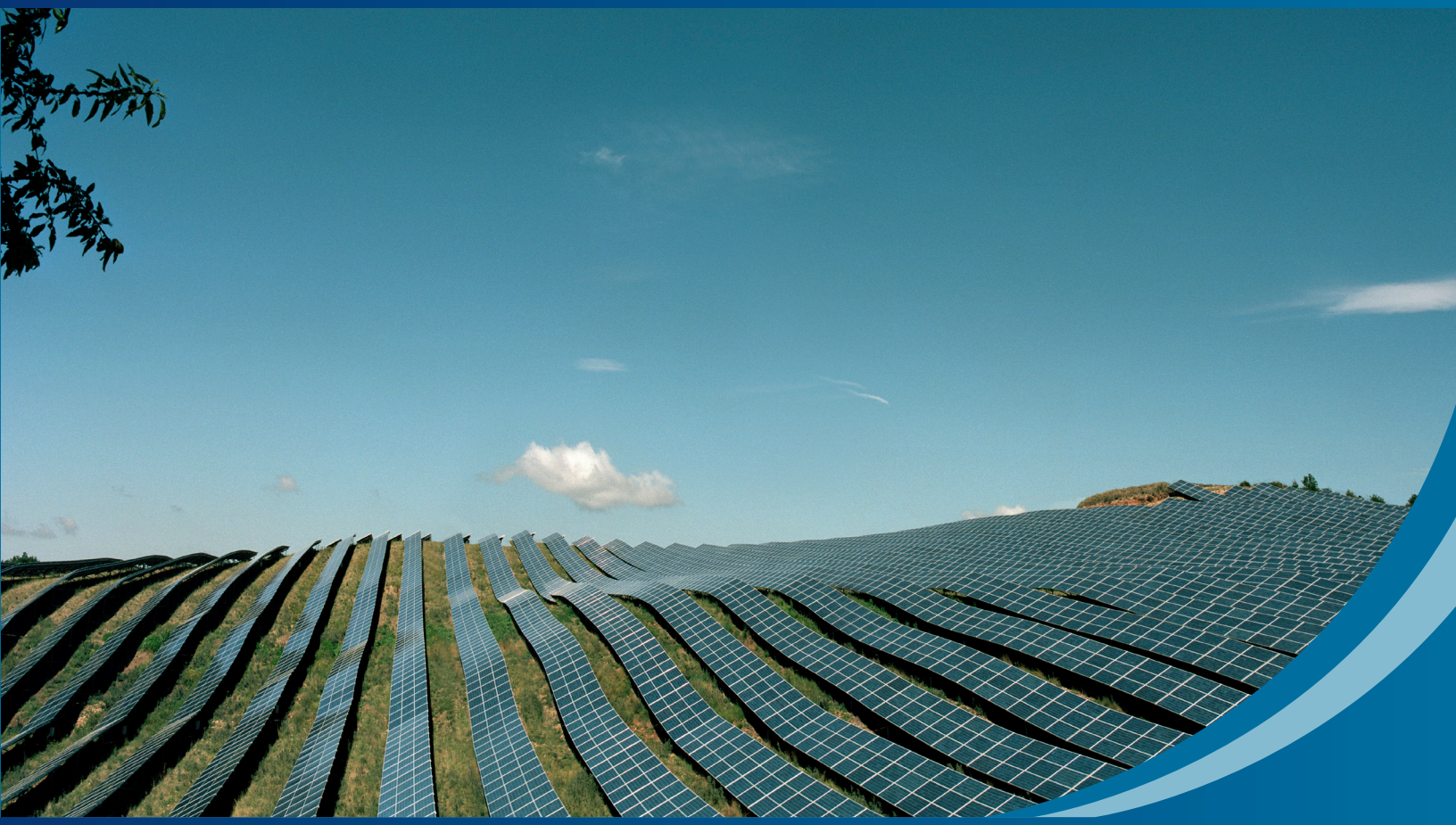
Clean Energy Resource Development and Incentives:

The Build-Ready Program Annual Progress Report 2022



Final Report | April 2023

NEW YORK STATE | NYSERDA

NYSERDA's Promise to New Yorkers:

NYSERDA provides resources, expertise, and objective information so New Yorkers can make confident, informed energy decisions.

Our Vision:

New York is a global climate leader building a healthier future with thriving communities; homes and businesses powered by clean energy; and economic opportunities accessible to all New Yorkers.

Our Mission:

Advance clean energy innovation and investments to combat climate change, improving the health, resiliency, and prosperity of New Yorkers and delivering benefits equitably to all.

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Final Report

Case 15-E-0302

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Albany, NY

April 2023

Abstract

The Build-Ready Program Annual Progress Report is intended to inform the Public Service Commission, State agencies, market participants, and other interested parties on the progress of the Build-Ready 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 Order Approving the Build-Ready Program, and the Build-Ready Implementation Plan over the course of each calendar year. This report also provides an update on the Build-Ready Program's commitments and cumulative expenditure of associated funding as of December 31, 2022.

Keywords

Clean Energy Standard, Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act, Build-Ready Program, Build-Ready Project, renewable energy, renewable energy project, underutilized, community benefits, pipeline, site origination, screening, assessment, project development, portfolio, auction

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Summary

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 Program in achieving the program's stated goals and objectives as described in the Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act (the Act), the Order Approving the Build-Ready Program (the Order), and the Build-Ready Implementation Plan. This report provides information on annual progress made over the course of a calendar year including an update on the Build-Ready Program's commitments and cumulative expenditure of associated funding as of December 31, 2022.

Over the last year, the Build-Ready Program made significant progress in achieving the program's goals. Highlights include:

- **Advanced Build-Ready's Pipeline.** Since the program launched, Build-Ready has screened over 10,820 sites across 35 counties in New York State. Build-Ready is focused on advancing over a dozen potential sites from the pipeline into project development. Build-Ready is implementing several new site origination strategies to expand the program's pipeline. This includes originating sites in lower risk interconnection areas,[1] significant outreach to key channel partners[2] to identify and vet sites, identifying large publicly owned parking lots that could host solar carports/canopies, aggregating distributed energy resources (DER) projects into large wholesale projects, and locating multiple Build-Ready projects near an area of the electric grid where a Build-Ready project is already requiring an upgrade to utility infrastructure. Build-Ready also continued to coordinate with State and federal agencies and supported Governor Hochul's Prison Redevelopment Commission report on potential redevelopment opportunities for 12 recently or soon to be closed prisons. Build-Ready attended several conferences where it shared program insights, met with key channel partners, and stayed abreast of broader renewable energy market developments.
- **Increased the Number of Projects in Development.** Build-Ready has over a dozen sites in development—about double the number of sites in 2021. The sites are at different stages of development with the BR Benson Mines Solar PV Project as the most mature with the auction planned for 2023. All sites are advancing through diligence activities, and several have secured initial site control through memorandums of understanding (MOU) between NYSERDA and the landowner. The sites include a mix of landfills, mines, underutilized/commercial properties, parking lots, and airports.

