

Public Open House for Chute-à-Blondeau Agrivoltaics

Date: 23rd April 2025 / 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Location: Chute-à-Blondeau Community Centre

Proponent Contact Information:	info@chute-a-blondeauagrivoltaics.ca
Project Name:	Chute-à-Blondeau Agrivoltaics
Maximum Nameplate Capacity:	9.5 MWac
Technology:	Solar Photovoltaics (PV)

PRESENTERS

Compass Greenfield Development

Jonathan Cheszes

James Marzotto

Rim Assaad

Jean-Luc Mainville

AGENDA

The Public Open House provided attendees with the opportunity to view poster boards displaying key Proponent and Project information. The presenting team engaged attendees, responded to their questions, and solicited their feedback on the Project.

Displayed poster boards covered the following topics:

- CGD's Projects in Canada
- Ontario's Power Needs
- What is Agrivoltaics?
- About the Project
- Preliminary Project Design
- Why your Municipality?

- Regulatory & Environmental Compliance/Development Timelines

Please refer to Appendix A for the poster boards displayed at the public open house, which includes the project details. Please refer to Appendix B for photographs of the public open house.

OVERVIEW OF OPEN HOUSE

This meeting was attended by 15+ people. Several participants requested information about the project and its impacts. Some participants raised questions, and some left without concerns. The questions raised during the open house have been summarized below. If you are reviewing these minutes and don't see your concern summarized, please reach out to the project team at: info@chute-a-blondeauagrivoltaics.ca.

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS/CONCERNS

1. Visual Barriers

- What are the impacts of the project on the viewscape? Will there be trees planted as a form of visual screening? What kind of trees will be planted? Will they be native trees? What is the expected height of the trees?*

Compass Greenfield Development ("CGD") is committed to minimizing the visual impacts on neighbours by installing a vegetative visual screen around the site where one does not already exist. We will work with a local arborist to determine the best type of visual screen and depth to be planted for the soil class and topography on site (i.e which tree species is best for the applicable soil and topography).

Trees will be planted such that they are at 10ft at the start of operations with a projection to reach 15ft in 2 to 3 years. (see the "Preliminary Project Design" poster in Appendix A for visual reference). These trees will be maintained as recommended by a local arborist on a regular basis to ensure the screening is effectively maintained throughout the operational term.

- Will trees be planted before construction?*

As part of regular development, the sequence of construction entails initial site preparation which will include planting trees, installing a perimeter fence, and constructing access roads.

- Is grass going to be planted throughout the area?*

CGD will commit to restoring the proposed project site to a native grass based on local consultation.

2. Agrivoltaics Component of the Project

- Some solar farms contain beehives. Would beekeeping be a possible addition to the 'agrivoltaics' component of this project?*

Beekeeping is indeed a possible addition to this proposed project, although the current preliminary design contemplates a pollinator garden only.

- b. What is the purpose of the sheep for this project? Where will the sheep be from? Has CGD already found someone or signed a contract for the sheep grazing?*

The Chute-à-Blondeau project is a proposed Agrivoltaics project. Agrivoltaics is the dual use of land for agriculture and solar generation (see the “What is Agrivoltaics?” Poster displayed at the Open House in Appendix A). The sheep will be used as part of the Agricultural component of the proposed project to maintain the vegetation of the site.

CGD has yet to finalize a contract with a sheep farmer but is in the process of searching for a farmer to graze sheep as part of this project.

3. Property Values

- a. What are the impacts of this project on property value?*

There have been several studies on this topic demonstrating large-scale solar arrays often have no measurable impact on the value of adjacent properties, and in some cases may even have positive effects^{1 2}.

Large solar projects have similar characteristics to a greenhouse or single-story residence. Usually no more than 10 feet high, solar farms are enclosed by fencing and/or landscaping to minimize visual impacts³.

Additionally, there was a comprehensive study looking at 70 solar farms built across the Midwest from 2009 to 2022. The researchers found that, on average, properties located near utility-scale solar farms saw an increase in value of between 0.5% to 2.0%⁴.

