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# CS Energy

## York Run Solar Community Engagement Plan

**Towns of Kiantone and Busti, Chautauqua County, New York**

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## Abbreviations

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| AC       | Alternating Current                                      |
| CEP      | Community Engagement Plan                                |
| CES      | Clean Energy Standard                                    |
| CLCPA    | Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act          |
| DC       | Direct Current   |
| EPC      | Engineering Procurement and Construction                 |
| FAA      | Federal Aviation Administration                          |
| GIS      | Geographic Information System                            |
| HCA      | Host Community Agreement                                 |
| GW       | Gigawatt   |
| kV       | Kilovolt   |
| MW       | Megawatt   |
| NYCRR    | New York Codes, Rules, and Regulations                   |
| NYS DAM  | New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets     |
| NYISO    | New York State Independent System Operator               |
| NYPA     | New York Power Authority                                 |
| NYS      | New York State   |
| NYSDEC   | New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  |
| NYSERDA  | New York State Energy Research and Development Authority |
| NYSOPRHP | New York State Parks Recreation & Historic Preservation  |
| NYSHPO   | New York State Historic Preservation Office              |
| ORES     | Office of Renewable Energy Siting                        |
| PILOT    | Payment In Lieu Of Taxes                                 |
| PV       | Photovoltaic   |
| REC      | Renewable Energy Credits                                 |
| RFP      | Request For Proposals                                    |
| USACE    | United States Army Corps of Engineers                    |
| USDA     | United States Department of Agriculture                  |

## Introduction

York Run Solar, LLC, an affiliate of CS Energy, is proposing to construct and operate a 90 MW-ac photovoltaic single-axis tracking solar energy generation facility (the project) in the Towns of Kiantone and Busti, Chautauqua County, New York. CS Energy has extensive experience developing, designing, and constructing solar energy generation facilities in New York and neighboring states.

This Community Engagement Plan (Plan) is intended to provide an overview of general guidelines that the project will follow throughout the development process for engagement with project stakeholders. It demonstrates the types of public outreach efforts CS Energy has undertaken and expects to undertake to both properly inform community stakeholders about the project and seek feedback that may be relevant to the projects continued development process. Under the previous governing statutes, specific requirements were provided to ensure adequate public engagement was carried out by the project for the host community and other interested parties and project stakeholders. Under new governing regulations for large scale projects, specific requirements for public outreach and engagement are more limited, however, CS Energy has and will continue to be committed to engaging with host communities and meeting or going beyond regulatory minimum requirements for community engagement. CS Energy understands the importance of establishing relationships with host communities and addressing their concerns and this is a core principle of our development strategy.

## Company Background

### Company Profile

CS Energy is a fully integrated solar and energy storage company, with over 2 GW of installed operating solar across 13 states. In addition to a robust solar resume, CS Energy is a highly bankable company, with over \$200 million in annual revenues and over \$200 million of bonding capacity. CS Energy provides end-to-end solutions for our projects, with in-house development, permitting, financing, engineering, construction, and operations expertise. CS Energy prides itself in its ability to perform all aspects of a solar project in-house. From the earliest phases of a project, including real estate negotiations and permitting, all the way through to financing, construction, and operations, CS Energy provides industry leading expertise to ensure projects are built safely, efficiently, and with minimal impacts.



American Securities, LLC, the majority owner of CS Energy, is a leading private equity firm with approximately \$45 billion in committed capital. Headquartered in New York, American Securities is a privately held firm with over 30 years of experience in private equity. Currently, American Securities has 26 investments and operates in over 55 countries, with a total revenue of \$45 billion. American Securities prioritizes environmental, social and governance matters, seeking to minimize adverse environmental or societal impacts on individuals' communities or the planet.

### Development Experience

CS Energy has established expertise in all aspects of the development, construction, and operation of greenfield solar projects. CS Energy understands the nuances associated with these projects and the complexities of zoning and regulatory processes. Additionally, the company has a detailed understanding of all other aspects of solar project development in New York, including policy expertise, in depth knowledge of permitting requirements, the NYISO interconnection process, and deep engineering and construction expertise. CS Energy has significant experience in New York State with over 500 MW of solar installed, and a further 200 MW of solar under construction. To support its growth in New York, CS Energy opened a regional office in Albany in 2020, a testament to the company's commitment to the New York solar and energy storage markets. CS Energy employs over 30 full time salaried employees in New York State and is growing its in-state team on a monthly basis. Additionally, CS Energy employs a robust construction labor force both on a permanent and temporary basis to support the construction of its projects in the field.

The company's aim is to provide a truly turnkey development solution, which distinguishes CS Energy from others in the marketplace. CS Energy controls the entire process from early-stage development through construction and commercial operations. This means that project stakeholders have one point of contact through development of the project, ensuring continuity and follow through on relationships with and obligations to the community.

### Project Siting and Location

Siting a solar project is a complex endeavor which involves evaluating a myriad of factors to ensure a specific location will support a responsibly developed, low impact and cost-effective projects. Major factors in selecting a suitable site include adequate interconnection capacity on the local electrical transmission grid, low impacts to environmental and cultural resource constraints, availability of suitable land for the construction of solar panels, and reasonable compatibility with the local community.

## Project Description

### Project Summary

The York Run Project is a proposed 90 MW-ac photovoltaic single-axis tracker solar power generation project. It is currently in late-stage development and is expected to enter construction in spring or summer of 2025. It will produce power for up to 40 years and is expected to generate enough electricity each year to meet the typical electrical consumption of approximately 20,000 New York homes. Current plans call for the project to lease or purchase approximately 550 acres across portions of 17 properties in the area.