- **Advanced the Auction Process.** Build-Ready plans to issue the first auction for the BR Benson Mines Solar PV project in 2023. To inform the auction development, Build-Ready issued Request for Information (RFI) 5034 in the spring of 2022 to private solar PV developers to gather feedback on the proposed auction process, the program's project development plans for BR Benson Mines Solar PV project, and to solicit interest in participating in a voluntary Market Advisory Group (MAG) that Build-Ready will engage to gather feedback on programmatic and project specific questions and issues. Build-Ready received 13 responses to the and is incorporating the feedback into the auction process and the remaining project development milestones for BR Benson Mines Solar PV project. In the fall of 2022, Build-Ready began the development of the auction solicitation, contracts, and the mechanism for recouping project costs. For the solicitation and the contracts, this included competitively selecting consultants to help build the auction RFP, developing the Member Interest Purchase Agreement (MIPA) used to transfer the development vehicle to the awarded bidder, and revising NYSERDA's Standard Form REC Agreement for a Build-Ready project transaction. To recoup costs, the program is charging a project development fee for each project that is auctioned. The project development fee includes all direct project development costs associated with BR Benson Mines Solar PV project as well as a portion of Build-Ready programmatic and NYSERDA administrative costs. As more projects are auctioned, Build-Ready will recoup all costs and aims to establish an evergreen fund to support future project development.
- **Managed Public Funds Responsibly.** In 2022, Build-Ready expenditures decreased compared to 2021 due to two full-time equivalent (FTE) staff departures including the program director and a senior project manager. The lower expenditures reflect a partially staffed program. For the remainder of 2022, the Build-Ready Program prioritized recruiting and hired a new Build-Ready Director in August of 2022 and competitively selected an existing Build-Ready Project Manager to replace the senior project manager. The Build-Ready Program is recruiting a new project manager and is expected to be fully staffed with six FTEs by the second half of 2023. There are no Build-Ready Program proceeds to report because the Build-Ready Program did not auction any sites in 2022. As mentioned above, the Build-Ready Program anticipates auctioning its first site in 2023 and will report the proceeds recouped in the applicable annual report.

The Build-Ready Program has numerous plans for 2023 that build on the program's accomplishments and learnings to date including:

- Expanding the program pipeline by screening and assessing the remaining 27 upstate counties for Build-Ready priority site types, rescreening the remaining New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Environmental Remediation database sites, and implementing and refining Build-Ready's new origination strategies across New York State.
- Moving more projects from pipeline into development with a goal to advance at least one large-scale solar PV parking canopy project in 2023.

- Seeking an amendment to Build-Ready's existing enabling statute to allow for "stand-alone energy storage systems" to expand opportunities for use of clean energy on underutilized sites and support New York State's energy storage goals under the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.
- Advancing at least three projects through the development phase and prepare them for future auctions in 2024.
- Auction BR Benson Mines Solar PV Project in 2023 and complete the project transaction by early 2024.
- Engage Build-Ready's voluntary Market Advisory Group to inform program and project strategies.
- Coordinate and partner with other NYSERDA programs to advance mutual goals including Tier 1, Energy Storage, Clean Siting, NY-Sun, Economic Development, Energy, Climate and Equity, Clean Transportation, and REV Campus Challenge along with other New York State agencies such as Empire State Development, Department of Environmental Conservation, New York Power Authority, Department of State, and Office of General Services, among others.
- Support New York State's Commitment to an inclusive clean energy economy by developing and implementing an inclusive stakeholder engagement approach for each project to deliver benefits to host communities.
- Strengthen relationships and increase collaboration with NYS Utilities to provide mutual benefits to the Build-Ready Program and the utilities.
- Continue to responsibly deploy and manage program funds and begin recouping program costs with the first project auction in 2023.
- Staff the Build-Ready Program to full capacity by hiring a new project manager and bringing on additional staff capacity by competitively procuring two assistant project managers via contract.
- Increase external engagement, including participation at State and national conferences, to share lessons learned and meet with key channel partners including government and private sector stakeholders.

More details on the Build-Ready Program's progress and accomplishments to date as well as plans for 2023 can be found in the subsequent sections of this annual report.

1 Background

The Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act (the Act) established the Build-Ready Program.[3] The Act directs NYSERDA to identify, assess, and facilitate the development of suitable sites for renewable power-generating facilities, giving priority to "previously developed sites" and "existing or abandoned commercial sites," such as brownfields, landfills, or other disused or underutilized sites, and provide benefits to host communities. In October 2020, the PSC issued an order formally approving the Build-Ready Program.[4] The Order reiterates that Build-Ready will prioritize (1) advancing renewable energy projects on previously developed and existing or abandoned commercial sites and (2) providing benefits to communities hosting these sites. In January 2021, NYSERDA submitted the Build-Ready Program's Implementation Plan, formalizing the processes and procedures the program will follow in site prospecting, project development, and project auction and transfer.[5] Over the last year, the Build-Ready Program continued to put the Implementation Plan to work, building a pipeline of potential sites and advancing feasible sites through the project development phases for eventual project auction and transfer.

The Build-Ready Order requires NYSERDA to submit an annual report on the Build-Ready Program by April 1, 2021, and annually thereafter, and requires that the report provide a summary of (1) achievements in the prior year versus planned achievements; (2) plans for the coming year; (3) an accounting of proceeds, less program and administration expenses, earned; (4) a status update on the use and status of the CEF cash balances; (5) a status update on the portfolio of projects under development; (6) a list of the sites auctioned for development and the identity of the winning bidders; (7) the amount of renewable energy production from the auctioned sites; and (8) the amount and type of host-community benefits provided. This third Annual Progress Report fulfills NYSERDA's reporting requirement under the Order for calendar year 2022.

The annual report is centered on progress and achievement in implementing the Build-Ready Program from January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022. The report sections cover the following topics:

- Section 1 provides background on the Build-Ready Program.
- Section 2 reviews the Build-Ready Program 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 outlines the Build-Ready Program's plans for 2023.

2 Build-Ready Site Origination and Pipeline

Over the last year, the Build-Ready Program continuously originated new sites while refining and advancing its development pipeline. The following section provides a snapshot of Build-Ready's pipeline, discusses the program's efforts to originate and advance new sites in the upstate and downstate regions,[6] discusses continued coordination and collaboration with local, State, and federal agencies, presents new site origination strategies and screening approaches the program is implementing, and discusses conferences and events in which the program participated.

2.1 Snapshot of Build-Ready Pipeline

The following section provides a summary of the current Build-Ready pipeline. In 2022, Build-Ready made significant progress refining its assessment tools to support fast and effective desktop site screening nearly doubling the number of sites[7] screened from 2021 (5,738) to 2022 (10,820). More efficient screening helped Build-Ready progress more sites through its tiered site screening process (see Box 1) and ultimately into development (see section 3).

Box 1. Build-Ready Program's Site Screening Approach

The Build-Ready Program is using a three-tiered approach toward site identification, screening, and assessment. Potential sites are identified using a mix of inputs including property classification codes that align with priority Build-Ready site types, existing State and federal databases of contaminated or remediated sites, reclaimed mines, brownfield opportunity areas, and other challenging site types. Other sources include site nominations via the Build-Ready Site Nomination RFI as well as other sites provided by local government, State, and federal agency partners.

Under the three-tiered approach, sites first undergo Tier I screening. Tier 1 screening considers the following factors, among others, for each potential site: distance to interconnection or known electric grid congestion areas; alignment with priority Build-Ready site types; site limiting factors such as protected lands, agricultural designations and uses, and residential development; and land cover and topographical limiting factors including wetlands, waterbodies, protected areas, mature forested areas, steep slopes, and existing buildings, roads and railways.

Box 1. continued

Sites that progress from Tier I screening advance to Tier II assessment, where they are reviewed to refine buildable area, investigate interconnection feasibility, and initiate landowner outreach, among other factors. At this stage, sites are also scored and ranked using a set of weighted screening criteria that help further prioritize sites for advancement. The weighted screening criteria consist of several variables including the buildable area, early interconnection feasibility, site type, site ownership, private developer interest, wetlands, agricultural designations and uses, community support, and disadvantaged communities/environmental justice areas. The screening criteria, scores, and weights are continually adjusted to reflect learnings from Build-Ready Program implementation and to differentiate between ideal site characteristics in various geographic regions of the State.