4. Benefits of the Project

- a. What benefits do the neighbours of the project site gain?*

A general estimate is that 4-5kW AC of demand generation will power 1 home. So 9MW AC (9,000kW AC) will be able to provide power for roughly 1,800 homes.

¹ [Utility-Scale Solar Farms and Agricultural Land Values | School of Economics](#)

² [What shapes community acceptance of large-scale solar farms? A case study of the UK's first 'nationally significant' solar farm - ScienceDirect](#)

³ [Solar & Property Value – SEIA](#)

⁴ [Midwest Study Finds Solar Farms Don't Hurt Property Values — And They May Even Boost Them - The Good Men Project](#)

Energy demand in Ontario is expected to increase by 75% leading up to 2050. Golden Leaf Agrivoltaics (GLA) energy will contribute to this demand ensuring Ontario's homes, hospitals, educational institutions, factories etc. will have enough power.

CGD will also be committing to an annual \$1,000/MWac Community Benefit Agreement in favour of the County (so \$17,000.00 in the first year).

CGD will also be paying the increased municipal tax base to the municipality which helps to fund local infrastructure.

5. Selection Criteria for the Project Site

- a. *How did you come to choose this property, as opposed to other properties? There must be other properties with less residential impact. Did you investigate other properties?*

In general, this site was chosen because it satisfied several criteria to allow for a solar project in Ontario.

Non-Prime Agricultural Area: The province has restricted ground mount solar development on Prime Agricultural Areas as defined in the Provincial Policy Statement. This proposed agrivoltaics project is located on land designated as outlined in the United Counties of Prescott and Russell Official Plan.⁵

Electrical Capacity: The 44-kilovolt distribution line that is close to the project has capacity for the project.

Willing landowner: The landowner is willing to host the project and is supportive of ongoing agricultural activity in site such as sheep farming in parallel to solar.

Agrivoltaics: The project will be able to host an agricultural component amongst the solar array (agrivoltaics). CGD will partner with a sheep flock that would graze amongst the panels.

Supportive Official Plan: The United Counties of Prescott and Russell supports the development of renewable energy projects as the Official Plan outlines that the Counties shall "*Promote development, design and building orientation which maximize the use of alternative or renewable energy, such as solar and wind energy*"⁶.

6. Preliminary Project Design

- a. *Where would the placement of the chainlink fence be? Would there be a fence around the entire property? Where is the fence shown in the preliminary design layout? Is it possible to snowmobile through the site where there is a gap in the fence?*

⁵ [UCPR Official Plan](#)

⁶ [UCPR Official Plan](#)

Vegetative screening will be planted on the property line, fences will be on the inside of the perimeter screening. This was presented on the “Preliminary Project Design” poster in Appendix A.

The proposed project holds a lease on the proposed parcel that allows for the installation and operation of this proposed Agrivoltaics project.

7. Environmental Impacts of the Project

- a. *What are the impacts of solar and the electromagnetic fields on the ground and the microbes? Has this been studied?*

Based on current research, shading from PV panels can promote the co-occurrence of certain soil microbes but may inhibit the abundance of others. The presence of solar panels can stimulate vegetation growth and increase soil organic carbon content, positively contributing to carbon storage and potentially benefiting microbial habitats⁷.

- b. *Will there be any noise as a result of the project?*

Inverters and Transformers have cooling fans (like computers) which emit noise. This equipment will be sited to ensure our project complies with the provincial regulations on noise and our equipment will be selected to ensure we meet noise limitations as outlined by the Ministry of the Environment’s “Environmental Noise Guideline – Stationery and Transportation Sources – Approval and Planning (NPC-300) for Class 3 receptors”. These guidelines are differentiated for urban vs. rural environments and have different standards for noise between day and nighttime.

8. Project Timeline

- a. *What is the length of PPA?*

The IESO offers a 20-year PPA Term for those proponents that are selected as part of the LT2 Window 1 Procurement process. For more information on LT2 Window 1 Procurements please visit the IESO website found here: [Long-Term 2 RFP](#).

