

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

**DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY FUND PROGRAMS
FOR LOW AND MODERATE INCOME RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS**

RPS 2023-002

**Order Approving Requests for Proposals for
Low-Moderate Income Solar Project Funding in Fiscal Year 2024 and Future Fiscal Years**

On October 19, 2023, the Department of Energy (Department) held a public comment hearing to receive public comment regarding the low-moderate income (LMI) community solar projects to be funded by the Renewable Energy Fund (REF) in state fiscal year (FY) 2024. At the public comment hearing the Department received no objection to the use of a request for proposals (RFPs) for FY 2024 and future years, a three-month bidding period for FY 2024, and no cross eligibility with SB 270 (2022) programs for FY 2024. In addition to the comments received at the public comment hearing, the Department received written comments from the Plymouth Area Renewable Initiative supporting the use of a request for proposals and related issues.¹ After consideration of all comments received, the Department hereby approves a competitive solicitation through the issuance of a RFP to select LMI community solar projects to be funded by the REF in state FY 2024, and future years until further notice, pursuant to RSA 362-F:10, VIII and X.

Under RSA 362-F:10, X, the Department is required to allocate not less than 15 percent of the REF annually to, “benefit low-moderate income residential customers, including, but not limited to, the financing or leveraging of financing for low-moderate income community solar projects in manufactured housing communities or in multi-family rental housing.”

The phrase “low-moderate income community solar project,” is defined as, “ground-mounted or rooftop solar arrays that directly benefit a group of at least [five] residential end-user customers,

¹ A transcript of the public comment hearing, as well as a copy of all written comments received, may be found on the Department of Energy’s website here: <https://www.energy.nh.gov/rules-and-regulatory/proceedings/renewable-portfolio-standard-proceedings>

where at least a majority of the residential end-user customers are at or below 300 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.” RSA 362-F:2, X-a.

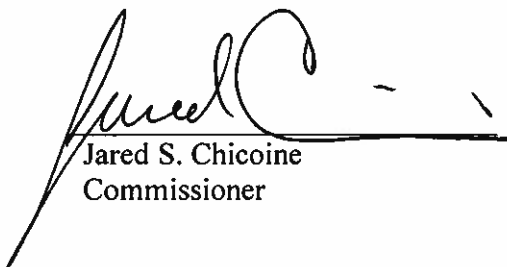
Under RSA 362-F:10, VIII, the Department is authorized to, “after notice and hearing, by order or rule, establish additional incentive or rebate programs and competitive grant opportunities for renewable thermal and electric energy projects sited in New Hampshire.”

Based on the foregoing, I hereby find that it is reasonable and appropriate to issue an RFP to select LMI community solar projects to be funded by the REF in FY 2024 and in future fiscal years until and unless another determination is made. The Department has allocated \$1 million for the FY 2024 RFP, and it shall be issued in that amount. Bidding shall remain open for a minimum period of two months with a maximum grant contract period of 24 months. No project selected for funding under the FY 2024 LMI Grant Program shall be eligible for any solicitation issued to implement the EAP solar project program established by SB 270 (2022). The Department will endeavor to prepare an LMI grant program RFP for issuance on or about November 1, 2023.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that the Department shall issue a request for proposals to select low-moderate income community solar photovoltaic projects to be funded by the Renewable Energy Fund in state fiscal year 2024 and future years until further notice, consistent with the parameters specified in this order.

So ordered this 1st day of November, 2023.



Jared S. Chicoine
Commissioner