Following Tier II assessment, sites with favorable landowner responses and high-priority ranking progress to Tier III assessment, which include preparing a site layout and gen-tie route, continued landowner engagement, local government outreach, further interconnection feasibility, wetland and environmental analysis, and preparing sites for review by NYSERDA's internal Investment Committee. From Tier III, sites progress to NYSERDA's internal Investment Committee for review and approval by NYSERDA's executive team. If a site is approved by NYSERDA's executive team, NYSERDA enters into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the landowner and advances the site into the next stage of development activities including permitting, interconnection, and preliminary engineering and design. Section 3 discusses Build-Ready sites that are undergoing further development.

Table 1 provides a summary of the program's pipeline including the cumulative number of sites screened through the Tier I process.

Table 1. 2022 Snapshot of Build-Ready Pipeline

Tier	Sites* Screened & Assessed
Tier I	10,820
Tier II	271**
Tier III	28**

* Sites is used to refer to a single parcel of land or a group of parcels of land that could make up a single Build-Ready project site.

** The total sites screened and assessed in Table 1 excludes the closed sites included in Table 2

Table 2 provides further detail on the types of sites Build-Ready is advancing through its pipeline. The major site types include commercial or industrial sites; contaminated sites such as Superfund sites, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) sites, landfills, or brownfields; mines, including closed and reclaimed mines; federal, State, and municipally owned sites; dormant or existing electric generating sites; parking lots; and other types of underutilized sites. It's important to note that many sites categorized as federal, State, or municipally owned may also have another underlying site characteristic such as contamination; however, if the dominant characteristic is federal, State, or municipally owned, then it's labeled as such.

Table 2. Build-Ready Pipeline: Tier II and III Common Site Types

Site Type	Number of Sites
Commercial/Industrial	152
Contaminated Site	120
Mine	50
Underutilized	51
Federal, State or Municipally Owned	39
Electric Generating Site	15

Table 3 provides the status of sites advanced through Tier II and Tier III assessment in 2022. Build-Ready sites are categorized as in-progress, on-hold, and closed.[8] Sites that are currently in Tier II assessment will either be advanced to Tier III, put on-hold, or closed. Build-Ready advanced dozens of sites into Tier II assessment with many progressing into Tier III.

Table 3. 2022 Build-Ready Pipeline Status for 2022: Tier II and III

Tier	In-Progress	On-Hold	Closed
Tier II	254	17	111
Tier III	17	11	17
Total	**271**	**28**	**128**

A major takeaway from Table 3 is that as sites progress through more advanced assessment it is common, and to be expected, that site viability may change, and a site may no longer be feasible for development. In 2022, Build-Ready continued to confront many of the same challenges in advancing sites as discussed in the 2021 Annual Report.

Table 4 provides a snapshot of how and why sites did not progress through Build-Ready's pipeline including:

- **Insufficient Buildable Area:** A Build-Ready site typically requires a minimum of 35 buildable acres for an anchor parcel[9] for a large-scale solar PV project. Wetlands, agricultural designations and uses, or significant forest cover, among other constraints, can limit buildable area and make a site infeasible.
- **Lack of Landowner Interest:** landowner not interested in pursuing renewable energy.
- **Private Renewable Energy Developer Interest:** Build-Ready has a policy to not compete with the private sector. If a site is under development by a private renewable energy developer, the site is ruled out.
- **Non-Viable Interconnection:** a non-viable interconnection due to distance, hosting capacity, congestion, deliverability, etc.
- **Environmental Constraints:** an insurmountable environmental constraint such as significant presence of wetlands.
- **Agriculture District/Activities:** Build-Ready has a policy to avoid developing sites in an agricultural district and/or with significant agricultural activity.
- **Potential Non-Energy Use:** site being considered for a potential non-energy use, such as a commercial development opportunity.

Note, a site may have not advanced due to a combination of factors with the most prominent reason displayed in Table 4. The top challenges Build-Ready faces in progressing sites include lack of landowner interest, existing private renewable energy developer interest, insufficient buildable area, and nonviable interconnection.

Table 4. Common Challenges to Advancing Build-Ready Sites

Challenge	Number of Closed Sites
Insufficient Buildable Area	17
Lack of Landowner Interest	40
Private Renewable Energy Developer Interest	21
Nonviable Interconnection	11
Environmental Issues	8
Agricultural District/Activity	2
Potential Non-Energy Use	29
Total	**128**

Thus, it is critically important for Build-Ready to identify major roadblocks as early as possible during the site screening and assessment phases, to take a thoughtful and measured approach to pre-development activities, and to continuously add new and viable sites to its pipeline. The following sections further elaborates on Build-Ready's efforts to advance its pipeline.

2.2 Advancement of Build-Ready's Upstate Pipeline

In 2022, the Build-Ready Program continued to make progress in advancing its upstate[10] pipeline and took several approaches to originate new sites including prioritizing site origination and screening efforts in lower interconnection risk[11] areas of the State, significant outreach to key channel partners, re-screening Build-Ready priority site types with revised screening criteria a lower buildable area requirement for anchor parcels and working with sister agencies to source, identify and evaluate sites that could support Build-Ready projects.

The Build-Ready Program and our upstate prospecting consultants engaged over twenty key channel partners such as county Industrial Development Agencies, Economic Development organizations, and municipal planning agencies. The conversations led to numerous site recommendations and provided additional information on potential projects. The sites recommended by the agencies were assessed using standard Build-Ready screening criteria. Through this engagement, a set of promising sites were identified, however, after screening and further assessments the sites did not progress due to common siting challenges including lack of buildable area, significant distance to a point of interconnection or congestion, private developer interest, municipal concerns, or a non-energy competing use such as a commercial development opportunity.

The Build-Ready Program and its prospecting consultants also screened nine additional upstate counties to originate new sites, which resulted in 526 sites making it through Tier I screening. Of the 526 sites, 22 sites advanced to Tier II screening. After more intensive diligence and outreach to landowners, three sites advanced into Tier III and are being further developed by the Build-Ready Program (see section 3). In total, the Build-Ready Program has screened 28 out of 55 upstate counties and plans to screen the remaining upstate counties in 2023.

The Build-Ready Program also re-assessed the NYS DEC Environmental Site Remediation Database using a lower buildable area threshold of 9.5 acres.[12] The program's review focused on twenty-four upstate counties with low interconnection risk. A total of 911 sites, made up of 9,616 separate parcels were assessed. Only 232 sites, composed of 654 individual parcels, were found to have enough buildable acreage for potential large-scale solar redevelopment—less than seven percent of all parcels reviewed. After further diligence, including screening for interconnection viability, private renewable energy developer interest or existing solar, landowner interest, other non-energy development plans, restrictive environmental, topographical, forest cover, wetlands, agriculture use, floodplains, remediation status, or other active uses, five sites remained. In general, buildable area was the greatest limiting factor in identifying suitable Build-Ready sites. The Build-Ready Program plans to re-assess the remaining counties with higher interconnection risk, including congestion challenges and limited headroom, in the NYS DEC Environmental Site Remediation database in 2023 to ensure all sites are re-considered using a lower buildable area requirement.

2.3 Advancement of the Program's Downstate Pipeline

In 2022, the Build-Ready Program made progress advancing the downstate pipeline in New York City and Long Island. In the downstate region, a major constraint to Build-Ready site development is the lack of available land large enough for large-scale solar PV projects. Over the last year, Build-Ready developed and implemented new strategies to many of the program's common siting challenges, with particular focus on addressing the lack of available land (see section 2.4). This included originating sites in lower risk interconnection areas, significant outreach to key channel partners to identify and vet sites, identifying large publicly owned parking lots that could host solar carports/canopies, aggregating distributed energy resources (DER) projects into one large wholesale project, and clustering projects around potential Build-Ready initiated utility infrastructure upgrades.