9. Health and Safety Concerns

- a. *Do solar panels and the radiation they emit cause cancer?*

⁷ [Frontiers | Potential benefits and risks of solar photovoltaic power plants on arid and semi-arid ecosystems: an assessment of soil microbial and plant communities](#)



There is no scientific evidence to suggest that solar projects increase the risk of cancer to nearby communities.^{8 9}

While solar power systems, especially inverters, emit low-frequency electromagnetic fields (EMF), the levels are far below those that would be considered harmful. EMF exposure from solar projects is much weaker than that from common household appliances, power lines, or cell phones. Research has not shown a link between low-frequency EMF exposure and cancer.¹⁰

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) has indicated that “No mechanism by which ELF-EMFs or radiofrequency radiation could cause cancer has been identified. Unlike high-energy (ionizing) radiation, EMFs in the non-ionizing part of the electromagnetic spectrum cannot damage DNA or cells directly.” Additionally, the NCI states that “Studies of animals have not provided any indications that exposure to ELF-EMFs is associated with cancer.”¹¹

⁸ [Does living near Solar Farms make you susceptible to Cancer? What does Research Say About it? | Health News, Times Now](#)

⁹ [Can Solar Panels Cause Cancer? - Your Energy Answers](#)

¹⁰ [Are electromagnetic fields from solar farms harmful to human health?](#)

¹¹ [Electromagnetic Fields and Cancer - NCI](#)

APPENDIX A – POSTERS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMUNITY MEETING

