

Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA)

Commercial Rooftop Solar & Renewable Energy Toolbox



COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Edward P. Romaine
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

January 8, 2025

Dear Interested, Renewable Energy Project Consumers,

Renewable energy is very important to Suffolk County, Long Island's economy and its communities. The installation of renewable energy sources such as Commercial Rooftop Solar and Commercial Geothermal HVAC offer many benefits and advantages for businesses such as a 30% Federal Tax Credit, accelerated depreciation over 5 years, and no Suffolk Sales Tax on commercial solar equipment.

The Commercial Rooftop Solar and Renewable Energy Toolbox is an interactive and informational center for project clients interested in renewable energy solutions. This toolbox will provide valuable information and will give business owners the necessary tools needed for researching commercial solar rooftop installations as well as Commercial Geothermal HVAC.

We hope that you find this toolbox helpful, and we look forward to our continued partnership.

Sincerely,

Edward P. Romaine
Suffolk County Executive

EPR:ms



**Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA)
Enhanced Financial Assistance for
Qualifying Solar and Renewable Energy Projects Policy**

The Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency (the “Agency”) is charged, pursuant to Article 18-A of the New York State General Municipal Law (as amended from time to time, the “Act”), with the purpose of, among others, promoting, developing, encouraging and assisting in industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, commercial, research, renewable energy and recreational facilities (including educational and cultural facilities among others) and thereby advancing the job opportunities, health, general prosperity and economic welfare of the people of Suffolk County and the State of New York. Toward that end, the Agency has been granted a number of powers under the Act. The purpose of this policy is to enumerate a strategic policy of the Agency, as general guidelines, in awarding financial assistance and additional/enhanced “financial assistance” under the Act for proposed projects that provide Renewable Energy Systems (defined below) to be strictly utilized as the energy generation or energy storage for such project; not necessarily to sole energy generation source and maybe combined with additional renewable energy generation solutions.

“Renewable Energy Systems” shall mean systems that generate electricity or thermal energy or store energy through use of the following technologies: solar thermal, photovoltaics, geothermal electric, geothermal ground source heat, battery energy storage systems and fuel cells which do not utilize a fossil fuel resource in the process of generating electricity.

It is being recognized that it has been a long-standing practice of the Agency to encourage commercial solar development on rooftops, and other Renewable Energy Systems to meet Suffolk County’s renewable energy goals.

The Agency desires to encourage any and all “projects” authorized under the Act. However, the Agency may give special consideration to provide additional/enhanced financial assistance for projects that advance the public policy of providing Renewable Energy Systems.

Approval of all projects will be at the sole discretion of the Agency’s Board of Members and shall be subject to the Agency’s policies and procedures in existence from time-to-time, including without limitation, the Agency’s Uniform Tax Exemption Policy (UTEP). To the extent anything contained herein is determined to be contrary to the Agency’s UTEP policy, the Agency UTEP shall control. The Agency will not be extending PILOT benefits to third-party leasing programs or community solar projects.

For projects that are installing commercial rooftop solar or other Renewable Energy Systems, the Agency may engage the services of a consultant to assist the Agency to determine appropriate Payment - in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) payment levels based upon such relevant factors, including but not limited to;

- i. Total project cost for renewable energy solution/s.
- ii. Cost benefit analysis of the project.
- iii. Breakeven analysis of the proposed renewable energy solution/s.
- iv. Anticipated energy generation from the newly installed system.
- v. Government and industry related incentives being utilized for this project.
- vi. Identify additional renewable energy solutions being installed.

Enhanced Assistance Consideration Criteria

In determining eligibility and whether and to what extent provide additional/enhanced financial assistance under this Policy, the Agency shall consider the following based on the Uniform Project Evaluation Criteria Policy, Effective June 23, 2016:

Energy Production Projects

For Energy Production Projects, the Agency should consider the following criteria, as applicable:

- i. The information provided in the Cost Benefit Analysis;
- ii. The capital investment being made by the applicant;
- iii. The impact, if any, from local labor construction for the project;
- iv. Wage rates (above median wage for area);
- v. In region purchases (percentage of overall purchases for project);
- vi. Advances renewable energy production/transmission goals;
- vii. How the project advances renewable energy production/transmission goals; and
- viii. The need being met for the municipality and/or region.

This policy is not intended to exclude any qualified “projects” under the Act, but is intended to enumerate those projects that may receive special consideration.

Enhanced Assistance for Qualifying Projects

Each project will be reviewed and evaluated on a case by case basis. The Agency review will utilize the criteria listed in this Policy, the Agency’s Uniform Tax Exemption Policy, dated June 28, 2012, (the UTEP”), the Uniform Project Evaluation Criteria Policy, dated June 23, 2016 and/or impact upon Suffolk County (collectively, the “Policy Documents”).

Projects that are determined to satisfy the criteria in the Policy Documents may qualify for an additional reduction and/or abatements than the amounts listed in Attachment 2 to the UTEP for an additional term to be determined by the Board of the Agency (the “Enhanced Benefits”). Any Enhanced Benefits will be structured as an optional extension term to the PILOT that the project would be eligible for under the UTEP. Any such extension could be exercised by the Agency after satisfactory evidence has been provided by the Company to the Agency that the Renewable Energy System has been installed and is operational.

Commercial Rooftop Solar & Renewable Energy Toolbox

SCIDA is proud to provide this Toolbox to increase Commercial Rooftop Solar and Renewable Energy installations and advance Suffolk County Executive Edward P. Romaine's Solar-Up Suffolk program.