Much of the first half of 2022 was focused on prioritizing the program's downstate pipeline opportunities. In 2021, the program identified potential sites for the Build-Ready Program. The sites met Build-Ready's site type and screening criteria and were identified through a combination of desktop screening and outreach to key channel partners in New York City and Long Island. Through further diligence in 2022, the Build-Ready Program prioritized 66 sites with potential to host solar PV projects greater than 5 megawatts (MW). Some of the main factors used to prioritize sites included interconnection viability, landowner interest, and enough buildable acreage to support solar PV projects greater than 5 MW. Potentially promising sites that could accommodate solar PV projects less than 5 MW were noted and reserved for future DER aggregation opportunities.

To further prioritize sites, Build-Ready engaged over twenty-five representatives from various municipal governments, as well as the Long Island Power Authority-PSEG LI and ConEdison to discuss potential sites for Build-Ready projects. Of the 66 prioritized opportunities, two sites were advanced into project development in 2022 (See section 3.2.2 and 3.2.5). The remaining opportunities are at different stages of diligence and will be further advanced in 2023.

2.4 New Origination Strategies

The Build-Ready Program has an opportunity to develop and implement strategies and approaches that can help overcome common renewable energy development challenges in New York State. Three of the main challenges the Build-Ready Program confronts that are also faced by most renewable energy developers are lack of landowner interest, interconnection infeasibility, and insufficient buildable area. To mitigate these challenges, Build-Ready is implementing several new origination strategies that are discussed below.

2.4.1 Reduce Interconnection Risk Strategy by Targeting Areas with Lower Interconnection Risk for Site Development

As discussed in previous Build-Ready annual reports, one of the main challenges in siting renewable energy projects is risk, complexity, and cost involved with interconnecting projects to the electric transmission network. This is often due to congestion, limited headroom, and circuit protection requirements. To help identify strategic locations with lower interconnection risk, the Build-Ready Program commissioned a thermal transfer screening study to determine the maximum injection and withdrawal capacities for all 34.5 kilovolt (kV) through 230 kV transmission lines and sub-transmission lines within Areas A through K of the New York Control Area (NYCA) system. The main objective of the study was to provide preliminary guidance on the amount of nameplate generation that can interconnect to the transmission system at specific locations without the need for significant transmission system upgrades. The study identified locations potentially suitable for capacity injection and withdrawal of up to 100 MW per site. It's important to note that this analysis produced a high-level screening of potential generation injection and withdrawal locations and transfer capabilities across the NYCA system. Build-Ready will need to carry out site specific interconnection assessments once a project location is identified to fully understand the interconnection viability. The Build-Ready Program is using the transfer study results as a guide to target development of renewable energy projects.

2.4.2 Key Channel Partner Strategy—Overcoming Lack of Landowner Interest by Identifying Sites and Building Relationships with Key Channel Partners

Build-Ready has had the highest success rate in identifying viable sites through its relationships with key channel partners including Economic Development Councils and Industrial Development Agencies (EDCs/IDAs), other State agencies, municipalities, and utilities. Over the last year, the Build-Ready

Program has met with representatives from over 50 key channel partners. Direct conversations with key channel partners are a more efficient approach to originating sites than a top-down site origination effort. Build-Ready will continue to prioritize meetings with key channel partners in 2023 to identify and advance sites.

2.4.3 Parking Lot Solar Canopy Strategy—Bringing Multiple Co-Benefits through Developing Solar Parking Canopies Paired with Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

The aim of the Build-Ready Program is to develop large-scale renewable energy projects on underutilized sites and provide benefits to the host site and community. In communities of greater population density where available acreage is sparce, solar PV canopies present a unique opportunity to bring large-scale renewable energy generation to the urban environment. When parking lots are enhanced with solar PV canopies, they can maintain their existing use and create additional revenue streams for property owners while also allowing the siting of renewable energy proximate to electric load pockets. When coupled with BESS and EV charging stations, these carports can provide multiple additional co-benefits to the local communities in which they are located while efficiently using existing underutilized parking lots.

Although large-scale solar canopies provide significant value, their market potential has been constrained due to the higher construction and operating costs compared to traditional ground mount solar PV systems. The volatility of steel prices over the last few years has been a key driver in increased capital cost. Operations and maintenance costs can also be higher because of specialized equipment needed to clean and maintain the solar panels, snow plowing, and potentially more required repairs due to car damage. Build-Ready is uniquely positioned to develop these sites in the same manner that it de-risks and brings to market other priority sites. To this end, Build-Ready has initiated a new origination strategy that is working to identify and map large parking lots throughout New York State for potential solar PV canopy, BESS, and/or EV charging stations. Build-Ready is prioritizing larger publicly owned parking lots and those proximate to electric transmission infrastructure and existing load pockets. Build-Ready is in the process of identifying and meeting with owners of large, publicly owned parking lots in the State.

2.4.4 DER Aggregation Strategy—Creating Large Scale Renewables Projects by Grouping Multiple DER-Scale Projects Operating in Virtual Unison that Inject into the Wholesale Market as if They Were a Large-Scale Generator

Build-Ready is exploring distributed energy resources (DER) aggregation opportunities for solar canopy projects as well as ground-mounted and roof-mounted projects with the NYISO as permitted under Order No. 2222 and NYISO's 2019 DER and Aggregation participation model.[13,14] The DER Aggregation model could be helpful in enabling Build-Ready to advance and auction portfolios of smaller brownfield and landfill projects, parking canopies, and other site types located on the same transmission node.

2.4.5 Cluster Development Strategy—Maximizing Interconnection Investments and Project Success by Clustering Project Development around Build-Ready-Initiated Utility Infrastructure Upgrades

The Build-Ready Program is considering clustering projects in areas where the program is proposing local electric grid improvements. Sometimes to facilitate the development of a project, the Build-Ready Program commits strategic interconnection investments, such as the construction of a three-breaker ring bus or a new substation. To make the investment more meaningful, Build-Ready is seeking opportunities to cluster sites in an area of a proposed local electric grid improvement to realize cost savings across the Build-Ready portfolio. In 2023, Build-Ready intends to implement and refine these origination strategies as well as consider other strategies to measure their effectiveness and increase Build-Ready's project portfolio.

2.5 Coordination with State and Federal Agencies

In 2022, the Build-Ready Program continued to coordinate with other State and federal agencies on program and project activities including New York DEC, the New York State Department of State (DOS), Empire State Development (ESD), the New York State Office of General Services (OGS), the New York Power Authority (NYPA), and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) RE-Powering America's Land headquarters and regional team. In particular, Build-Ready worked with ESD to support the Prison Redevelopment Commission efforts to identify potential productive and creative uses for a portfolio of 12 state prisons that have closed or are scheduled to close due to declines in the incarcerated population. The prisons include the Willard Drug Treatment Facility, Southport Correctional Facility, Mt. McGregor Correctional Facility, Butler Correctional Facility, Camp Gabriels Correctional Facility, Livingston Correctional Facility, Watertown Correctional Facility, Oneida Correctional Facility, Downstate Correctional Facility, Gowanda Correctional Facility, Moriah Correctional Facility, and Ogdensburg Correctional Facility. Build-Ready

collaborated with ESD to evaluate the prison sites and identify those with potential to support a Build-Ready project. Out of the 12 prisons screened, Livingston Correctional Facility, Ogdensburg Correctional Facility, and Willard Drug Treatment Center were identified as potentially viable Build-Ready sites. The findings of our assessments were shared with ESD, the respective local communities, and were included in the Prison Redevelopment Commission's final report, *Unlocking Opportunity: The Report of the Prison Redevelopment Commission.*[15] Build-Ready remains in close communication with ESD about the opportunities at these sites. Finally, NYSERDA continued to work closely with agricultural stakeholders through the Agricultural Technical Working Group (A-TWG), developing responsible solar-agricultural siting recommendations. Build-Ready also coordinates with New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) and participates in the Farmland Protection Working Group.