WELCOME

TO THE PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE FOR

CHUTE-À-BLONDEAU

AGRIVOLTAICS



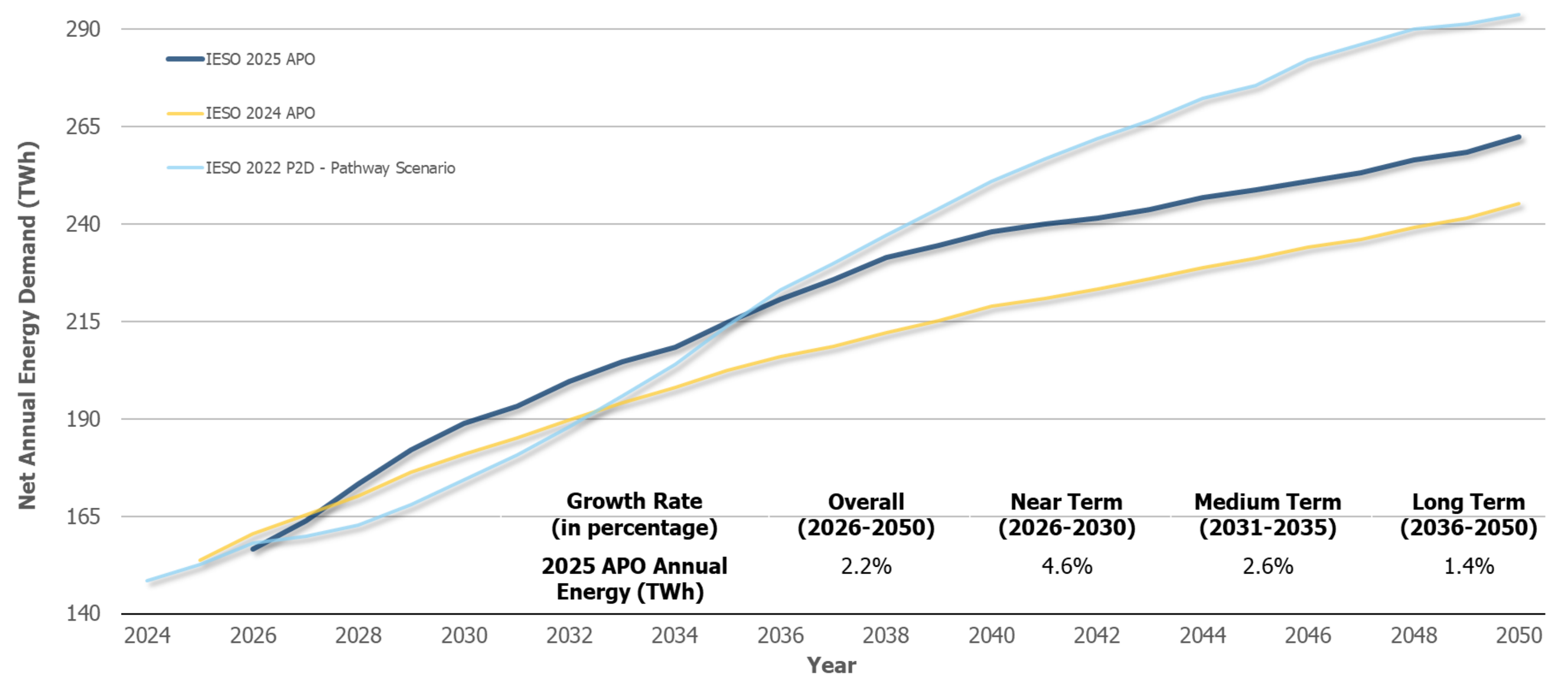


In October 2024, Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) updated its demand forecast for Ontario and indicated that it is anticipating a 75% increase in energy demand between 2025 and 2050.



Annual Energy Demand by Forecast

75% Demand Growth by 2050



What is Causing this Growth?

- Large increases in demand in the near and medium term
- Industrial sector and data centre growth are the primary drivers of new demand
- Industrial electric vehicle production and supply chain sub-sector
- Commercial sector growth, increasing population, and electrification are also continuing to escalate electricity demand across the province.

What is Agrivoltaics?

- Agrivoltaics is dual use of land for agricultural and solar generation activities.
- Agrivoltaics is already common in Ontario, where sheep are used on several projects to maintain the vegetation on solar farms.
- The Solar Projects fenced area provides protection for the flock and the panels provide shade, while the sheep maintain the vegetation.

CGD's Commitment to Agrivoltaics

Phase 1: Sheep Grazing

Sheep grazing on open fields in Eastern Ontario and amongst solar arrays.



