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CT Green Bank launches Solar Marketplace Assistance Program

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Hartford, CT To help owners and residents of affordable multifamily housing have easier access to the benefits of solar energy and battery storage, the Connecticut Green Bank's Solar Marketplace Assistance Program (Solar MAP) is now available to affordable properties with five or more units. This enhancement was enabled through passage of legislation in 2021, which expanded the definition of a residential customer as it relates to solar energy generation to include multifamily properties. Solar MAP for affordable multifamily properties officially launched June 6.

Through Solar MAP, no-cost technical assistance is provided to affordable multifamily housing agencies, property managers, and owners to simplify and navigate the process of going solar (including battery storage) from start to finish. The program helps identify project sites, conduct feasibility and design solar installations. The Green Bank also provides the financing, incentives, and contractors to take projects from concept to completion.

Prior to 2021, affordable multifamily properties were defined as commercial properties, which compete for a capped incentive. Affordable multifamily properties can now access the Residential Renewable Energy Solutions program, which has no cap and will often provide benefits greater than the commercial incentive. The program also allows the tenants to share in the savings from the solar system. Solar MAP offers a lease arrangement to avoid complicated financing structures and easily share the benefits with property owners and tenants.

Affordable multifamily properties can also benefit from the Energy Storage Solutions program, which provides substantial incentives that help tenants become more resilient in the event of a grid outage.

The Connecticut Green Bank has been awarded Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that will be used to reduce the cost of capital for affordable multifamily housing projects - passing along meaningful benefits to tenants and property owners alike including more energy savings, increase in resilience from grid outages through storage, and more.

Additionally, Green Bank has partnered with the Council of Governments and submitted an implementation application under the EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant. This grant funding, if awarded, will be utilized to help deploy solar energy and battery storage in vulnerable communities and address other barriers to solar projects, such as scenarios where new roofs or structural upgrades are required prior to installation, or where interconnection is cost prohibitive.

Since 2020, Solar MAP has supported solar project development at state and municipal properties, including the Towns of Manchester, Portland, Mansfield, and Branford. Future rounds of the program will support the state's 10 megawatt per year solar goal and growing interest from all sectors in battery storage.

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