2.6 Conferences and Events

Lastly, the Build-Ready Program participated directly and through consultants, in several conferences including the New York State Economic Development Council Annual Meeting, and those organized by the Alliance for Clean Energy New York and the New York Solar Energy Industry Association. In 2023, Build-Ready plans to participate in several State and national conferences to support the program's goals and share lessons learned. To date, these include: the New York Association of Towns Annual Meeting and Training School Event, the New York State Economic Development Council Annual Meeting, the National Brownfields Conference, NYBEST Spring Conference, Renewable Energy +, the Alliance for Clean Energy New York Annual Conference, the New York Solar Energy Industry Association Annual Conference, and other industry events as appropriate.

3 Portfolio of Projects Under Development

The Build-Ready Program is advancing projects across New York State. Table 5 provides a snapshot of the sites progressing through development. The sites include a mix of landfills, mines, underutilized/commercial properties, parking lots, and airports. Since 2021, Build-Ready doubled the number of sites under development. At this stage, all sites are planned to host projects that are 20 MW (alternating current) or less and will proceed through the NYISO's small generator interconnection procedure (SGIP). Each site is advancing through diligence activities with several projects having secured initial site control through memorandums of understanding (MOU) between NYSERDA and the landowner. The BR Benson Mines Solar PV Project is the most advanced with the auction planned for 2023. The following section provides more details about the sites under development.

Table 5. Build-Ready Sites Under Development

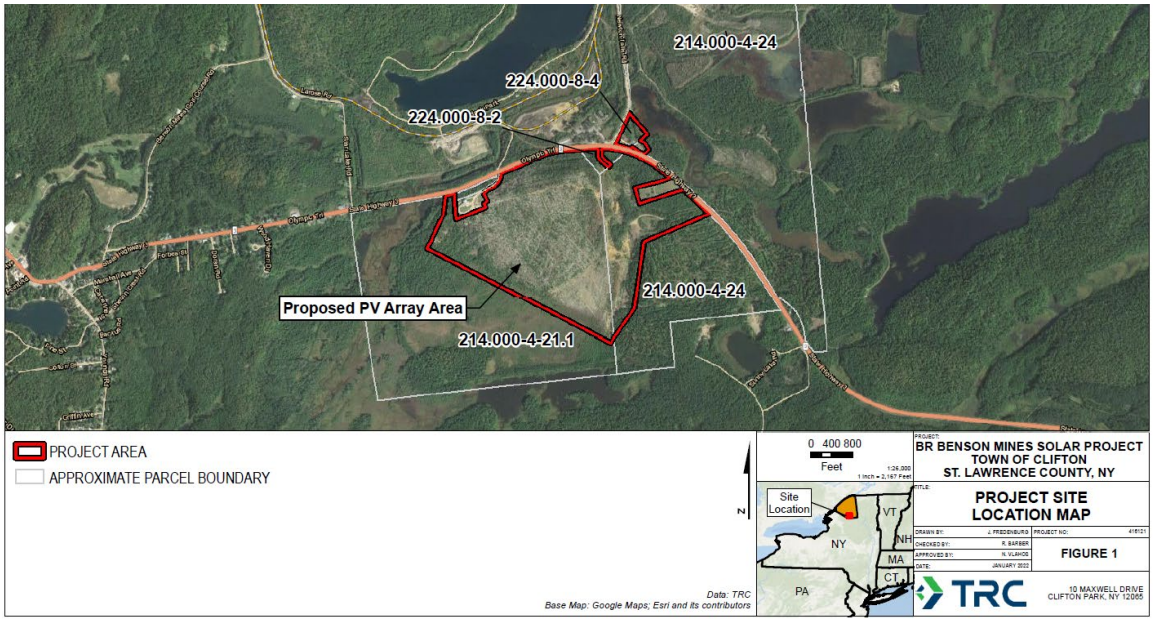
County	Site Type	Utility Territory	Technology	Project Study Area (Acres)	Solar PV Estimated Capacity (MW)[a]	Status
St. Lawrence	Mine	National Grid	Solar PV	245	20 MW	Auction Prep
Jefferson	Former Industrial	National Grid	Solar PV + BESS	311	10 MW	Site Control MOU; Advanced Feasibility Review
Suffolk	Landfill	LIPA	Solar PV + BESS	400	20 MW	Site Control MOU; Advanced Feasibility Review
Orange	Landfill	Orange and Rockland	Solar PV + BESS	420	20 MW	Site Control MOU; Advanced Feasibility Review
Tompkins	Landfill	NYSEG	Solar PV + BESS	112	12 MW	Site Control MOU; Advanced Feasibility Review
Clinton	Mine/Former Industrial	NYSEG	Solar PV + BESS	282	10 MW	Site Control MOU; Advanced Feasibility Review
Ontario	Industrial	NYSEG	Solar PV + BESS	348	10 MW	Site Control Discussion; Advanced Feasibility Review
Oneida	Industrial Site/Landfill	National Grid	Solar PV + BESS	100	10 MW	Site Control Discussion; Advanced Feasibility Review
Statewide	Airport Portfolio	Multiple	Solar PV + BESS	Variable	Multiple	Portfolio Development, Site Control Discussions
Statewide	Parking Lot Portfolio	Multiple	Carport + BESS + EV Chargers	Variable	Multiple	Portfolio Development, Site Control Discussions

[a] The table only presents the estimated solar PV capacity for each project. Build-Ready is planning to include BESS for a number of the projects listed in Table 5, but the final BESS system size is still being determined.

3.1 BR Benson Mines Solar PV Project

In 2022, the Build-Ready Program continued to advance BR Benson Mines Solar PV project, in the Town of Clifton, St. Lawrence County, New York. The project is proposed on a mine tailings pile. The permitted project is a 20 MW (alternating current) solar photovoltaic (PV) system that includes commercial-scale solar arrays and inverters, access roads, buried collection lines, a generation tie line, point of interconnection (POI) line-tap, fencing, and laydown areas. The project is anticipated to interconnect to the National Grid transmission lines north of the Star Lake Substation, which is north of State Route 3 and adjacent to the project. As currently permitted, the system will occupy up to approximately 111-acres of the approximately 255-acre project area, as depicted on the Project Site Location Map (see Figure 1). It is estimated that at the current planned capacity, the project could generate enough clean, renewable electricity to power over 4,000 New York State households.

Figure 1. BR Benson Mines Solar Project Site Location Map



In 2022, the main project activities included obtaining the major siting approvals, advancing the project through the NYISO interconnection process, and preparing the project for auction. A summary of the status of the project as of December 31, 2022, is provided below.

- **Site control**: Build-Ready obtained site control via a Lease Option Agreement with BR Benson Mines Inc. for the portion of the property where the project is to be sited in April 2021. Build-Ready entered into the first option year in 2022 and plans to enter the second option period in 2023.