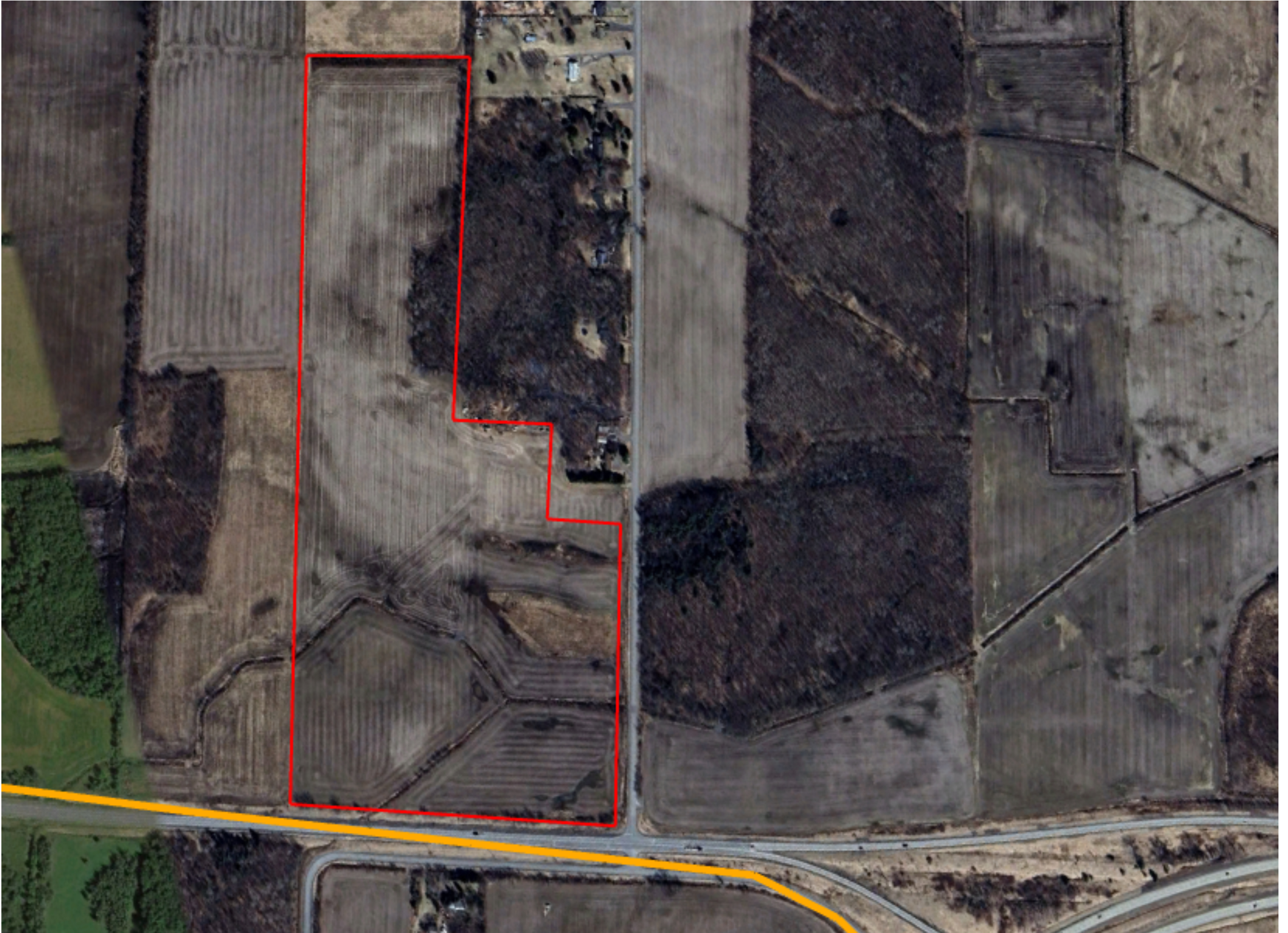
Phase 2: Crop Production

The field of agrivoltaics continues to advance. Soil and water resource dependent, CGD is committed to establishing crop production at Chute-à-Blondeau agrivoltaics over the life of the proposed project.

