

City Colleges of Chicago – Response to Illinois Solar for All Comment Request

Hello IPA,

City Colleges of Chicago has a project on the Illinois Solar for All Waitlist at Olive-Harvey College, located in an environmental justice community and in a lower income section of Chicago.

In reviewing the scoring for projects under consideration posted at <https://www.illinoisfa.com/announcements/2021/08/rank-scores-posted/>, I would like to highlight some unique aspects of the Olive-Harvey College project that are not fully reflected in the scoring criteria and hope that you will take these items for additional consideration as you decide whether to fund the remaining waitlisted projects before starting a new procurement.

Our intention is to use this solar PV array as a teaching resource for solar PV installation and renewable energy programming at Olive-Harvey College. We've been running solar PV installer classes at City Colleges for the last three years, starting with the first cohort at Olive-Harvey College in Fall of 2018. Since then, we've run a cohort at Dawson Technical Institute and three more cohorts at Humboldt Park Vocational Education Center. The array will be used as a teaching tool for utility scale solar PV system design, monitoring, and maintenance. The solar PV class will be offered for credit, and part of a larger offering of sustainability related technological classes. Our recently completed transportation center will host electric vehicle trainings, and our on-campus wetland and greenhouse under construction will house our urban agriculture programming.

There are worthy applications of these funds in other waitlisted projects that should all be funded before allocating funds to new procurement opportunities, including projects that raise awareness of solar technology, reduce monthly billings for front line non-profit service providers, and empower local M/WBE contractors (of which all also apply to the Olive-Harvey project). Olive-Harvey College is unique in using these funds to ensure a pipeline of workforce training that has a clear path towards accreditation, articulation, and career readiness.

Thank you for your consideration, and with your help, we look forward to training future solar PV industry leaders right here in Chicago.

Sincerely,

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