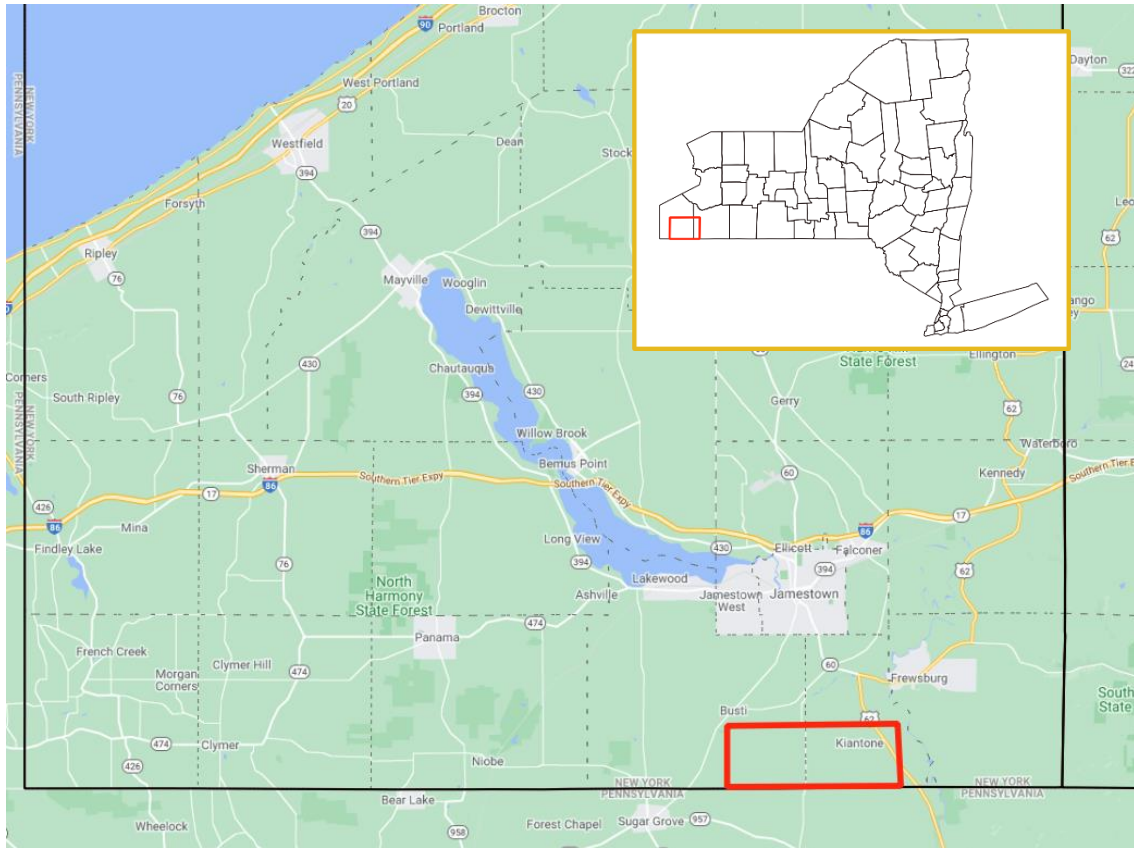
The York Run Solar Project is in the Towns of Kiantone and Busti, in Chautauqua County, NY. The project will be sited on a mix of agricultural, forested, and shrubland to recognize and balance the competing concerns and interests specific to each cover type. Low density rural residential development and farms are interspersed throughout the project area. The project is located within the A 1 and A 2 Agricultural zoning districts in the Town of Kiantone and the Conservation/Agricultural zoning district in the Town of Busti. The project will run along Riverside Road and will be South of Donelson Road and West of State Road 62 in Kiantone, and South of Burton Road and East of Pine Ridge Road in Busti. Of the 550 acres anticipated to make up the total project area, approximately 330 acres will be located in Kiantone, and approximately 220 acres will be located in Busti. The following pages includes an overview of the project location with respect to the state and county (**Figure 1**) and with respect to the local area (**Figure 2**).

The project's interconnection application was submitted on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and has been assigned the NYISO queue position of Q# 1151. The project has completed its System Reliability Impact Study (SRIS) for generation interconnection by the NYISO and the affected Electrical Transmission Owner, National Grid. The Project entered into the 2023 Class Year Study in early 2023 and anticipates completion of this study in the Summer or Fall of 2024. Once the Class Year Study is complete, the project will work towards entering a Large Generator Interconnection Agreement, which is anticipated to be executed in late 2024 or early 2025. York Run Solar proposes to connect to the Falconer-Warren 115 kV line that runs through the project site between the Falconer and Warren Substations. At the point of interconnection there will be a substation, including a pad-mounted switchgear, transformer, and breaker equipment.

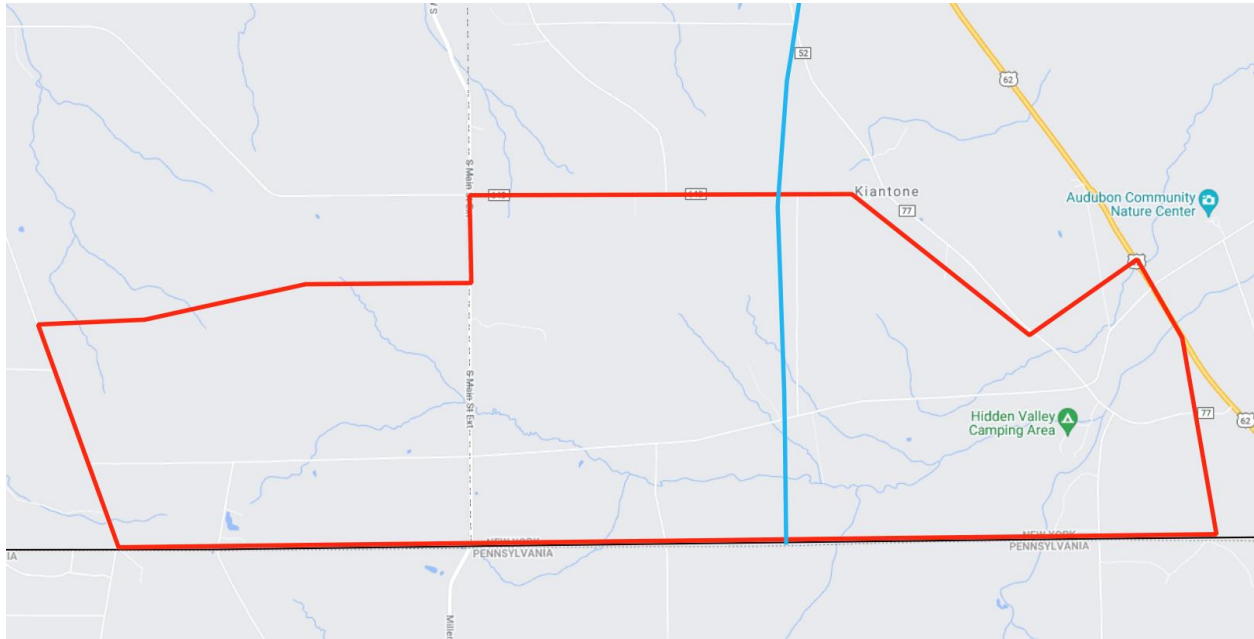
The Project submitted a 94-c application to the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES) on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 and received a Notice of Incomplete Application on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, and submitted a revised application to ORES on August 6, 2024. Once the project has obtained an ORES permit, CS Energy, will carry out construction of the facility. The facility will consist of PV modules on single axis tracking

