

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Chequamegon Bay Renewables, Inc. is Bringing Solar to Washburn Through \$10,000 Energy Dept. Award, Will Participate in National Solar Competition**

April 24, 2017, Washburn, Today, Chequamegon Bay Renewables (CBR) announced that it was selected to participate in the U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative's [Solar in Your Community Challenge](#), a \$5 million prize competition that aims to expand solar electricity access.

Over the next 18 months, CBR's Team will develop an innovative project that enables the City of Washburn, Bayfield County, and the Washburn School District to incorporate solar PV for up to 15 municipal sites. The project will demonstrate how local investors can cost-effectively finance solar energy so there is no upfront cost to these government entities. The model developed from this pilot project will inform other municipalities, schools, or tribes in the area looking to go solar.

"We are thrilled that our team was selected to join the challenge," said Scott Griffiths, Mayor of Washburn. "Our project will benefit the people of Washburn, and help the city reach its goal of 25% renewable energy, *and* use local investors to bolster our local economy."

CBR will join hundreds of other teams from around the country in their pursuit of solar projects and programs that expand solar access to low- and moderate-income households and nonprofit organizations. All teams will compete for \$1 million in final prizes, which will be awarded by judges based on each project or program's innovation, impact, and replicability.

The CBR team will develop approximately 400kW of solar photovoltaic (PV) to generate electricity by combining locations for the city, county and school district. The power generated will benefit both the municipalities and the tax payers that live in and around Washburn by reducing utility expenses for the city, county, and school district.

The City of Washburn has had sustainability goals since 2005 when it became one of the nation's first Eco-municipalities and was reinforced in 2009 when it and Bayfield County became Energy Independent Communities under the State Energy Office guidelines. Financial restraints have hampered solar development until now, but with this innovative approach to finance the project through local investors and support from the U.S. Department of Energy to cover technical costs, the project can move forward.

CBR hopes this development model will be successfully deployed in other area municipalities and tribes. Coupled with the current project, CBR plans to integrate a "solar group buy" for area residents and is looking at incorporating electric vehicle charging stations into the solar project rollout.

#### **About Chequamegon Bay Renewables**

CBR is a local non-profit 501 (c)(3) advocating for renewable energy in the Chequamegon Bay area. Recently incorporated as a non-profit, they have been active since May of 2014 when they began supporting Bayfield Electric Cooperative's Community Solar garden which went online in October of 2016. CBR also maintains the website [www.chegbayrenewables.org](http://www.chegbayrenewables.org) as a community resource for renewable energy information.

## About the Solar in Your Community Challenge

[The Solar in Your Community Challenge](#), sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy [SunShot Initiative](#) and administered by [SUNY Polytechnic Institute](#), is a \$5 million prize competition that aims to expand solar access to low and moderate income households; and state, local, and tribal governments; and non-profit organizations.

More information about the selected teams and the Solar in Your Community Challenge is at [www.solarinyourcommunity.org](http://www.solarinyourcommunity.org).

## About the SunShot Initiative

The [U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative](#) is a national effort to drive down the cost of solar electricity and support solar adoption. SunShot aims to make solar energy a low cost electricity source for all Americans through research and development efforts in collaboration with public and private partners. Learn more at [energy.gov/sunshot](http://energy.gov/sunshot).

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## Images

