>							
Program Administration	\$27.00	\$1,420.10	\$1,244.60	\$1,776.10	\$1,934.70	\$925.80	\$7,328.30
Program Support	\$220.50	\$1,526.00	\$999.60	\$1,889.70	\$2,604.90	\$845.30	\$8,086.00
Clean Energy Fund Resources (Returned)	—	—	—	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
NYS Cost Recovery Fee	\$0.30	\$32.40	\$23.20	\$34.40	\$39.90	-\$16.10	\$114.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$247.80</b>	<b>\$2,978.50</b>	<b>\$2,267.40</b>	<b>\$3,700.20</b>	<b>\$4,579.50</b>	<b>\$1,755.00</b>	<b>\$15,528.40</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>\$375.90</b>	<b>\$648.80</b>	<b>\$24.80</b>	<b>-\$1,605.80</b>	<b>\$3,812.00</b>	<b>\$3,255.70</b>
<b>Cumulative Surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>\$3,255.70</b>
<b>Cash Balance at 6/30/2025</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>\$3,255.70</b>

<sup>a</sup> NYSERDA is authorized to use any cash balances for the Build-Ready Program in the CEF through the Bill-As-You-Go funding mechanism to satisfy Build-Ready Program cash payments until such funds are replenished and restored to the CEF through ongoing Build-Ready site disposition fees.

<sup>b</sup> Investment income represents earnings that can be attributed to the investment of cash balances that are not immediately required for programmatic use. The income is primarily derived from these balances invested in U.S. Treasury securities, such as Treasury Bills and Treasury Notes.

## **6 Future Program Plans**

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During the second half of 2025, the Build-Ready team will focus its efforts on the ongoing project auction and screening and evaluating various potential sites. In October 2025, the Build-Ready Program will complete its first five years of operation and will submit its 5-year report to the PSC, providing an assessment of the Build-Ready Program's progress in meeting New York State's clean energy goals.

# Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> “Agricultural land” is defined in the 2025-2026 Budget Amendment as “land used in agricultural production as defined by the department of agriculture and markets, with additional consideration for land within an agricultural district or land that contains mineral soil groups 1–4, shall not be deemed suitable for the development of a build-ready site except when necessary for generator lead lines and other equipment needed for interconnection or projects to the electrical system.”
- <sup>2</sup> New York State Legislature. 2020. *Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act*, Chapter 58 (Part JJJ) of the Laws of 2020.  
[https://nyassembly.gov/leg/?default\\_fld=&&leg\\_video=&&bn=A09508&&term=2019&&Text=Y](https://nyassembly.gov/leg/?default_fld=&&leg_video=&&bn=A09508&&term=2019&&Text=Y)
- <sup>3</sup> New York State Public Service Commission (PSC). 2020. *Order Approving Build-Ready Program*. CASE 15-E-0302. Issued and Effective October 15, 2020.  
<http://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/Common/ViewDoc.aspx?DocRefId={B0F6CC45-490C-48A7-B0FB-6D3C7924993C}>
- <sup>4</sup> NYSERDA. 2021. “Build-Ready Implementation Plan.” January 12.  
<http://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/Common/ViewDoc.aspx?DocRefId={277A546B-8DD7-4D19-8532-E4049B1141E1}>
- <sup>5</sup> See note 1 above for the definition of “agricultural land.”
- <sup>6</sup> “Lower interconnection risk areas” refers to parts of New York State’s electric transmission and distribution grid with sufficient capacity to support additional integration of renewable energy generation, also called “available headroom,” and limited congestion. These conditions help lower the cost and complexity of the interconnection of renewable energy generation projects.
- <sup>7</sup> NYSERDA. 2023. *Clean Energy Resource Development and Incentives: The Build-Ready Program Annual Progress Report 2022*. April 1. <https://www.nysERDA.ny.gov/-/media/Project/Nyserda/Files/Programs/Clean-Energy-Standard/LSR-BRP-2022-annual-r-1-v3-acc.pdf>
- <sup>8</sup> “Anchor parcel” is the primary parcel used for project siting. For large-scale solar PV projects, a minimum of 35 buildable acres is typically required for project viability.
- <sup>9</sup> “Three-breaker ring bus” is an electrical interconnection configuration generally required by all utilities in New York State for large-scale generation interconnection because it offers the highest reliability. Costs range from \$5 million to \$44 million, depending on the voltage level of the transmission system where the project is interconnecting. This cost often exceeds other types of substation interconnection requirements by a factor of 4–5 times the cost, making it cost-prohibitive for most projects unless they can be sized sufficiently to generate enough revenue to cover these costs.

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