- **Interconnection:** The project's interconnection request was submitted to the NYISO in May 2021 (NYISO Queue Position #1166). There is ongoing coordination with NYISO and National Grid as part of the Small Generator Interconnection Procedure process.
- **Permitting:** NYSERDA received an APA Solar Generation Facility Permit and a Town of Clifton Site Plan Review approval.
- **Community Engagement and Host Community Agreement:** Build-Ready is working with the St. Lawrence Industrial Development Agency to pursue a PILOT option that will allow for an expedited process to pursue a PILOT for the project.
- **Auction Preparation:** For each Build-Ready project a special purpose holding company (LLC) is formed to facilitate a smooth transaction with the awardee. In 2022, BR Project 1 LLC was formed. Prior to auction, all the agreements, permits, and approvals received by NYSERDA for BR Benson Mines Solar PV project will be transferred to the LLC. At the time of contracting with the auction awardee, the LLC and all its holdings will be transferred to the awardee. In addition, the Build-Ready Program ran a Request for Information (RFI) to gather feedback on the project (see section 4). The feedback is being incorporated into the final project development steps as the project is prepared for auction in 2023.

3.2 Other Build-Ready Projects Under Development

3.2.1 Deferiet Paper Mill—Abandoned Industrial Site

The Build-Ready Program is continuing to work closely with Jefferson County and local officials on a Build-Ready project on the site of an abandoned paper mill. In 2021, Jefferson County nominated this former industrial site to the Build-Ready Program. The site consists of several privately owned parcels that contain numerous buildings and supporting facilities that overtime, have become dilapidated, adversely affecting the community's landscape. The site was subject to an emergency action by the EPA to address asbestos abatement from exposed piping. Additionally, the properties are tax delinquent, increasing the need to find a suitable reuse that will benefit the community. Build-Ready is working with the community to plan for the overall revitalization of the site, which includes the development of a large-scale solar PV project, and the potential for BESS.

In furtherance of the overall revitalization planning, in the 2021 Build-Ready annual report it was noted that that Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) grant program submission was successful, and DOS awarded a grant to the municipalities to prepare a nomination study. In 2022, the Town of Wilna and the Village of Deferiet, working with DOS, procured a consultant to advance the BOA planning process. While the BOA process is not managed by Build-Ready, program staff sit on the BOA Steering Committee with the first meeting planned for February 2023. In 2022, the Build-Ready

Program also supported Jefferson County, the Jefferson County IDA, and the Tug Hill Commission in a Restore NY grant submission that, if granted, would help address the demolition of derelict structures on the site. Related to this, Build-Ready, Jefferson County, and the Jefferson County IDA have recently presented their plans to the Village of Deferiet at a public meeting.

In preparation for the proposed solar PV project, Build-Ready has completed a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) in 2021 and initiated the Phase II ESA in 2022. The results of the Phase I and Phase II ESAs will inform the overall project strategy and site plan development. Build-Ready intends to develop on portions of the site that have been de-risked. Build-Ready will determine if an application can be made into the NYSDEC Brownfield Cleanup Program to provide an additional tax incentive for the future developer, if applicable to the site.

The Build-Ready Program is planning to continue its engagement with Jefferson County, Jefferson County IDA, the Town of Wilna, the Village of Deferiet, and the Tug Hill Commission throughout 2023.

3.2.2 Landfill Solar PV Projects

In 2022, three publicly owned landfills advanced into development. Build-Ready has entered MOUs with the Town of Brookhaven, Orange County, and Tompkins County, for developing large-scale solar opportunities on each of their municipally owned landfill properties.

For each site, environmental and wetland delineation studies were completed, initial interconnection feasibility assessments were conducted, and different project concepts were developed and discussed with site owners.

Build-Ready understands that each site and its surrounding community is unique. Build-Ready plans to take development, de-risking, and community engagement approaches that meet the needs of each site and community. In 2023, the aim for each site is to begin community engagement to inform the conceptual design and the host community benefits. Build-Ready will also begin environmental and site plan review and submit the applicable interconnection request. If at any point it is determined that any site is no longer viable, Build-Ready is prepared to stop further development. More details of these projects will be made public through direct community engagement, and the environmental and site plan review processes.

3.2.3 Mine Site: Dannemora, NY

Build-Ready is advancing diligence around a renewable energy project on municipally owned land in the Town of Dannemora. The Adirondack North County Association (ANCA) nominated the site via the Build-Ready Site Nomination Request for Information (RFI). In 2022, the program entered into an MOU with the Town of Dannemora. Since then, preliminary environmental investigations and conversations with the Town have progressed. A wind resource assessment was completed for the site, which concluded that the site was not suitable for a wind energy project. Build-Ready continues to pursue diligence and conversations with the Town of Dannemora and ANCA on a potential solar PV + BESS project.

3.2.4 Underutilized Commercial/Industrial Sites

Build-Ready is advancing diligence of solar PV projects on privately owned, underutilized commercial/industrial sites in Oneida and Ontario Counties that were identified during Build-Ready's desktop screening for underutilized lands. The program is in site control discussions with the landowners and coordinating with related agencies. The program is conducting preliminary layout and engineering design on the sites while identifying nearby underutilized lands/brownfields which could increase buildable area and improve project economics.

3.2.5 Solar Carport Projects

As noted above, Build-Ready is advancing a solar parking carport origination effort. Several landowners have expressed interest in working with Build-Ready to develop solar carports on their publicly owned parking lots. These locations are being developed as individual projects or as potential DER aggregations. Landowner engagement and utility coordination is underway. In 2023, Build-Ready's focus is on developing technically and economically viable project designs that comply with existing and forthcoming market rules, initiating host community engagement, continuing landowner and utility coordination, and starting the permitting and environmental review processes.

3.2.6 Solar Airport Projects

In 2022, Build-Ready advanced the program's understanding of the unique design and permitting requirements for solar PV projects sited on airport properties. As a result of screening efforts, Build-Ready identified several airports suitable for solar PV. Three airports in Tompkins

County, Chautauqua County, and Onondaga County look favorable. Build-Ready is engaged with the respective airport managers and municipal governments in preparation for the development of site layouts for initial Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) review. Projects can complete the FAA review in parallel with other permitting efforts and the NYISO interconnection process, ultimately, with feedback from all parties informing the final design. In 2023, Build-Ready will advance these airport projects in coordination with airport managers, municipal governments, FAA, and host communities.

4 Build-Ready Auction

In 2022, the Build-Ready Program further refined its competitive auction process and plan for selling projects under development. In the spring of 2022, Build-Ready issued RFI 5034 to gather feedback from solar PV developers, owners, operators, investors, and other interested stakeholders to: (1) better understand the most attractive time in the development process to auction a Build-Ready project, (2) foster significant interest from the private sector that results in competitive auctions and successful construction and operation of Build-Ready projects, and (3) solicit interest in a voluntary Market Advisory Group (MAG) that the Build-Ready Program can engage to gather feedback on programmatic and project specific questions and issues.[16] The RFI included a detailed proposal and a series of questions on the auction process as well as a package of information and a series of questions on the BR Benson Mines Solar PV project. The Build-Ready Program received 13 responses and posted a summary of the key take-aways from the RFI.[17] The program is incorporating, where feasible and practical, the responses into the design and development of the first Build-Ready auction planned for 2023.