structures that follow the sun throughout the day, inverters which convert direct current to alternating current, electrical collection systems between the panel arrays, and a new substation to deliver power to the transmission line. Complementary facility areas will include access roads, fencing, stormwater management systems, and temporary construction areas for equipment.

**Figure 1: State and county location of the York Run Solar Project**



**Figure 2: Local location of the York Run Solar Project**



### Project Schedule

The York Run Solar project has been under development since 2020 and is expected to go under construction in 2025 and be operating by the end of 2027. A high-level representation of the expected project schedule is included below.

| Project Task/Milestone  | Start Date | Completion Date                                |
|---|------------|--|
| Landowner outreach and negotiations   | Q2 2020    | Q4 2021  |
| Town outreach and communication   | Q3 2020    | Ongoing  |
| NYISO/National Grid Interconnection Studies   | Q4 2020    | Q4 2024  |
| On site environmental studies and surveys   | Q3 2021    | Completed Q3 2023                              |
| Neighbor and Community outreach and communication                                   | Q3 2020    | Ongoing and will continue through project life |
| NY Office of Renewable Energy Siting permit application and anticipated permit date | Q1 2024    | Q1 2025  |
| Federal (i.e. USACE) and Ministerial Permits  | Q4 2024    | Q1 2025  |
| Project Construction  | Q1 2026    | Q4 2027  |

## Permitting

The York Run Solar project will be classified as a Major Renewable Energy Facility under Title 19 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) § 900-1.2(ag) and as such will be permitted through the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES) under the Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act (AREGCBA) and NYS Executive Law § 94-c. The ORES permitting process was developed through insight and input from the NY Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSAGM), the NY Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), and the NY Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (NYOPRHP) and addresses concerns from these agencies as well as local municipalities. The project submitted an application to ORES on January, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 and received a Notice of Incomplete Application on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. A revised application was submitted to ORES on August 8, 2024.

The project was designed by a third-party engineering firm with input and support from CS Energy's internal engineering team. The project has been designed to avoid impacts to water bodies as much as is practicable, including streams and wetlands, thereby largely minimizing, the need for wetland permits from the NYSDEC or the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The project will limit the scope and timing of tree clearing operations and other construction activities in order to minimize impacts to rare, threatened or endangered species. The project will obtain access permits, building and electrical permits, a final Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and any additional ministerial permits, such as a permit from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that may be required.

As per the NYSERDA and ORES requirements, the York Run Project has completed a wildlife site characterization survey to identify rare and endangered species that are on or near the project location, an on-site wetland delineation to provide detailed feedback as to the specific locations of wetlands on the project area, and a Phase 1A/1B archeological survey to locate potential sites of archeological sensitivity. The project has also completed several studies to assess the site for presence of Endangered or Threatened species, including a Wintering Raptor Survey, a Grassland Breeding Bird Survey, and a Forest Raptor Survey.

The York Run Solar Project has been designed specifically to encourage the long-term strength and viability of the underlying agricultural resource and to ensure there is no significant impact to agricultural and rural character of the area. The site will be planted with low-growth native plant species wherever the existing vegetation has been disturbed. These deep-rooted plants improve soil with organic matter which allows for microorganisms and soil fauna to recover, and provide habitat for various birds,

mammals, and other species. The project site will be able to be restored to its current agricultural use at the end of the project life, effectively preserving the site’s agricultural heritage for the long-term in ways that other more permanent development would not. This restoration commitment will be secured by long-term decommissioning and restoration bonds that will be posted for the benefit of the host municipalities.

### CLCPA Goals

The York Run Solar Project is not sited in an area considered to be a Disadvantaged Community. As a solar-powered electric generation facility, the York Run Solar Project (Project) will not generate air emissions during operation. As a part of the Projects ORES application, Census Tract and Block Groups within half a mile of the Project Site were studied for Environmental Justice consideration. Potential Environmental Justice Areas (PEJAs) are defined by 6 New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) § 487.3 as areas with populations that meet one or more of the thresholds related to minority and low-income populations.<sup>1</sup> The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has updated these thresholds based on its statistical analysis of 2014-2018 American Community Survey data.

- 52.42 percent or more of the population in an urban area reported themselves to be members of minority groups; or
- 26.28 percent or more of the population in a rural area reported themselves to be members of minority groups; or
- 22.82 percent or more of the population in an urban or rural area had household incomes below the federal poverty level.