Learn More
About Agrivoltaics



About the Proposed Project



- Parcel Boundary
- Distribution Connection Line

Project Name
Chute-à-Blondeau Agrivoltaics

Developer
Compass Greenfield Development

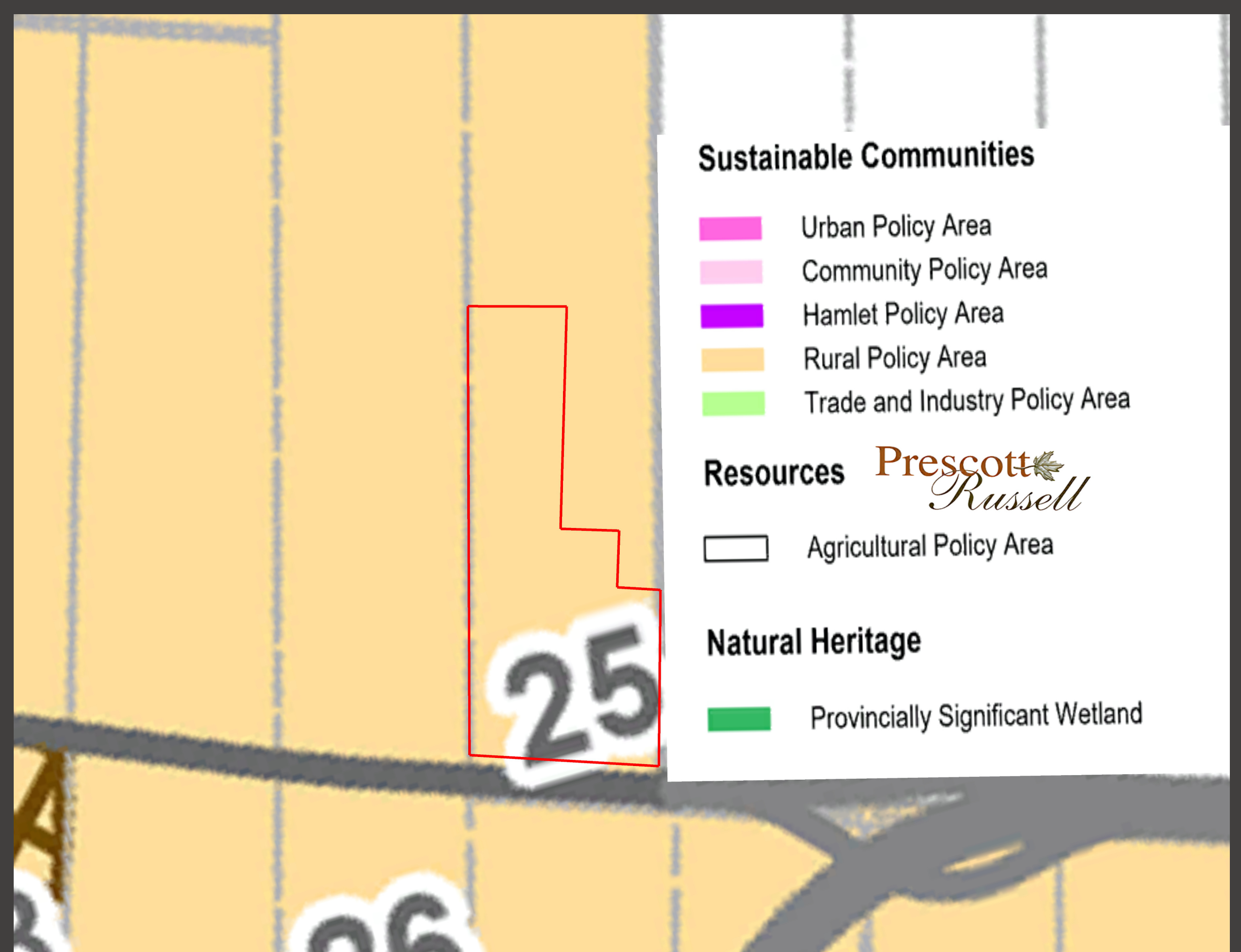
Max Name Plate Capacity
Approx. 9.5MWac

Property Identification Number (PIN)
54186-1019

Technology
Solar (Agrivoltaics)

