

## Request for Decision

### Rooftop Solar PV Projects – Municipal Council Blanket Support Resolution

Presented To:	City Council
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Type:	Routine Management Reports

### Recommendation

WHEREAS Applicants have been and will continue to propose the construction and operation of Rooftop Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Projects (the “Projects”) in the City of Greater Sudbury under the Province’s Feed-In Tariff (FIT) Program;

AND WHEREAS Applicants have requested that Council of the City of Greater Sudbury indicate by resolution Council's support for the construction and operation of the Projects in the City of Greater Sudbury;

AND WHEREAS, pursuant to the rules governing the FIT Program (the “FIT Rules”), Applications whose Projects receive the formal support of Local Municipalities will be awarded Priority Points, which may result in the Applicant being offered a FIT Contract prior to other persons applying for FIT Contracts;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Council of the City of Greater Sudbury supports the construction and operation of the Projects anywhere in the City of Greater Sudbury. This resolution's sole purpose is to enable the participants to receive Priority Points under the FIT Program and may not be used for the purpose of any other form of municipal approval in relation to the Application or Projects or any other purpose.

### Finance Implications

No financial implications.

## Background

The Ontario Power Authority (OPA) is a not-for-profit corporation with a mandate from the Ontario government to ensure a reliable, sustainable supply of electricity for the province. As of December 18, 2014, the OPA has merged with the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO). The current responsibilities of both organizations will continue after the merger, including the operation of the FIT

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(Feed-In Tariff) program.

The IESO is responsible for designing and implementing the FIT program, which includes the program rules, price schedule, contracts, registration, application and contracting processes as well as ongoing contract management activities. The FIT program is intended for projects producing over 10 kilowatts (kW) of electricity. By encouraging the development of renewable energy in Ontario, the FIT program is:

- helping Ontario phase out coal-fired electricity generation;
- boosting economic activity and the development of renewable energy technologies; and,
- creating new green industries and jobs.

The FIT program encourages the construction and operation of rooftop solar, ground mount solar, bio-energy and on-shore wind generation projects. The new version of FIT includes an opportunity for City Council to lend their support to specific projects or project types by resolution. A municipal council support resolution enables applicants to secure priority points. These points increase the chance for applicants of securing a FIT contract for 20 years at a pre-determined rate. A new FIT contract application period is expected sometime in 2015.

Over 98 percent of the successful applications in Ontario received municipal council support resolutions. Most of these contract offers in the Province are for solar photovoltaic (PV) projects, including 934 solar PV projects, 16 bioenergy projects and one waterpower project. In total, project developers are expected to invest over \$750 million in the Ontario economy, and the projects are expected to result in 2,200 jobs for Ontarians.

Currently, approximately 70% of Ontario's electricity is generated by Ontario Power Generation at its hydroelectric, nuclear and fossil fuel stations. Independent power producers generate the remaining 30%.

## **Municipal Council Support**

The IESO screens the FIT applicants for their proposed project and its viability in order to ensure that the grid capacity for renewable energy is well spent. IESO considers various aspects such as financial capability, design thoroughness, proposed project timeline etc. on which it issues merit points.

One of the aspects that the IESO considers to award priority points is local support for a specific project by the municipality in which the project is to be constructed. Support is expressed through a Council resolution, either on a case-by-case basis for individual projects or, in the case of roof-top solar PV projects, as a blanket resolution. The resolution's sole purpose is to enable the participants to receive priority points under the FIT Program and may not be used for the purpose of any other form of municipal approval in relation to the application or projects or any other purpose. Projects that receive a contract from the IESO will still need to obtain any required approvals prior to construction (building permits, etc.).

The increased local supply of energy derived from renewable sources is one of the key objectives of the City's EarthCare Sudbury Action Plan. On October 8, 2013, Council passed Resolution CC2013-313 that provides blanket support to roof-top solar photovoltaic projects anywhere in the City of Greater Sudbury. According to IESO rules, however, the resolution expires twelve (12) months after its adoption by Council. Many Ontario municipalities, such as Aurora, Burlington, Cambridge, Guelph, Hamilton, London, Mississauga, Toronto, Vaughn, and Windsor have also chosen to create blanket resolutions for rooftop solar PV projects due to the high number of applications being processed.

This recommendation is for a Council blanket support resolution for rooftop solar photovoltaic (PV) anywhere in the City of Greater Sudbury. The blanket support resolution would not apply to ground-mount

solar projects or any other type of renewable energy project encouraged by the Province's FIT Program.