The Toolbox contains information for property owners and businesses to:

- Identify solar developers,
- Locate financial incentives,
- Provide contact information for utilities, and
- Access Town guidelines, where available.



Commercial Rooftop Solar & Renewable Energy Toolbox

Developers

Solar – Commercial Rooftop contractors can be obtained via the NYSERDA link below.

NYSERDA – To locate a regional contractor, enter Suffolk County to retrieve a list of local Commercial Solar Contractors.

[Residential & Small Commercial Solar Contractors – NYSERDA](#)

NYSERDA – Solar & Affordable Housing Incentives

[Affordable Solar and Storage Predevelopment and Technical Assistance – NYSERDA](#)

Geothermal HVAC – Available Contractor

[GEOTHERMAL LONG ISLAND - HOME](#)

[Geothermal Energy - PSEG Long Island](#)

Commercial Rooftop Solar & Renewable Energy Toolbox

Financial Incentives & Resources

Production Tax Credits (PTC) & Investment Tax Credits (ITC)

U.S. Government Production tax Credit (PTC Credits) –

[Clean Electricity Production Credit | Internal Revenue Service](#)

U.S. Government Investment Tax Credit (ITC Credits) –

[Publication 5886 \(Rev. 3-2024\)](#)

- a. Domestic Content Bonus
- b. Energy Community Bonus
- c. Low-Income Community Bonus

New York State – (PACE) Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Financing via (EIC) Energy Improvement Corporation - PACE financing programs use authority given to a municipality to offer financing for property owners to fund energy efficiency and renewable energy projects on existing commercial structures.

<https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Commercial-Property-Assessed-Clean-Energy-PACE-Financing-Resources>

[Energy Improvement Corporation - https://www.eicpace.org/](https://www.eicpace.org/)

PSEG LI, Battery Storage Incentives

[Battery Storage Rewards Program - PSEG Long Island](#)

USDA Rural Energy for America Program

Many, but not all, Suffolk County farms and small businesses from Long Island Expressway (LIE) Exit 68 East may be eligible for this funding

[Rural Energy For America Program \(REAP\) | Rural Development](#)

Suffolk County

There is no Sales Tax on Commercial Solar equipment in the county.

Commercial Rooftop Solar & Renewable Energy Toolbox

Industry Resources

*Cornell Cooperative Extension –
Resource Center*

[Cornell Cooperative Extension | Solar
Energy](#)

*PSEG LI – Resources for
Developers*

[Community Solar - For Developers -
PSEG Long Island](#)

Solar Roadmap –

[Long Island Solar Roadmap – A
collaborative approach to finding
low-conflict sites for solar energy](#)

*Everybody Solar – Help
Nonprofits Obtain Solar*
[Nonprofit Solar Installation |
Everybody Solar](#)

PSEG Long Island

Installing Commercial
Rooftop Solar can be
challenging. Reach out to the
Implementation and
Renewable team with
questions and expert advise.

Bob Boerner

Manager, Program
Implementation & Renewable
Programs

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Commercial Rooftop Solar & Renewable Energy Toolbox

Town Guidelines

Town	What does the Town Code say?	Additional Information
Brookhaven	- Allows for solar collections systems to be permitted as an accessory use on roof and/or ground mounted in all commercial, J Business, J Business 2, J Business 4, J Business 5, J Business 6, L Industrial 1, L Industrial 2, MF, PRC, PRCHC and NH-H Districts. - Includes incentives where the Zoning Board of Appeals can increase the FAR or can grant a relaxation in parking as outlined below: - Solar collection systems as an accessory use in commercial and industrial zones may increase the maximum permitted FAR by 20% by the Board of Appeals. - Solar collection system as an accessory use in commercial and industrial zones may reduce minimum required off- and on-street parking requirements by a maximum of 20%, provided that the applicant can demonstrate that adequate and safe parking will still be provided and that the site is a minimum of three acres. - In the Land Development section of the Code, it states that: - All buildings shall be oriented for rooftop solar energy installation to provide the best opportunities for photovoltaic energy production and passive solar.	Renewable Energy Systems Land Development Standards

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Town Guidelines

Town	What does the Town Code say?	Additional Information
Huntington	• All building permit applications for installation of solar energy panels on residential and non-residential buildings should be expedited. • The Building Department Fee for Solar Panels on Commercial Building is specified. For non-residential uses the solar panel installation fee is \$250.	SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM FAST TRACK PERMIT PROCESS Building Permits
Riverhead	The Building Department Fee for Solar Panels which qualify for a tax credit or tax rebate on Commercial Building is specified. For non-residential uses the solar panel installation fee is \$150.	Administration and Enforcement of Uniform Code
Smithtown	• The installation of solar panels is not subject to Site Plan approval provided the installation complies with other building related requirements identified in Town Code Section 322-78B. • The Building Department Fee for Solar Panels on Commercial Buildings is specified. The Fee for roof-mounted solar panels is: \$13 per panel, not to exceed \$2,100	Site Plan Review
Southampton	• Roof mounted solar energy systems permitted in all Town zoning districts when the primary purpose is for producing electricity for on-site consumption. • In the Riverside Overlay District, under building height restricts there is an exception that allows solar collectors to extend above the maximum height restrictions.	Supplemental Use and Dimensional Regulations
Babylon Islip East Hampton Shelter Island Southold	• Town Codes include solar permitting regulations for residential homes. • Town Codes do not include specific language relating to industrial or commercial rooftop solar installation.	

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