Main Intersection Location
Hwy 17 & Gourley Road

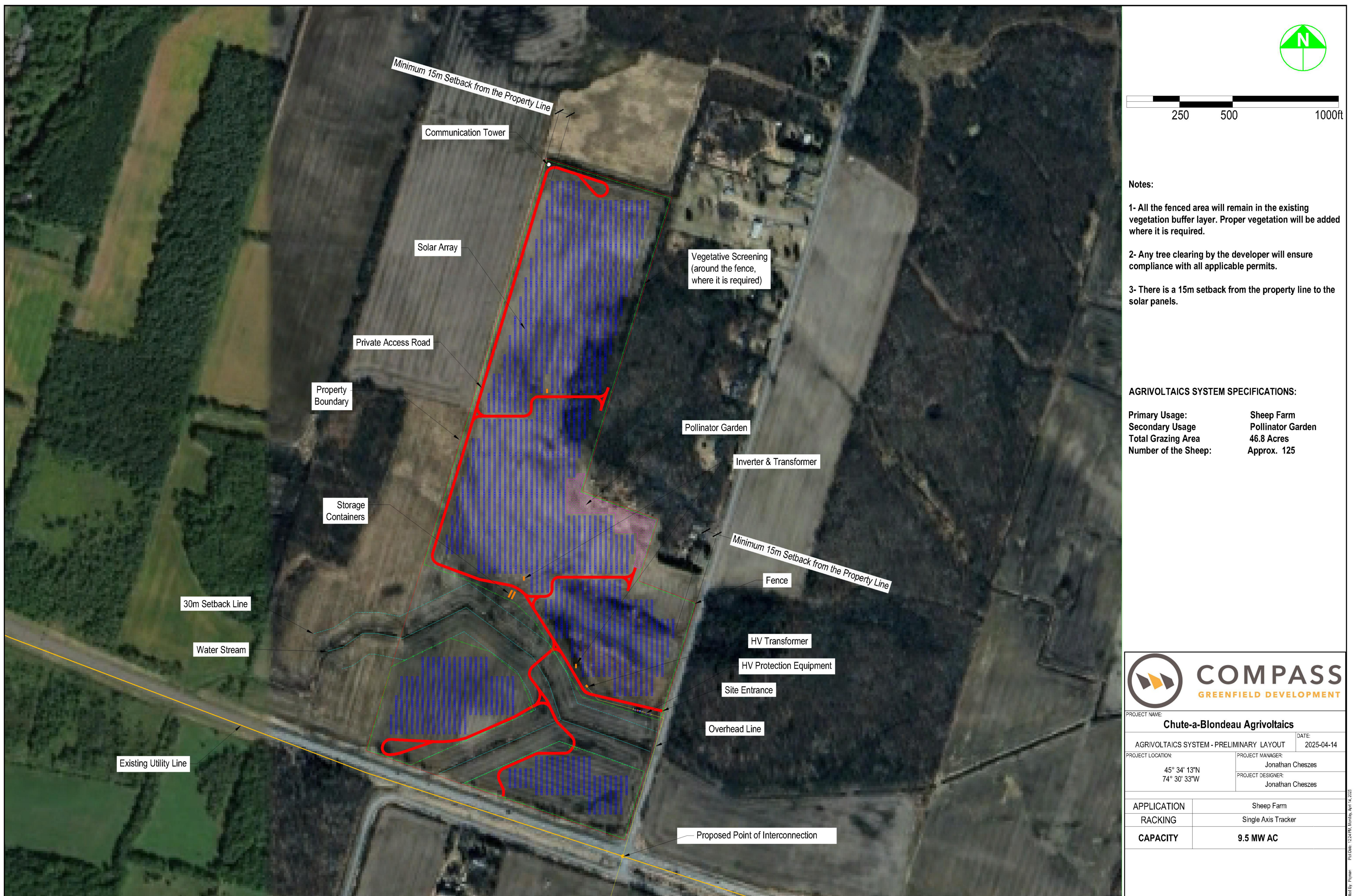
Official Plan Designation



Project Website
chute-a-blondeauagrivoltaics.ca

Contact
info@chute-a-blondeauagrivoltaics.ca

Preliminary Project Design



Racking Foundations

Steel piles are screwed into the ground. At decommissioning, piles can be removed, and the land use is returned to its prior state.

Racking Design and Spacing

Rows are typically 25 feet apart. The racking will either be fix-tilt or tracking.

Footprint Size

Up to 59 acres.

Visual Screening

Commitment to add vegetative buffer along perimeter where it doesn't already exist.

Security

Project is fenced in and locked.

Operations

Project is 24/7 remote monitored and controlled. Operations and maintenance contractors are locally based in Ontario. Scheduled site visits occur 4 times a year.

Interconnection

The solar system is connected to the Hydro One distribution grid.



Why your Municipality?



The Township of East Hawkesbury's Energy Management Plan states it "aspires to show leadership in the promotion and development of renewable energy systems that are compatible with our asset management and land use planning objectives."



United Counties of Prescott and Russell

The United Counties of Prescott and Russell Official Plan states it shall:

"Promote development, design and building orientation which maximize the use of alternative or renewable energy, such as solar and wind energy"



Community Benefits

Optimize Land use

Sheep grazing will be implemented while solar generation is added.

A stronger local energy grid

Distributed connected energy generators add to a municipalities electrical grid resiliency.

Job creation, local economic stimulus

Construction will lead to a creation of jobs. On-site activity will boost the revenues of local business.

Community Benefit Agreement (CBA)

CGD will commit to an annual payment of \$1,000 / MWac to the municipality. CGD will pay for any third-party costs incurred by the municipality to support this project.

Diversified income stream for local landowners

Keep landownership within your municipality.

Increased tax based for the municipality

Regulatory Compliance

Compass Greenfield Development has made careful note of the regulatory bodies that it must engage to secure the permits and approvals.