Based on 2014-2018 American Community Survey data none of the Block Groups in the Projects half-mile study area are considered a PEJA. Percent of income below the poverty level and minority population for each Block Group are shown in the below table:

| Block Group                    | Low-income Population | Minority Population (non-white and/or Hispanic) | Urban/Rural | Potential EJ Area |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---|-------------|-------------------|
| Tract 375, BG 2 - NY           | <u>6.6%</u>           | <u>1.3%</u>                                     | Rural       | No                |
| Tract 375, BG 3 - NY           | <u>2.5%</u>           | <u>0.8%</u>                                     | Rural       | No                |
| Tract 370, BG 2 (buffer) – NY* | <u>13.7%</u>          | <u>1.7%</u>                                     | Rural       | No                |

<sup>1</sup> <https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/environmental-justice/gis-tools>

|  |              |             |       |    |
|--|--------------|-------------|-------|----|
| Tract 370, BG 3 - NY   | <u>7.4%</u>  | <u>2.1%</u> | Rural | No |
| Tract 9702, BG 3 (buffer) – PA*  | <u>10.1%</u> | <u>5.2%</u> | Rural | No |
| Tract 9702, BG 2 (buffer) – PA*  | <u>3.6%</u>  | <u>4.4%</u> | Rural | No |
| Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018: ACS 5-year estimates<br>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020: DEC Demographic and Housing Characteristics<br>*contains a portion of buffer only |              |             |       |    |

In addition to checking for PEJA’s near the Project Site, the NYSERDA Disadvantaged Communities Mapper was utilized.<sup>2</sup> The CJWG finalized the disadvantaged communities criteria on March 27, 2023. According to this mapper, there are no disadvantaged communities nearby the Project Site. The closest mapped disadvantaged community is located approximately 7 miles north in the City of Jamestown.

Neither the Project’s construction nor its operation and maintenance will result in significant and adverse disproportionate effects on local disadvantaged communities. Therefore, no impact avoidance measures, impact mitigation measures, or impact offset measures are required.

Language considerations were also made to ensure that any material that is published for the project is accessible. In Chautauqua County, approximately 8% of the residents aged five or older speak a language other than English per the US Census Bureau Data from 2019. This represents approximately 6,8880 residents. In the Town of Busti, 0% of the population speaks a language other than English, and in the Town of Kiantone, approximately 3%, or 40 residents, speak a language other than English. Given the low percentage of non-English speaking people residing near the project, publication and dissemination of materials in a language other than English will be carried out on request.

CS Energy seeks to prioritize economic development in Environmental Justice Areas and will work to identify opportunities that may be available to and benefit these communities. The company has pursued multiple opportunities to create job training and internship opportunities that will benefit the residents of the Jamestown area. These efforts are expanded on below.

## Project Benefits

### Project Construction Benefits

Development of the York Run solar project will include a significant investment in regionally based, full-time and contract employees. Surveying and Engineering firms have supported the field studies necessary

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/ny/disadvantaged-communities>



to prepare the project's initial design and permit applications. Additionally, staff from TOVIP Energy, a landowner relations company based in Saratoga County, has supported landowner engagement throughout the development period.

The most significant employment and economic impacts associated with a solar project occur during the construction phase. CS Energy anticipates creating over 100 construction jobs to build the facility. CS Energy will hire local laborers and electricians to the greatest extent practicable for construction and installation of the solar arrays. Work on a solar array includes tree clearing and site preparation, fencing and access road installation, foundation, racking and module installation, electrical wiring and commissioning. Additionally, highly skilled electricians and technicians are hired to construct the utility interconnection facilities and performance test the facility. As New York's solar market has grown, the number of in-state firms and personnel that can support this type of construction has also expanded. As such, many of these workers are expected to be hired in-state. These workers will also provide indirect benefits to the local community through food and lodging purchases throughout the construction period.

Additionally, during the construction phase, the project will purchase or rent tools and equipment, construction trailers, fuel, gravel, and associated items from local and regional businesses.

### Project Operational Benefits

Over the operational life of the project, York Run Solar will contribute significantly to the local economy and the local taxing jurisdictions. Local landowners will receive economic benefit through lease payments which will also yield both direct and indirect contributions to the community. Electricity rate payers in Kiantone and Busti will also see a small reduction in their electric utility bill. This reduction will be equivalent to \$500.00 dollars per MW of energy generated within the town and split evenly between the rate payers in the town. Finally, the project will contribute significantly to the revenues of the local taxing jurisdictions through PILOT and Host Community Agreements.

York Run Solar will directly support up to 4 full-time equivalent, high-quality jobs over the life of the project. Care for the project's landscaping improvements, habitat features, and grasses planted beneath the solar panels will be performed by local ground maintenance contractors. The project will also employ solar technicians to perform routine inspections, maintenance, and repairs of the solar energy generating equipment and to respond to unexpected interruptions in service. The project will be managed by a project or asset manager who will be responsible for long-term compliance with permits, lease



agreements, and interconnection agreements, and will manage ongoing relationships in the local community.

CS Energy is currently engaged in discussions with the Jamestown Community College (JCC) Workforce Readiness program about a potential job training program or internship program that could be carried out through the construction portion of the project. It is CS Energy's intention to work to develop this program to support the labor that CS Energy and other solar EPC and development companies will require and provide an avenue for residents of New York to be a part of that labor market. This program would directly benefit residents of Jamestown by providing accessible training for local, clean energy jobs that would increase the potential to secure additional jobs in the renewable energy industry in the future.

CS Energy has also reached out to the Chautauqua County Industrial Development Agency to seek input on how to advance economic opportunities for environmental justice areas in Jamestown. Through this outreach, CS Energy received information about a local job sourcing agency, Chautauqua Works. Through this discussion, CS Energy and Chautauqua Works identified potential job training, job development and funding opportunities through the York Run Solar project.

Solar power is a safe and renewable form of energy generation. Unlike fossil fuel generated electricity, solar power does not emit pollutants while in operation. By replacing energy sources that produce air pollution, solar provides public health and climate benefits. The York Run Solar Project is participating in the 2024 NYSEDA Solicitation for LSR which will support New York State's clean energy goals, and ultimately contribute to the fight against climate change, a significant existential threat to local and global agricultural production.

