

Promising Practices



Municipalities

Ottawa plans 20 rooftop solar arrays, two solar energy parks

The City of Ottawa has taken initial steps to achieve its goal of positioning itself as a green energy leader. A recent announcement for the installation of 20 rooftop solar energy arrays is an important move toward clean energy.

The new agreement, announced on January 11, 2011, is expected to power more than 300 homes. “Subject to confirmation of detailed technical and financial feasibility, and subsequent contract offers from the OPA [Ontario Power Authority], it is anticipated that the first solar arrays could be constructed and operational in 2012,” said Michael Murr, the manager of Ottawa’s Community Sustainability Department.¹ Rosemarie Leclair, the outgoing president and chief executive officer of Hydro Ottawa, said “five of the projects could be operational by 2012, seven projects in 2013 and eight more in 2014.”²

The solar development began with a pilot project in the Fall of 2010 when the city installed small-scale solar projects at two locations: City Hall at 110 Laurier Avenue and at the Transit Services Integrated Control Centre at 875 Belfast Road. These systems provide enough power for 2.5 homes.

“These new solar arrays are enhancing Ottawa’s reputation as a green city,” said Mayor Jim Watson in a press release. “This is a good first step towards making the

City’s own buildings important examples of sustainability.”³

These projects are examples of how to transition to renewable energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the city. They also come with substantial financial benefits. Because the solar contracts will be with the Ontario Power Authority under the Feed-In-Tariff (FIT) Program, the city has a guaranteed rate of return for the contribution of their solar energy at roughly 80 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh). According to a press release from the city, these 20 arrays result in promised revenues estimated at \$250,000 annually, or up to \$5 million over the 20 years.⁴

“These projects are good news for Ottawa,” said River Ward councillor, Maria McRae. “They show that we can do these tangible projects in an environmentally and financially responsible way.”⁵

Energy Ottawa, owned by Hydro Ottawa, is developing the 20 solar projects. Hydro Ottawa is a fully-owned subsidiary of the City of Ottawa. Therefore, the financial benefit to the city of Ottawa will be realized by the dividends that Hydro Ottawa transfers to the city annually.

In addition to the 20 rooftops project, two solar energy parks are expected to be operational soon near the Trail Road Waste Facility with the capacity to power approximately 1,500 homes each year.⁶ ⁷ The first park is expected to be operational by 2012, the second by 2013.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Michael Murr, Manager
Community Sustainability Department
City of Ottawa
Phone: 613-580-2424 x25195

This Promising Practice was brought to you by
Ecology Ottawa on behalf of the
Community Energy Network of Eastern Ontario
*Encouraging the uptake of renewable energy and energy
efficiency initiatives*

www.community-energy.ca



The Network gratefully acknowledges the support of
the Ontario Trillium Foundation



References:

¹ Murr M. E-mail communication. 12 May 2011. Available upon request.

² Mueller L. "City takes a shine to solar power revenue streams." YourOttawaRegion.com. 20 January 2010. www.ottawa.ca/city_hall/mayor_council/council_updates/2010/20100526_en.html. Accessed May 2011.

³ Szein A. "City of Ottawa goes green by going with solar power." EMC News. 20 January 2011. www.emcottawaeast.ca/20110120/news/City+of+Ottawa+goes+green+by+going+with+solar+power. Accessed March 2011.

⁴ "City Council Update: Your guide to what happened at City Council January 26, 2011." The City of Ottawa. 26 January 2011. www.ottawa.ca/city_hall/mayor_council/council_updates/2011/20110126_en.html. Accessed March 2011.

⁵ Supra note 3.

⁶ Lunchbox Consulting Inc. "Ottawa Tapping Into Some Sunshine." Bite Size Green Blog. 14 January 2011. www.bitesizegreen.com/?p=411. Accessed March 2011.

⁷ City of Ottawa. "City Council Update: Solar parks approved for Trail Road." Website text. 26 May 2010. www.ottawa.ca/city_hall/mayor_council/council_updates/2010/20100526_en.html. Accessed May 2011.