- The Township of East Hawkesbury
- Hydro One
- Ontario Ministry of Energy and Electrification
- Independent Electricity System Operator
- Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
- Local Conservation Authorities
- Electrical Safety Authority

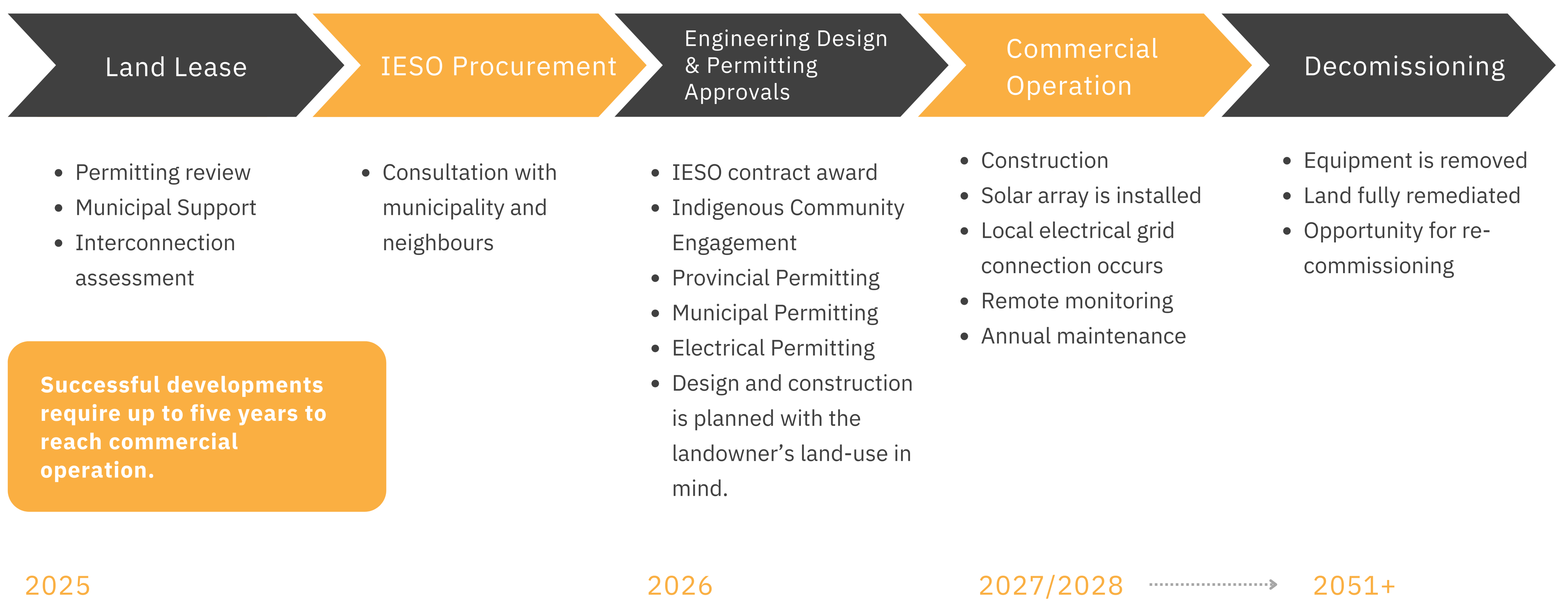


Environmental Compliance

Compass Greenfield Development is committed to the health and safety of the communities we develop in and work with regulatory bodies to obtain and comply with permits, as such we will thoroughly study:

- Species at Risk
- Wetland and Watercourses
- Sound Emissions

Development Timeline



Successful developments require up to five years to reach commercial operation.

CGD's Projects in Canada



Ontario



Saskatchewan



In total, Compass has over 50 MW of solar and battery storage operating, under construction or contracted, and an additional 500 MW in early stages of development in ON and SK.

10 + years Experience in Energy Development in Ontario

- An industry leader in renewable and clean energy development across Ontario.
- We have developed over 100 renewable energy projects in Ontario representing over 100 megawatts (MW) in the last 6 years
- Track record of success with principles that designed and launched Ontario's renewable and clean energy procurements in the public sector.
- Awarded six projects representing over 45 MW/200 MWh of battery energy storage in the last two IESO Procurements.



APPENDIX B – PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMUNITY MEETING