Solar provides public health benefits by replacing energy sources that produce air pollution and other climate change impacts. Solar facilities are, largely, quiet and produce no vibration. The panels that will be used do not contain hazardous materials and pose no risk of leaching throughout the project life. Setbacks and buffers have been implemented to minimize the visual impacts on the community and setting in the area and to aid in the integration of the project with the natural landscape.

### Property Taxes and Host Community Agreements

One of the most tangible and lasting economic benefits to local jurisdictions from a solar power generation facility development are property tax payments. For the York Run Solar Project, three of the five involved taxing entities have opted out of participation in NYS's Real Property Tax Law (RPTL) 487. This law provides a 15-year real property tax exemption for properties with renewable energy systems, applicable only to



the additional value added through the project. CS Energy engaged the county’s Industrial Development Agency and the local taxing jurisdictions early in the development process to discuss a PILOT agreement. The PILOT agreement will provide certainty and flexibility for both the project and jurisdictions. Due to the limitations of PILOT agreements under RPTL-487, CS Energy typically seeks a PILOT agreement with the County IDA for each project. However, given the importance of community buy-in for large scale projects, particularly with respect to the hosting municipality, CS Energy has engaged with the local taxing jurisdictions in parallel with engaging the IDA to establish acceptable terms of the PILOT agreement before applying to the IDA. In this case, due to the imbalance between the proportion of project impact to proportionate property tax revenue, CS Energy will negotiate a Host Community Agreement with the host municipality in addition to the IDA PILOT to ensure that the host municipality is receiving commensurate benefits. CS Energy has actively worked throughout the project development period to negotiate PILOT’s and HCAs with the taxing jurisdictions. CS Energy representatives have held several conversations with Chautauqua County IDA representatives to discuss the potential for a PILOT agreement for the project. Discussions have also been held with both Towns as well as their counsel regarding an HCA and PILOT agreement. All relevant parties, including the Towns and the IDA, which will be coordinating the PILOT agreement on behalf of the applicable school districts, have expressed intent to enter into a PILOT agreement with the project.

| Taxing Jurisdiction                  | RPTL Status |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| Chautauqua County                    | Opted Out   |
| Town of Busti                        | Opted In    |
| Town of Kiantone                     | Opted In    |
| Frewsburg Central School District    | Opted Out   |
| Southwestern Central School District | Opted In    |

## Authorities and Stakeholders

CS Energy has worked and will continue to work directly with both participating landowners, and project neighbors, those located within 1 mile from the project location, to ensure concerns are heard and addressed through project design and mitigation efforts. AHJ’s that have project oversight have been identified below.

| Authority Having Jurisdiction | Contact Title | Contact Name | Contact Information | Tenure (if applicable) |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|------------------------|
|                               |               |              |                     |                        |

|                                   |                         |                 |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| Office of Renewable Energy Siting | Jasmine Matley          | Project Manager | (518) 473-4429<br>Jasmine.matley@ores.ny.gov   | N/A  |
| Chautauqua County                 | County Executive        | Paul Wendel     | (716) 753-4211<br>Countyexecutivewendel@outlook.com  | Term expires in 2024; Elections take place in June, 2024 |
| Chautauqua County IDA             | Chief Executive Officer | Mark Geise      | (716) 661-8900<br>GeiseM@chqgov.com  |  |
| Town of Kiantone                  | Town Supervisor         | Josh Ostrander  | (716) 969-0752<br>Josh.ostrander12701@gmail.com  | Term expires 12/31/2027                                  |
| Town of Busti                     | Town Supervisor         | Jesse Robbins   | (716) 763-8561<br>jrobbins@townofbusti.com   | Term expires 12/31/2027                                  |
| Southwestern School District      | Superintendent          | Maureen Donahue | (716) 484-1136<br>mdonahue@swcsk12.org   | N/A  |
| Frewsburg School District         | Superintendent          | Danielle Cook   | (716) 569-7000<br><a href="mailto:webmaster@frewsburgcsd.org">webmaster@frewsburgcsd.org</a> | N/A  |

Agencies and organizations with direct permitting and oversight responsibilities will be engaged throughout the course of the project permitting process. CS Energy typically engages directly with authorities having jurisdiction for permits while seeking support from engineering and land development consultants on a case-by-case basis. CS Energy will also provide information on the project to area Legislators prior to formally submitting site plans and other application materials to the ORES.

Above and beyond the public process afforded by the project’s requisite permits, CS Energy intends to build on the success of its public engagement to date, utilizing multiple avenues to encourage stakeholder participation. CS Energy finds that community meetings outside of the regulated public hearing process can be a better forum for open dialogue. See below in this document for a more detailed explanation of the public engagement process. A list of relevant agencies, representatives and stakeholders that CS Energy anticipates being involved in the project throughout the rest of the development period are identified below.

| State and Federal Agencies                            | Project Role                |
|---|-----------------------------|
| NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets             | Consultation Agency         |
| NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) | Direct Permitting Oversight |
| NYSDEC, Region 9                                      | Direct Permitting Oversight |
| NYS Office of Renewable Energy Siting                 | Direct Permitting Oversight |

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| NYS Energy Research and Development Authority                               | Direct Oversight                  |
| NYS Department of Economic Development                                      | Consultation Agency               |
| NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation                  | Consultation Agency               |
| NYS Department of Public Services   | Consultation Agency               |
| NYS Department of State Office Planning and Development                     | Consultation Agency               |
| NYS Department of Transportation  | Direct Permitting Oversight       |
| NYS Independent Service Operator  | Direct Oversight                  |
| Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)                                       | Direct Oversight                  |
| United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Rural Developments       | Consultation Agency               |
| USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service                                 | Consultation Agency               |
| United States Fish and Wildlife Service                                     | Direct Oversight                  |
| United States Army Corps of Engineers                                       | Direct Permitting Oversight       |
| National Telecommunication and Information Administration                   | Consultation Agency               |
| United States Senator Chuck Schumer   | Area Legislator                   |
| United States Senator Kirsten Gillibrand                                    | Area Legislator                   |
| United States House of Representatives, Tom Reed, 23 <sup>rd</sup> District | Area Legislator                   |
| State Senator George Borrello, District 57                                  | Area Legislator                   |
| State Representative Andy Goodell, District 150                             | Area Legislator                   |
| Local Agencies and Governments  |                                   |
| Town of Busti Town Supervisor Jesse Robbins                                 | Direct Oversight                  |
| Town of Kiantone Town Supervisor Joshua Ostrander                           | Direct Oversight                  |
| Town of Busti Planning Board  | Building Permitting and Oversight |
| Town of Kiantone Planning Board   | Building Permitting and Oversight |
| Town of Busti Town Board  | Oversight and HCA                 |
| Town of Kiantone Town Board   | Oversight and HCA                 |
| Town of Busti Town Clerk Darlene Nygren                                     | Oversight and HCA                 |
| Town of Kiantone Town Clerk Gail Davis                                      | Oversight and HCA                 |

