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Community Solar In Carroll County *Community Solar Energy Generating Systems, or CSEGS*

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Introduction

Maryland's Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard was enacted in 2004 to decrease the state's reliance on fossil fuels and increase the amount of energy generated by renewable sources, such as solar. Energy suppliers are required to provide 25 percent of their energy sales from Tier 1 (renewable energy). In 2015, the Maryland

Solar-Related Acronyms

- CSEGS = community solar energy generating systems
- 🔅 kW = kilowatt (1,000 watts)
- kWh = kilowatt hour
- 🌣 MW = megawatt (1,000,000 watts)
- PSC = Public Service Commission
- PV = photovoltaic (generating energy from the sun)

General Assembly passed legislation to begin the process of allowing community solar energy generating systems (CSEGS, or "community solar") and establishing subscriber organizations. The intention was to increase access to solar energy particularly for residents who could not install solar on their property due to physical or financial constraints.

As a follow up to its previous work to incorporate solar uses into the Zoning Code, the Carroll County Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) researched community solar to determine how it fits into the current zoning and regulatory framework in Carroll County. This report is intended to provide information to assist the Board of County Commissioners in determining if the current regulatory framework is consistent with the policies and directions the Board would like to take regarding community solar or if further action should be pursued or investigated. This document outlines the concept of CSEGS; how they fit into the regulatory frameworks at the Federal, State, and County Level; the advantages and disadvantages associated with further changes to County regulations to expand or enable, depending on the district, the use of CSEGS; and possible next steps for the Board to consider if it desires to further look into access to community solar. The purpose of this report is not to provide the Board with a specific policy recommendation.





What is Community Solar?

Broadly speaking, a community solar project is a solar power generating station whose electricity is shared by more than one household or customer.

'Community solar' can refer to both 'community-owned' projects as well as third partyowned plants whose electricity is shared by a community. The primary purpose of community solar is to allow members of a community the opportunity to share the benefits of solar power even if they cannot or prefer not to install solar panels on their property. Project participants benefit from the electricity generated by the community solar farm, which costs less than the price they would ordinarily pay to their utility. Community solar allows people to go solar even if they do not own property on which to put their own system. (EnergySage. "Community Solar: What Is It?" Retrieved April 20, 2018, from https://www.energysage.com/solar/community-solar/community-solar-power-explained/)

Community solar business models increase deployment of solar technology in communities, making it possible for people to invest in solar together. Shared solar falls under the community solar umbrella, allowing multiple participants [to] benefit directly from the energy produced by one solar array. Shared solar participants typically benefit by owning or leasing a portion of a system, or by purchasing kilowatt-hour blocks of renewable energy generation. (Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy. Community and Shared Solar. Retrieved April 10, 2018, from https://energy.gov/eere/solar/community-and-shared-solar.)



https://news.energysage.com/virtual-net-metering-what-is-it-how-does-it-work/)





Maryland's Community Solar Pilot Program

The Maryland General Assembly passed legislation (Senate Bill (SB) 398/House Bill (HB) 1087) in 2015 to allow community solar projects as part of a three-year pilot study. This State law defines a CSEGS as a solar energy system that:

- Is connected to the electric distribution grid serving the state;
- Is located in the same electric service territory as its subscribers;
- Is attached to the electric meter of a subscriber or is a separate facility with its own electric meter;
- Credits its generated electricity, or the value of its generated electricity, to the bills of the subscribers to that system through virtual net energy metering (see "Net Metering" below for more information);
- Has at least two subscribers;
- Does not have subscriptions larger than 200 kilowatts (KW) constituting more than 60 percent of its subscriptions;

According to ElectricityLocal.com, the average Maryland home uses about 1,005 kWh/month or 12,060 kWh/year. A number of sources, such as SolarPowerRocks.com, indicate that the average panel in Maryland will produce about 1,250 kWh of energy per year per kW of solar panel. At this rate, an average Maryland home would need 10 kW to produce all of the energy needed in a year (12,060,000). Hence, a 2 MW array, or 2,000 kW, divided by 10 kW/household equals roughly 200 households per 2 MW array.

