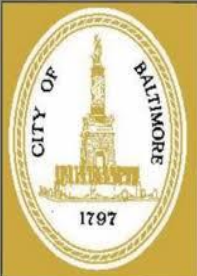


<b>FROM</b>	<b>NAME &amp; TITLE</b>	Jason W. Mitchell, Director	CITY of BALTIMORE  <i>MEMO</i>	
	<b>AGENCY NAME &amp; ADDRESS</b>	Department of Public Works 600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building		
	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>City Council Resolution 22-0106R</b>		

July 15, 2022

**TO:**

Economic and Community Development Committee

I am herein reporting on City Council Resolution 22-0106R introduced by Council Members Burnett, Conway, Porter, Ramos, Bullock, Dorsey, Cohen, Glover, and Middleton.

The purpose of the Resolution is to invite representatives from WeSolar; the Departments of Public Works, Housing and Community Development, Recreation and Parks, General Services, Planning’s Office of Sustainability; the Comptroller; the City Administrator; the State Public Service Commission; and the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company; to brief the City Council on commercial and residential solar farming and to assess how solar farming can benefit the citizens of Baltimore City.

Community solar is defined by the U.S. Department of Energy as “...any solar project or purchasing program, within a geographic area, in which the benefits of a solar project flow to multiple customers such as individuals, businesses, nonprofits, and other groups.”<sup>1</sup> These customers buy or lease portions of panels in a solar array, usually off site, and either receive a credit on their electric bill or receive a bill from the community solar provider and one from the traditional electric utility. Maryland began its 7-year community solar pilot program in 2017.<sup>2</sup> The Maryland Public Service Commission issued regulations and is managing the pilot program. The pilot program has a cap of 418 MW, of which 125 MW is set aside for low- and moderate-income households. The intent is to encourage private investment in the State’s solar industry and to incentivize companies to offer solar to low- and moderate-income households. Finding appropriate locations and sufficient land to support large solar arrays can be challenging in an urban setting. One of the advantages of community solar is that customers can benefit from solar-generated power without having to provide an installation location, or even be in close proximity to the solar generating location(s).

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.energy.gov/eere/solar/community-solar-basics>

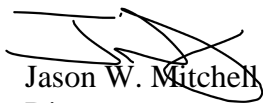
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.psc.state.md.us/electricity/community-solar-pilot-program/>

The Honorable President and Members  
of the Baltimore City Council  
July 15, 2022  
Page 2

The Department of Public Works has two major wastewater treatment plants and three water filtration plants that, due to the complex processes that produce potable water and treat wastewater, require a lot of land and significant power to site and operate these systems. To build resiliency and reduce reliance on the electrical grid for these utilities, a 1 MW solar array was installed at the Back River Wastewater Treatment Plant. In conjunction with the City's Department of General Services, a similar, but slightly smaller installation, is planned to be located at the Montebello Filtration Plant No. 2. The challenge for these utilities is to find sufficient space that can be devoted to solar or other energy producing facilities without conflicting with or limiting the building of future processing and operational needs mandated by federal and State laws and regulations.

The Bureau of Solid Waste has a funded capital project to assess the condition of some of its closed landfills to determine whether these sites, or portions of the sites, would be viable locations for Solid Waste operational facilities, transfer stations, small hauler or residential drop off locations, or waste diversion activities. Recently, State bond funding (\$4 million in FY23, \$3 million in FY24) was approved to provide for a Solid Waste eastside transfer station and a small hauler/residential drop off facility at the Bowley's Lane Landfill. The Bureau currently uses this landfill for recycled goods and bulk trash transfer as well as equipment maintenance and storage. The Department is in discussions with the Department of General Services to determine whether it is feasible to place a solar array at the Monument Street landfill.

While the Department of Public Works does not feel it is the best agency to brief the City Council on commercial and residential solar farming, representatives will attend the hearing on this Resolution to listen to and participate in the discussion on community solar farming. The Department has no objection to City Council Resolution 22-0106R.

  
Jason W. Mitchell  
Director

JWM/MMC