|  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Chautauqua County Industrial Development Agency          | Possible PILOT                   |
| Host Municipalities and School Districts                 |                                  |
| Chautauqua County  | Possible PILOT, Direct Oversight |
| Town of Busti  | Possible PILOT, Direct Oversight |
| Town of Kiantone   | Possible PILOT, Direct Oversight |
| Frewsburg Central School District                        | Possible PILOT                   |
| Southwestern Central School District                     | Possible PILOT                   |
| Utility and Highway Departments                          |                                  |
| Town of Busti Highway Superintendent                     | Direct Permitting Oversight      |
| Town of Kiantone Highway Department                      | Direct Permitting Oversight      |
| National Grid  | Transmission Owner               |
| New York Power Authority                                 | Interconnection                  |
| Additional Stakeholders                                  |                                  |
| Jamestown Audubon Society                                | Community Stakeholder            |
| Local Environmental Groups                               | Community Stakeholder            |
| Recreation Groups  | Community Stakeholder            |
| Hunters/hunting groups                                   | Community Stakeholder            |
| Fishers  | Community Stakeholder            |
| Bird watching groups                                     | Community Stakeholder            |
| Town of Busti Fire Department                            | First Responders                 |
| Town of Kiantone Fire Department                         | First Responders                 |
| Chautauqua County Soil and Water Conservation District   | Direct Oversight                 |
| Chautauqua County Emergency Management                   | Direct Oversight                 |
| Chautauqua County Department of Planning and Development | Direct Oversight                 |
| County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency       | Community Stakeholder            |

### Community Engagement Timeline

CS Energy intends to follow our community engagement timeline, provided below, to ensure full engagement and transparency with the community and its stakeholders throughout the development

lifecycle of the project. The following table of ongoing outreach actions identifies both the specific activities that are required under ORES and the additional commitments CS Energy has made to foster strong relationships with host communities.

| Outreach Activity                | Start Date  | Duration | Frequency                    |
|----------------------------------|-------------|----------|------------------------------|
| Comments and Inquiries           | Summer 2021 | 4 years  | Continuous                   |
| Town Supervisor Meetings*        | Fall 2020   | 4 years  | Continuous                   |
| Initial Town Board Meetings      | Fall 2020   | 2 years  | Continuous                   |
| Project Neighbor Outreach        | Summer 2022 | 3 years  | Continuous                   |
| Stakeholder Organizations Panel  | Spring 2023 | 1 year   | Annual                       |
| Public Engagement Meetings**     | Spring 2023 | 1 year   | Annual                       |
| Project Informational Sessions** | Spring 2023 | 1 year   | Annual                       |
| Direct Neighbor Outreach         | Summer 2022 | 3 years  | Continuous, on as need basis |

\*ORES Section 900-1.3(a) requires consultation with the chief executive officer of the municipality(ies) in which the proposed facility will be located, and any local agencies of such municipalities identified by the chief executive officer. This consultation has been fulfilled through a meeting held in Spring, 2023, as further elaborated on below.

\*\*ORES Section 900-1.3(b) requires meeting with community members which has been fulfilled through a meeting held in Summer, 2023, as further elaborated on below.

## Proposed Public Engagement

### Community Engagement Activities to Date

CS Energy began exploring the Chautauqua County area as a possible location for a solar project in the summer of 2020. The first landowner was signed up in late 2020, and the 20 total participating parcels in the current Project design are all under option or easement agreements and provide sufficient acreage for a 90 MW system. CS Energy worked with TOVIP Energy on initial landowner identification and outreach in the area.

CS Energy’s development approach involves early and frequent communication with community representatives. In the pre-development phase, CS Energy contacted local officials to introduce the project concept, provide basic facts regarding solar technology, project construction and project operation, and to discuss the local permitting context. A key goal of this initial consultation is to identify

potential fatal flaws for the project or particular sensitivities or concerns that should help to guide the development of the project. As hands-on developers, the CS Energy team serve as reliable project representatives with direct agency over project decision-making and whom stakeholders can contact with specific questions or comments about the project as they arise.

Central to its belief that strong relationships are vital to project success, CS Energy has made dozens of trips to the area and has had multiple substantive conversations with key stakeholders in the community specifically with project neighbors. Employees of CS Energy are on a first name basis with town and county leaders and the company's presence in town has been noted and applauded by residents and stakeholders alike.

To that end, CS Energy started targeted outreach to project neighbors in 2022 to inform them of the project, field questions and address any initial concerns. CS attended several town board meetings to inform the town board and residents of the project as it developed. As the project firmed the specific locations of panels, CS began hosting meetings for community members. Details on the meetings are below.

- Representatives of the Applicant held two Open Houses, on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at the Kiantone Fire Department in Kiantone, which is located in close proximity to the Project Site, for community members to attend, learn more about the Project, ask questions, and express concerns. Owners of residences within 1,000 feet of the Project Parcels were invited directly by mail to attend the event. Additionally, notice of the Open House was provided through the York Run Solar Newsletter on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, and April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, to those subscribed at the time.
- Representatives of the Applicant held a *Meeting with Community Members* at the Kiantone Fire Department, which is in close proximity to the Project, on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The purpose of this meeting was to further educate the public about the proposed Project, including our anticipated application date and information regarding the future availability of Local Agency Account Funding.
- In June of 2022, representatives for the Project knocked on Project neighbor doors and communicated directly with those who answered and left a handout with project information and contact information for the representatives.