Based on the feedback, the program intends to take the following approaches in developing and auctioning projects:

- **Interconnection:** Build-Ready plans to progress projects as far along as possible in the interconnection process while leaving the negotiation and execution of interconnection agreements to the selected developer to be completed post-auction. For the BR Benson Mines Solar PV project, Build-Ready plans to complete the SIS process prior to auction.
- **REC Agreement:** Build-Ready intends to offer REC agreements with each Build-Ready site, allowing bidders to choose either an indexed or fixed-price structure. Build-Ready is advancing an inflation adjustment to address inflation related risk between bid and construction similar to the mechanism deployed by Tier 1 of the CES in RESRFP22-1. In addition, Build-Ready is advancing an interconnection cost adjustment mechanism similar to that utilized in the recent Offshore Wind solicitation, ORECRFP22-1, to address interconnection cost risk relative to SIS estimate.
- **Site Control:** Build-Ready intends to advance site control for Build-Ready sites through Lease Option Agreements with a standard 4-year option period and a 20-year lease term with options to extend out to 40+ years.
- **Permitting:** Build-Ready intends to secure as many permits as possible prior to taking projects to auction.
- **Design**: Build-Ready intends to complete preliminary designs in a manner that will minimize grading and other project costs, include appropriate setbacks from wetlands and roads, and maximize project capacity.
- **PILOT Agreement:** Build-Ready intends on negotiating PILOT option agreements, when possible, to minimize the risk and variability this factor presents for bidders.

- **Host Community Benefit Agreement:** Build-Ready intends on negotiating Host Community Benefits Agreements, when possible, to minimize the risk and variability this factor presents for bidders.
- **Auction Process**: Build-Ready intends to adhere to the auction process format as set forth in the RFI and program documents. This includes initially issuing an RFI to share project(s) information and gather feedback, then issuing a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) seeking proposers to provide the full suite of services necessary to develop, finance, own, and operate each project. The RFP process will be a two-step process. The first step will be a qualifications round where prospective proposers must provide evidence they meet or exceed the minimum qualifications. Those that are qualified will be invited to participate in step two, where they will need to develop and submit a competitive bid proposal that Build-Ready will examine and evaluate based on price and non-price factors. Build-Ready will select and award the project to the highest scoring bidder. The project will be transferred to the awarded bidder and the program will continue to monitor the project as it progresses through development, construction, and operation.
- **Other Feedback**: Build-Ready intends to incorporate energy storage into project design/development, where possible, moving forward.

In the fall of 2022, Build-Ready began the development of the auction solicitation, contracts, and the mechanism for recouping project costs for the BR Benson Mines Solar PV project. For the solicitation and the contracts, this included competitively selecting consultants to help build the auction RFP, developing the Member Interest Purchase Agreement (MIPA) used to transfer the development vehicle to the awarded bidder, and revising NYSERDA's Standard Form REC Agreement for a Build-Ready project transaction. To recoup costs, the program is calculating a project development fee for each project that is auctioned. The project development fee includes all direct project development costs associated with BR Benson Mines Solar PV project as well as a portion of Build-Ready programmatic and NYSERDA administrative costs. As more projects are auctioned, Build-Ready will recoup all costs and aims to establish an evergreen fund to support future project development.

For the remainder of 2022 and through the first half of 2023, Build-Ready is focused on the development of the RFP, the MIPA, the Standard Form REC Agreement, and finalizing the project development fee. Prior to the launch of the solicitation, the Build-Ready Program will engage the voluntary MAG on BR Benson Mines Solar PV project and auction related questions. Build-Ready plans to issue this first auction for the BR Benson Mines Solar PV project in 2023.

5 Use and Status of Funding

The Order approved the Build-Ready Program budget of $71.8 million through 2025 and authorized the use of $50 million of Clean Energy Fund (CEF) cash balances to serve as an initial funding source. The Order also specified that the proceeds from auctioned sites must be used to repay the CEF funds, and, thereafter, the proceeds will be reinvested into the Build-Ready Program to support the advancement of additional project sites. Table 6 provides a summary of expended and remaining funds through December 31, 2022, and Table 7 provides a financial status report of the Build-Ready Program through December 31, 2022.

As displayed in Table 6 and 7 below, Build-Ready expenditures decreased in 2022 compared to 2021. In March of 2022, two full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members departed the Build-Ready Program including the director and a senior project manager. The lower expenditures reflect a partially staffed program. For the remainder of 2022, the Build-Ready Program prioritized recruiting and hired a new Build-Ready Director who started in August of 2022 and competitively selected an existing Build-Ready Project Manager to replace the senior project manager. The Build-Ready Program is recruiting a new project manager and is expected to be fully staffed with six FTEs by Q2 2023. The Build-Ready Program anticipates spending to increase in 2023 to reflect a fully staffed program.

For 2022, there are no proceeds to report because Build-Ready did not auction any sites. In 2023, the Build-Ready Program anticipates auctioning its first site with the project costs likely to be recouped in 2024. The proceeds will be reported in the applicable annual report.

Table 6. Summary of Build-Ready Program Funding and Spending from Program Inception through December 31, 2022 (Amount in thousands)

Category	Total Funding	2020	2021	2022	Cumulative Spending	Remaining Funding
Salaries and Overhead	$13,500	$26.9	$1,420.1	$1,244.6	$2,691.7	$10,808.3
Technical, consultant, legal support, and system development	$57,500	$220.5	$1,526.0	$999.6	$2,746.1	$54,753.9
New York State Cost Recovery Fee Expense	$800	$.3	$32.4	$55.8	$55.8	$744.2
Total	$71,800	$247.8	$2,978.5	$2,267.4	$5,493.5	$66,306.4

Table 7. Build-Ready Cumulative Financial Status Report (Amounts in thousands)

	2020	2021	2022	Total
Revenues/sources of funds				
Site disposition fees	-	-	-	-
Clean energy fund resources*	$247.8	$3,354.0	$2,878.9	$6,480.7
Financial backstop guarantee	-	-	-	-
Investment income**		$0.4	$37.3	$37.7
Total	$247.8	$3,354.4	$2,916.2	$6,518.4
Expenses/use of funds				
Program administration	$26.9	$1,420.1	$1,244.6	$2,691.6
Program support	$220.5	$1,526.0	$999.6	$2,746.1
Clean energy fund resources (returned)	-	-	-	-
NYS Cost Recovery Fee	$0.3	$32.4	$23.2	$55.9
Total	$247.8	$2,978.5	$2,267.4	$5,493.7
Surplus/(deficit)	-	$375.9	$648.8	$1,024.7
Cumulative surplus/(deficit)		$375.9		$1024.7
Cash balance at 12/31/2022				$1,024.7

* NYSERDA is authorized to use any cash balances 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.

** 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 Program Plans for 2023

The Build-Ready Program has numerous plans for 2023 that build on the program's accomplishments and learnings to date. The following section details many of the Build-Ready Program's plans for 2023.

- **Expand the Program Pipeline.** Build-Ready plans to screen and assess the remaining 27 upstate counties for Build-Ready priority site types, rescreen the remaining NYS DEC Environmental Remediation database sites using the revised screening criteria, and implement and refine the new origination strategies across upstate and downstate. The program will also continue to apply process improvements to more efficiently advance sites from the pipeline into development or remove sites from the pipeline or development at an earlier stage.
- **Move More Projects from Pipeline into Development Through New Origination Strategies.** The program plans to execute and refine the new origination strategies and has a goal to advance at least one large-scale solar PV parking canopy and one DER Aggregation project from pipeline into development in 2023. In addition, the program plans to update its marketing materials and website to reflect the new strategies.
- **Program Improvements.** To expand opportunities for use of clean energy on underutilized sites, the Build Ready Program would seek an amendment to the existing enabling statute to allow for "stand-alone energy storage systems." The Build-Ready enabling statute (Title 9-B of Article 8 of the Public Authorities Law) authorizes the creation of the Build-Ready program within NYSERDA to incentivize the development of renewable energy projects on underutilized sites, such as landfills and brownfields. Although the Build-Ready Program can pair energy storage with renewable energy projects on underutilized sites, many such underutilized sites do not have enough acreage to host a utility-scale renewable energy project but would be adequate to host a stand-alone energy storage project. An amendment to the existing statute would provide NYSERDA's Build-Ready Program with statutory authorization to deliver stand-alone energy storage projects. Authorization to develop stand-alone energy storage projects using the Build-Ready Program is critical to New York State efficiently meeting its energy storage goals under the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.
- **Advance Projects Through the Development Phase and Prepare for Future Auctions in Q1'24.** Build-Ready aims to complete development of at least three projects and prepare them for auction in 2023 or early 2024. For projects under development, this will include increasing community engagement activities to identify and develop host community benefit packages and PILOT options.
- **Auction BR Benson Mines Solar PV Project in 2023.** Build-Ready plans to complete the auction preparation process and launch the RFP for the BR Benson Mines Solar PV project in 2023 with the goal of selecting and awarding a bidder by the end of 2023, completing the transaction by early 2024.

