

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
NEPA DETERMINATION



RECIPIENT: [City of Chicago](#)

STATE: [IL](#)

PROJECT TITLE : [Chicago Libraries Solar Power Project](#)

Notice of Funding Opportunity Number

Procurement Instrument Number
[DE-EE0010771](#)

NEPA Control Number
[GFO-0010771-002](#)

CID Number
[GO10771](#)

Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Policy 451.1), I have made the following determination:

CX, EA, EIS APPENDIX AND NUMBER:

Description:

[B5.1 Actions to conserve energy or water](#)

(a) Actions to conserve energy or water, demonstrate potential energy or water conservation, and promote energy efficiency that would not have the potential to cause significant changes in the indoor or outdoor concentrations of potentially harmful substances. These actions may involve financial and technical assistance to individuals (such as builders, owners, consultants, manufacturers, and designers), organizations (such as utilities), and governments (such as state, local, and tribal). Covered actions include, but are not limited to weatherization (such as insulation and replacing windows and doors); programmed lowering of thermostat settings; placement of timers on hot water heaters; installation or replacement of energy efficient lighting, low-flow plumbing fixtures (such as faucets, toilets, and showerheads), heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, and appliances; installation of drip-irrigation systems; improvements in generator efficiency and appliance efficiency ratings; efficiency improvements for vehicles and transportation (such as fleet changeout); transportation management systems (such as traffic signal control systems, car navigation, speed cameras, and automatic plate number recognition); development of energy-efficient manufacturing, industrial, or building practices; and small-scale energy efficiency and conservation research and development and small-scale pilot projects. Covered actions include building renovations or new structures, provided that they occur in a previously disturbed or developed area. Covered actions could involve commercial, residential, agricultural, academic, institutional, or industrial sectors. Covered actions do not include rulemakings, standard-settings, or proposed DOE legislation, except for those actions listed in B5.1(b) of this appendix.

(b) Covered actions include rulemakings that establish energy conservation standards for consumer products and industrial equipment, provided that the actions would not:

1. Have the potential to cause a significant change in manufacturing infrastructure (such as construction of new manufacturing plants with considerable associated ground disturbance);
2. involve significant unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (such as rare or limited raw materials);
3. have the potential to result in a significant increase in the disposal of materials posing significant risks to human health and the environment (such as RCRA hazardous wastes); or
4. have the potential to cause a significant increase in energy consumption in a state or region.

[B5.16 Solar photovoltaic systems](#)

(a) The installation, modification, operation, or decommissioning of commercially available solar photovoltaic systems:

1. Located on a building or other structure (such as rooftop, parking lot or facility, or mounted to signage, lighting, gates, or fences); or
2. Located within a previously disturbed or developed area.

(b) Covered actions would be in accordance with applicable requirements (such as land use and zoning requirements) in the proposed project area and the integral elements listed at the start of appendix B of this part, and would be consistent with applicable plans for the management of wildlife and habitat, including plans to maintain habitat connectivity, and incorporate appropriate control technologies and best management practices.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to administer Congressionally Directed Spending to the City of Chicago (Chicago) to design, develop, and install rooftop solar photovoltaic (PV) systems and implement energy conservation measures at two public library locations. The locations, listed below, are city-owned buildings:

1. Thurgood Marshall Library, 7506 S Racine Ave, Chicago, IL 60620;
2. West Chicago Library, 118 W Washington St, West Chicago, IL 60185; and
3. Northtown Library, 6800 N Western Ave, Chicago, IL 60645.

Proposed activities would include installing rooftop solar PV systems up to 300kW, with some roof upgrades and maintenance performed as needed. Additionally, HVAC retrofits would occur and energy efficient LED lighting would be installed.

The proposed installation would involve commercially available solar PV arrays and racking systems being added to the existing roof spaces. The HVAC system retrofits and lighting efficiency retrofits would utilize existing rooms and utility corridors, and no ground disturbing activities would occur. No change in the use, mission, or operation of existing facilities would arise out of this effort.

DOE does not anticipate any impacts to resources of concern due to the proposed activities of the project. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) website identifies the Piping Plover, Rufa Red Knot, Whooping Crane, Eastern Massasauga, Hine's Emerald Dragonfly, Rusty Patched Bumble bee, Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid, and Leafy Prairie-clover as species that may be present within the project range. No critical habitats are identified within the proposed project area. Because project activities would occur on existing buildings and would not involve ground disturbance, DOE has determined no effect to these species.

Buildings are not older than 45 years of age, and thus do not meet the minimum criterion for potential eligibility under the historic registry. Additionally, solar PV arrays and racking systems would be installed on the Northtown Library in such a way that they would not be visible from the nearby historic district, and thus would cause no visual impact or line of sight issues.

Potential hazards include fall risks due to working on rooftops and lighting installation, and electrical hazards. Standard safety practices would be followed at each facility. All required permits, licenses, and authorizations would be acquired by the project developer prior to construction activities.

DOE has considered the scale, duration, and nature of the proposed activities to determine potential impacts on resources, including those of an ecological, historical, cultural, and socioeconomic nature. DOE does not anticipate impacts on these resources which would be considered significant or require DOE to consult with other agencies or stakeholders.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Notes:

Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO)
Review completed by Alex Colling on 6/10/2026.

FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATIONS

The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix B to 10 CFR Part 1021 or Appendix B and C of DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures (June 30, 2025). To fit within the classes of actions listed in Appendix B to 10CFR Part 1021, or Appendix B of DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures, a proposal must satisfy the conditions that are integral elements of the classes of actions in Appendix B of both 10 CFR Part 1021 and DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposed action has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____



Electronically
Signed By: **Nicole Serio**

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 6/10/2026

FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION

- ☒ Field Office Manager review not required
- ☐ Field Office Manager review required

BASED ON MY REVIEW I CONCUR WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE NCO :

Field Office Manager's Signature: _____

Field Office Manager

Date: _____