In addition to the above, the Applicant created a personalized website for the Project on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 (<https://yorkrun-solar.com/>) and a Project-specific email ([yorkrunsolar@csenergy.com](mailto:yorkrunsolar@csenergy.com)) to promote awareness of the Project and facilitate communication between the Applicant and interested stakeholders. The Applicant also created a newsletter in November 2022 to establish a means of providing frequent Project updates to those who sign up.

Additionally, the Applicant complied with the 60-day and 3-day notice requirements set forth in §900-1.3(d) and §900-1.6(c) of the 94-c regulations to inform the community of the ORES application submission.

### Outreach with Town and County Officials

In conjunction with initial landowner outreach, CS Energy began contacting local officials regarding the potential for a large scale solar project including the following meetings and correspondence:

- The Applicant first met with the Town Supervisor, Josh Ostrander and Planning Board Chair for the Town of Kiantone in the fall of 2020, to discuss the prospect of pursuing a solar project in the Town.
- The Applicant met informally with the Kiantone Town Supervisor and the Kiantone Code Enforcement Officer on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 to provide updates on the Project and walk through the development process.
- The Applicant met informally with the Busti Town Supervisor on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 to discuss the potential for a solar project in the Town.
- The Applicant attended the Town Board Meeting in Busti on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021, to discuss the prospective solar project in the Town and review the development process for utility scale solar in New York, as well as review the NYSERDA RFP process and express our intent to bid the project into the RFP of 2021.
- The Applicant attended the Kiantone Town Board meeting on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021, to discuss with the Town Board the prospect of pursuing a solar project in the Town and to go over the initial plans for the Project and development process for utility scale solar in New York, as well as review the NYSERDA RFP process and express our intent to bid the project into the RFP of 2021.
- The Applicant attended a Busti Town Board Meeting on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021 to provide an update on the Project development process and provide an initial draft layout, and walk through the permitting process for the project.
- The Applicant attended a Kiantone Town Board Meeting on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021, to provide an update on the project development process and review the project layout, and discuss the permitting process for the project.
- The Applicant attended a Busti Town Board Meeting on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, to inform the board of the 2021 RFP award and discuss the ongoing studies and next steps for pursuing a permit application.
- The Applicant attended a Kiantone Town Board Meeting on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022, to inform the board of the 2021 RFP award and discuss the ongoing studies and next steps for pursuing a permit application, and had an in depth discussion about next steps for permitting with the Towns Counsel following the board meeting. An additional meeting was held with Kiantone Counsel and engineer on August 18<sup>th</sup>, and a meeting was held with Kiantone Counsel to discuss the local law on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- The Applicant presented detailed information about the Project and the 94-C permitting process to the Towns of Busti and Kiantone, as well as representatives from the County Industrial Development Agency, both town highway superintendents, and representatives from the Kiantone and Busti Fire Department, during a joint *Consultation with Local Agencies* meeting held on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, pursuant to §900-1.3(a). The purpose of this meeting was to provide mapping and other information regarding the proposed Project, discuss the status of completed and

anticipated studies, review the relevant and substantive local laws with municipal representatives, and to designate a Project contact person.

- Representatives of the Applicant have held regular virtual or in person meetings with representatives from Busti, along with their engineering firm, Wendel Group, and their Counsel since May 2023 to provide updates on the development process and solicit feedback on various aspects of the Project. Meetings were held on May 15<sup>th</sup>, June 21<sup>st</sup>, August 16<sup>th</sup>, August 29<sup>th</sup>, September 14<sup>th</sup>, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Prior to initiating development, Kiantone town official's solicited advice from CS Energy on the development of the Town Solar law, which passed in early 2021. Town officials and residents alike continue to be engaged, communicative and collaborative in project development.

### Construction

CS Energy acts as both developer and EPC contractor, and therefore the transition from development to construction phases for community engagement will be seamless. As the project nears construction, new members of CS Energy's construction team will be introduced to the community and project stakeholders. However, the development team will continue to be regularly involved in the project to ensure continuity of relationships and project obligations. CS Energy also expects to provide consistent updates on the project's construction progress to the local municipalities, through engagement with the local AHJs, and to the public, through periodical updates to the project's website. Construction is expected to start in late 2025 or early 2026 and last between 18 and 24 months. Overall, the project is expected to generate over 100 construction jobs. CS Energy will make all reasonable efforts to hire as many construction jobs from local labor pools as possible. These efforts include our continued outreach with local workforce development organizations and leaders to provide training, internships, and skills development for local leaders. It is the hope that through these efforts, CS Energy will be able to increase the labor pool in the local disadvantaged communities prior to the start of construction.

### Operation

Once the project enters commercial operation, the regularity of activity on the project or any project updates will reduce significantly. That said, it is still important for information about the project to remain accessible, and for lines of communication between local stakeholders and the project's operations and maintenance team to remain open. To that end, CS Energy will still function as a point of contact for the first few years of project operation to ensure mitigation measures have been successfully implemented and concerns regarding the project from local community members and town officials can be effectively addressed. Appropriate contact information for the project owner, including emergency contact information, will be posted at the project site. Additionally, CS Energy expects the project's website to

remain operational during the project's operations phase, and for appropriate contact information, including emergency contact information, to be posted at the project site.