- **Engage Build-Ready's Voluntary Market Advisory Group to Inform Program and Project Strategies.** Build-Ready plans to engage the Market Advisory Group (MAG) prior to the BR Benson Mines Solar PV project going out to auction to inform the final project development decisions and auction process. Build-Ready also plans to engage the voluntary MAG on other projects prior to auction and as it develops and refines its solar PV canopy, solar + BESS, and DER aggregation strategies and projects.
- **Coordinate and Partner with other NYSERDA Programs and State Agencies to Advance Mutual Goals.** Build-Ready is collaborating with several other NYSERDA programs including Tier 1, Clean Siting, NY-Sun, Energy Storage, Economic Development, Energy, Climate and Equity, Clean Transportation, and REV Campus Challenge along with other sister agencies including ESD, DEC, NYPA, DOS, and OGS, among others. Build-Ready will continue to collaborate with these programs and agencies to advance mutual clean energy and climate change goals and maximize benefits to host communities of Build-Ready projects.
- **Support New York's Commitment to an Inclusive Clean Energy Economy.** Build-Ready is developing and implementing an inclusive stakeholder engagement approach for each of our projects to deliver benefits to host communities. This includes engaging with historically marginalized communities to gather meaningful input to shape Build-Ready projects and host community benefit packages as well as compensating community-based organizations serving or representing disadvantaged communities. Build-Ready plans to use the soon to be established NYSERDA Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) Stakeholder Services Pool (RFQL 4922) and/or provide a DAC honorarium to individuals participating in and informing project development.
- **Strengthen Relationships and Increase Collaboration with NYS Utilities.** Build-Ready engaged with several New York State utilities in 2022 to discuss potential projects on typical Build-Ready site types. The conversations provided useful insights on how Build-Ready could site and design projects to provide mutual benefits to the program and the utilities. Build-Ready plans to continue and ideally increase utility engagement and collaboration in 2023.
- **Responsibly Deploy and Manage Program Funds.** Build-Ready will continue to responsibly deploy and manage program funds. With the first project auction in 2023, Build-Ready will begin recouping its costs and aims to establish an evergreen fund to support future project development.
- **Staff Build-Ready Program to Full Capacity.** As mentioned in the report, the Build-Ready Program is currently down one staff member. In 2023, Build-Ready will hire a new project manager to staff the program to full capacity and will also aim to competitively procure two assistant project managers via contract to provide additional staff capacity.
- **Secure Speaking Engagements at Conferences Relevant to Build-Ready and its Stakeholders.** In 2023, Build-Ready plans to participate in several State and national conferences to continue to build the program's pipeline and share lessons learned from the Build-Ready Program. These include: the New York Association of Towns Annual Meeting and Training School Event, the New York State Economic Development Council Annual Meeting, the National Brownfields Conference, NYBEST Spring Conference, Renewable Energy +, the Alliance for Clean Energy New York Annual Conference, the New York Solar Energy Industry Association Annual Conference, and other events as appropriate.

- **Support Build-Ready Staff Professional Development.** NYSERDA, and thus the Build-Ready Program, have a culture of supporting staff development both through internal work and external trainings or certifications. In 2023, Build-Ready staff plan to attend at least one external training to build their expertise in renewable energy project development and project management.

The Build-Ready Program looks forward to building on the momentum achieved in 2022 and making significant progress fulfilling the goals and objectives of the Act, the Order, and the Build-Ready Implementation Plan in 2023.

Endnotes

[1] The Build-Ready Program defines lower risk interconnection areas as parts of New York's electric transmission and distribution network with limited congestion and available headroom, which will facilitate simpler and lower cost interconnection of renewable energy projects.

[2] Key channel partners include county Industrial Development Agencies, Economic Development organizations, and municipal planning agencies.

[3] Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act. Chapter 58 (Part JJJ) of the laws of 2020. Available at: https://nyassembly.gov/leg/?default_fld=&&leg_video=&&bn=A09508&&term=2019&&Text=Y

[4] New York Public Service Commission. CASE 15-E-0302 - Proceeding on Motion of the Commission to Implement a Large-Scale Renewable Program and a Clean Energy Standard. "Order Approving Build-Ready Program." Issued and Effective October 15, 2020. Available at: http://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/Common/ViewDoc.aspx?DocRefId={B0F6CC45-490C-48A7-B0FB-6D3C7924993C}

[5] NYSERDA. "Build-Ready Implementation Plan." 12 January 2021. Available at: http://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/Common/ViewDoc.aspx?DocRefId={277A546B-8DD7-4D19-8532-E4049B1141E1}

[6] Downstate includes New York City and Long Island. The remainder of New York is referred to as upstate.

[7] Sites is used to refer to a single parcel of land or a group of parcels of land that could make up a single Build-Ready project site.

[8] The Build-Ready Program captures the status of a site as (1) *in progress* for sites that are progressing through screening/assessment/diligence, (2) *on-hold* for sites where advancement is paused due to an underlying issue that may be resolved, or (3) *closed* for sites where development cannot advance.

[9] Build-Ready uses the term anchor parcel to refer to the main parcel of land that will make up a project. For large-scale solar PV projects, Build-Ready typically requires an anchor parcel to have a minimum of 35 buildable acres for a project to be considered viable.

[10] Upstate is defined as all of New York State excluding New York City and Long Island.

[11] The Build-Ready Program defines lower interconnection risk areas as parts of New York's electric transmission and distribution network with limited congestion and available headroom, which will facilitate simpler and lower cost interconnection of renewable energy projects.

[12] New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Environmental Site Remediation Database: https://www.dec.ny.gov/cfmx/extapps/derexternal/index.cfm?pageid=3

[13] New York Independent System Operators, Inc., Compliance Filing, Docket No. ER21-2460-000 (Nov. 14, 2022) (2022 DER Order).

[14] New York Independent Sys. Operator, Inc., Proposed Tariff Revisions Regarding Establishment of Participation Model for Aggregations of Resources, Including Distributed Energy Resources, and Proposed Effective Dates, Docket No. ER19-2276 (Jun. 27, 2019) ("2019 DER Filing").

[15] Prison Redevelopment Commission. 2022. "Unlocking Opportunity: The Report of the New York State Prison Redevelopment Commission." Available at: https://esd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/Prison-Redevelopment-Commission-Report-2022.pdf

[16] NYSERDA. 2022. "Build-Ready Program Request for Information (RFI) 5043." Available at: https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/AllPrograms/Clean-Energy-Standard/Landowners-and-Local-Governments/Build-Ready-Program/Program-Opportunities

[17] NYSERDA. Build-Ready Program Request for Information (RFI) 5043 Responsiveness Summary. 2022. Available at: https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/-/media/Project/Nyserda/Files/Programs/Clean-Energy-Standard/RFI-5034-responsiveness-summary.pdf

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