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# **Electric** **VERNON**

*COOPERATIVE – WESTBY, WISCONSIN*

**COMMUNITY SOLAR**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

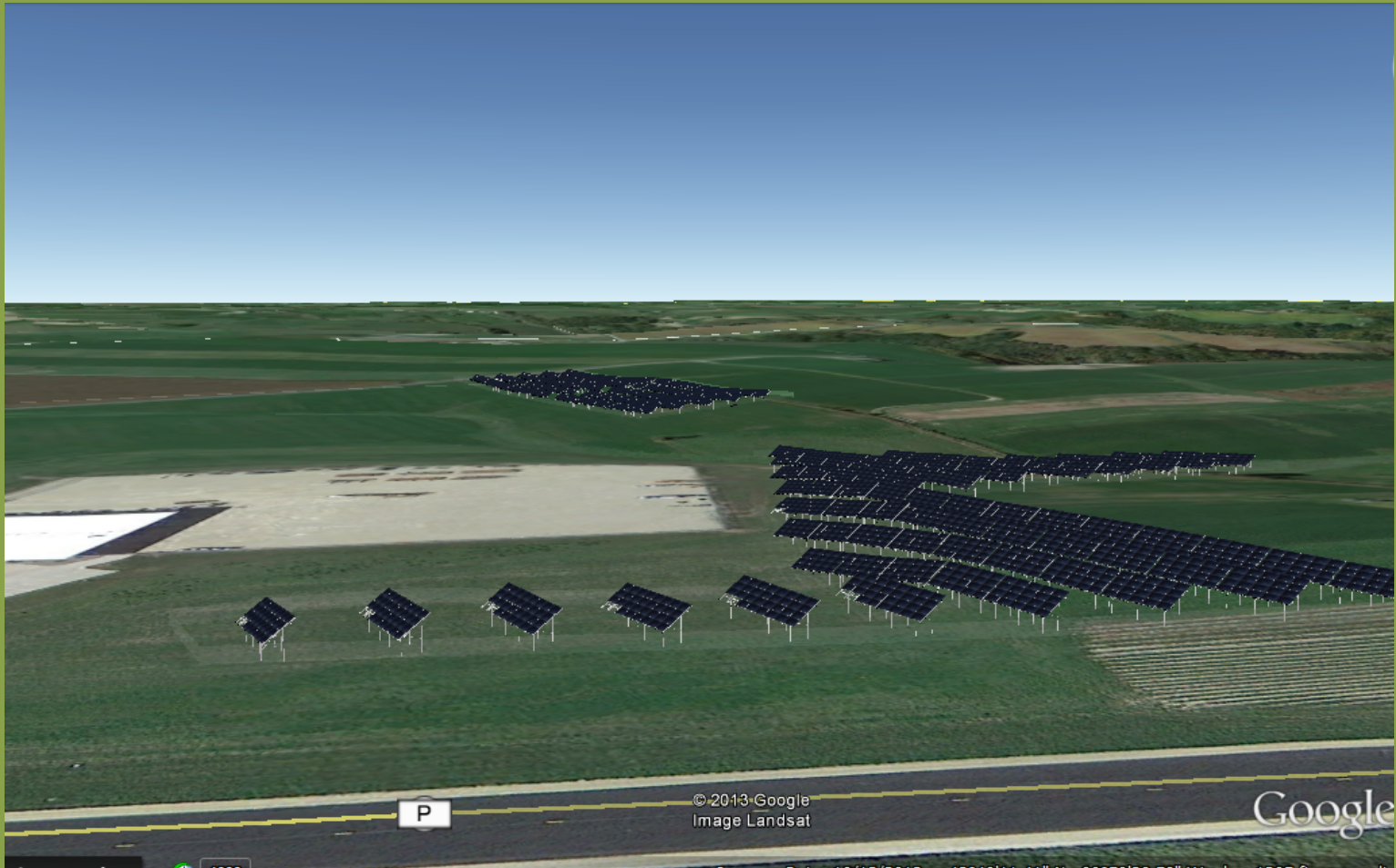
**Customer Service / Communications**

**Technology**

**Rates – Retail rates and Wholesale  
Power Expense**

**Renewable Energy – Trusted experts  
& be fair to all members**

# Solar Array Photo Simulation



# **VEC Solar Projects**

- **Community Solar Project**
- **Chose Clean Energy Collective**
- **Turned into 2 projects**
  - **DPC 500 kW – 60 homes \$1.5 m**
  - **Community Solar Project 305 kW**
  - **VEC get 24 kW (\$70,000) & REC's**
- **No member subsidy (fairness)**
- **No money investment from VEC**
- **Education for all of us**

# Community Solar Farm

**\*\* FAIRNESS \*\***

9.5 cents per kW credit on electric bill

.5 cents per kWh to maintenance escrow account

Paying 3 to 5 cents more than we can buy wholesale from DPC

Make up by demand savings, 80 panels we own, and set up our own Evergreen Fund.

# **VEC Solar Projects**

- **Economies of scale**
- **Upfront revenue**
- **Lower our peak demand**
- **Provide green energy to our members**
- **Allow us to pay less than retail rate – no rate subsidization**
- **Education**
- **Allow more members to own solar**
- **Develop options to members – not for everyone**

# VEC Community Solar Farm

**1,001 305-kW DC (250 AC) solar panels**

**921 for sale to members**

**FIRST COME BASIS!**

**80 owned by VEC**

**\$671 Per panel (\$2.20 watt) cheap!**

**-\$71 Do Watt\$ Right Rebate**

**\$600 Lowest per watt community  
Cost (< \$2 watt)**



# **\$600 Panel**

**One panel – 400 kWh / year estimated  
Paying 10¢ a kWh**

**\$38 year (based on sun, \$3.16 monthly  
credit on electric bill)**

**\$2 escrowed for maint. & insurance**

**Escalation for rate increases**

**12 – 13 year payback**

**6% X \$600 = \$36**

**Estimate life of 25 years**

# WHY COMMUNITY SOLAR

- **Experts**
- **Education**
- **Allow members to own green energy**
- **Hedge against rising electric rates**

**One-time offer until sold out**

# TODAY

- Providing the details and reasons
- Signup sheet – 10% down reservations
- Limit on number of panels
- Online – phone – in person
- Likely to sell out before construction



- **Nation's leading community solar provider:**
  - 33 community solar facilities in 6 states, delivering 10+ MW of capacity (over 40,000 solar panels)
  - Nearest solar facility - Rockford, Minnesota (Wright– Hennipen Co-operative Electric Association)
  - Built nation's first community-owned solar array in 2010 (78 kW)
  - Built nation's largest in 2011 (858 kW) and new largest in 2012 (1.12 MW)

# Lessons Learned

- 10X more complex than I thought
- **Tax, legal, PPA, ....devil in the details**
- Use a renewable energy attorney
- Keep your board informed
- SWOT helped our board and staff
- Work closely with power supplier – get in writing
- Don't set precedents
- Decide how much control you want
- Don't know what the price point is
- Most members ,/ customers love the idea
- Explain why not paying retail rate