## Public Permitting Engagement

### Common Public Concerns

Because projects like York Run Solar have large footprints, the surrounding communities have justifiable concerns. Specific concerns that the community adjacent to the project has brought to our attention include viewshed concerns, loss of agricultural land, decommissioning of the project, the safety of the panels and potential property value impacts. CS Energy has taken an active role in community engagement and will continue to meet landowners, neighbors, and concerned residents to find mutually beneficial solutions to the concerning aspects of solar projects. To specifically address a few of the concerns that have been brought up through community meetings or direct meetings with community members, CS has been working to identify the means to host sheep on the site to allow for an agricultural use to continue throughout the project area. Additionally, CS has met directly with property owners adjacent to the project regarding options for viewshed mitigation or other potential options available to mitigate the potential impacts. CS has also held meetings with both the Busti and Kiantone Fire Departments and will be carrying out safety trainings prior to construction and throughout operations. The project site was reviewed by both of the fire departments to determine locations where pass by and turnarounds would aid in effective access to the project site.

CS Energy prides itself on its strong partnerships with local municipalities and key stakeholders within the community. It is because of these partnerships that CS Energy has been able to build so many successful projects in New York State. The company has been in ongoing contact with the Towns of Kiantone and Busti in order to stay informed of concerns that are being brought by residents. Moving forward, the company intends to complete further outreach to project neighbors and build a question and comment structure to ensure that anyone who has concerns can raise them.

### Mitigation Efforts

A list of some common concerns and general solutions that CS Energy has implemented for previous projects and intends to implement for the York Run Solar Project include the following:

#### **Viewshed and Buffer zones**

- **Concern**
  - Viewshed concerns have been raised by neighbors to the project, by various Town Officials, and by host landowners that are concerned with their or their neighbors' view of the project. Community members want to be sure that adequate buffers are put in place to mitigate viewshed concerns.
- **Solution**
  - CS Energy conducted a robust visual analysis, including 3D renderings, to determine viewsheds of concern. The company has met with affected parties to determine the best course of action to mitigate concerns. Feedback received from the public and project neighbors has been incorporated into the viewshed mitigation plan that is currently in place and under review by ORES. CS Energy has latitude on where landscaping buffers can be planted and what type of buffer should be used, and the company has used this flexibility to find mutually agreeable solutions.

### **Decommissioning**

- **Concern**
  - Host communities and project neighbors have expressed concern over decommissioning and concerns over the potential that a defunct project may not be removed following the end of the project's life have been brought to our attention.
- **Solution**
  - The ORES permitting process requires a robust plan for decommissioning. The project area will be remediated in accordance with the decommissioning plan and any applicable regulations. To ensure the project is decommissioned regardless of potential long-term changes, the project will establish a bond or letter of credit with the local municipalities in an amount sufficient to decommission the project. The amount of the decommissioning bond has been established per ORES regulations, and will be reevaluated and adjusted every five years during the operational life of the project. This bond will be used by the municipality in the unlikely event that the company cannot complete its own decommissioning as written in its decommissioning plan.

### **Taxes**

- **Concern**
  - Many residents are concerned with how this project will be taxed and have concerns that the project won't be paying its "fair share".
- **Solution**
  - Taxation of renewable energy projects is a complicated issue and requires significant engagement with local stakeholders to ensure all parties are on the same page. This project will enter into PILOT and Host Community Agreements which will represent the bulk of the property tax payments the project will make. These agreements are meant to establish long term certainty and confidence for budgeting purposes for both the project and the local municipalities. The project will also be paying special district taxes directly based on the real property assessment of the project. Throughout the development process, CS Energy has been engaged with the local municipalities and other project stakeholders to make sure everyone understands how the project will be paying property taxes.

## Agriculture Loss

- **Concern**
  - Many residents of rural New York are concerned that solar projects are sited on agricultural land. They are worried that these projects will cause irreparable damage to local farmland.
- **Solution**
  - Open land is necessary for any large-scale solar project. However, York Run Solar has been intentionally sited on a mix of agricultural, forest, and scrubland to balance the impacts of the project across land cover types. Further, solar projects are not permanent structures and have little long-term effect on the underlying land or soil. When the project has reached the end of its life, the land can easily be converted back into agricultural land. Lastly, the York Run Solar has avoided state recognized prime soils to the greatest extent possible, overlapping with less than 4 acres of MSG 1-4 soils.

## Fires and Safety

- **Concern**
  - Some residents are worried about the potential fire hazard of solar projects and the ability of the local fire department to handle this hazard.
- **Solution**
  - Large-scale solar projects present little fire and safety risk. Small electrical fires may occur in some of the equipment, but these are generally self-contained and burn themselves out. However, CS Energy will conduct safety trainings to educate local first responders on safety procedures, energy cut-off locations, and electrical risk. CS Energy has already met with both the Kiantone and Busti Fire Departments to understand the concerns they have related to projects and ensure adequate access to the project is maintained.

## Public Input

CS Energy has found that the best way to assuage community concerns is to address them transparently and early in the process. It is for this reason that the company has opened many pathways to communication. CS Energy has solicited feedback from the public using several modalities. The first is direct outreach to key stakeholders. Through mailers to neighbors and conversations with local leaders, CS Energy has been in contact with those who are most affected by the project. The company has also held public information sessions and attended town board meetings. Meeting agendas and minutes have been disseminated to the public through traditional channels. A third method of communication will be through the creation of an informative website- [YorkRun-Solar.com](http://YorkRun-Solar.com). The website features detailed project information, a frequently asked question page with answers, and a contact form, and functions as a platform for notification of information sessions, town hall meetings, and other relevant information.



Due to the lengthy interconnection study process for large-scale solar projects, CS Energy has found that regular updates at Town Board meetings are helpful in providing up to date information on projects. In addition, community meetings outside of the regulated public hearing process ensure there are multiple means of communicating with and soliciting feedback from interested parties.

### Notification

Project information will be published via the project website (YorkRun-Solar.com) and will include, at a minimum, notification to the following:

- The Office of Renewable Energy Siting
- Each member of the State Legislature whose district will have any portion of the project

### Project Contact

Project contact's will be available via email and phone Monday - Friday during normal business hours:

Mitch Quine  
CS Energy  
100 Grove St. #102  
Worcester, MA 01605  
Development Manager  
Phone: 732.266.4255  
Email: mitch.quine@csenergy.com

### Document Repositories

Project information will be available via the project website. Hard copies of the material will be available upon request.