- Has a generating capacity that does not exceed 2 megawatts (MW), as measured by the alternating current rating of the system's inverter; and
- May be owned by any person.



The Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) approved regulations to establish a community solar pilot program in Maryland on June 15, 2016. The regulations went into effect on July 18, 2016. The three-year pilot program allows subscriber organizations, which own and/or operate the CSEGSs, to apply and implement a program. If approved by the PSC, CSEGSs are limited to 2 MW of electrical output. The PSC began accepting

applications in April 2017 for the pilot program, which is anticipated to conclude in 2020. Following the completion of the pilot, the commission will evaluate the merits of the program becoming permanent. For people who subscribe to a community solar project, the tariff will remain active as long as they are a subscriber, or 25 years, whichever comes first.





According to the PSC,

the community solar pilot program will:

- Provide access to solar-generated electricity in a manner similar to rooftop solar and net metering for all Maryland customers without requiring property ownership;
- Incentivize solar companies to provide service to low- and moderate-income customers;
- Set aside program capacity for each area of the state with a statewide cap at about 193 MW. About 60 MW is set aside for projects focused on low and moderate-income customers;
- Attract new investment in Maryland's renewable infrastructure and green economy;
- Allow renters to contract for solar energy with the same benefits as rooftop owners;
- Create separate program capacity for small systems and systems built on brownfields, parking lots, or industrial areas;
- Allow smaller and rural service territories to make use of existing solar facilities while encouraging construction of new systems in the urban and suburban areas of Maryland;
- Include significant consumer protections, including prohibition against unreasonable fees and clear contract disclosure requirements; and
- Allow the Commission Staff to collect necessary data to study the impact on Maryland's electricity grid over the three-year pilot program.

Individual community solar projects will be operated by subscriber organizations (which can include utilities, retail electricity suppliers, solar developers, etc.) that are approved by the Public Service Commission and the electric company serving the location of each project. (Maryland Public Service Commission. Community Solar Pilot Program. Retrieved March 13, 2018, from http://www.psc.state.md.us/electricity/community-solar-pilot-program/.)

According to SB 398/HB 1087 (MD, 2015), the installations approved/installed during the pilot program will be allowed to continue operation, and the electric company shall continue to facilitate operation of the system similarly after the pilot program ends.

Community Solar in Other States

Many states, including Maryland, have instituted policies that encourage innovative solar programs. Currently, sixteen states plus the District of Columbia have enacted policies to govern and support shared solar projects, and many more are considering programs to expand consumer access to shared clean energy. (Shared Renewables. USA Shared Energy Map. Retrieved May 7, 2018, from http://www.sharedrenewables.org/.) All of the state policies require the solar array and subscribing members to be located in the same utility service area. States vary though in defining group ownership benefits, such as determining a system capacity size, proof of partial ownership, or limits on the type of ratepayers that can participate. Billing methods also vary. Some programs offer a total bill for the entire group; others assign a prorated credit on each member's bill.





Community Solar in Carroll County

Chapter 158, Zoning, of the Carroll County Code defines solar energy conversion facilities and specifies how they can be used. (See the accompanying sidebar for a definition of *Solar Energy Conversion Facilities* and *Solar Energy Conversion Facilities, Accessory* that can be found in the Carroll County Code.)

The Code addresses the requirements for solar energy conversion facilities in §158.153. Solar energy conversion facilities are permitted as a principal or accessory use in all Business and Industrial zoning districts. Roof-mounted systems are allowed in the Business-Neighborhood Retail district, but not groundmounted systems. The panels may be roofand/or ground-mounted in the Industrial districts and in the Business General district. In all Residential, Agricultural, and Conservation zoning districts, solar facilities are only permitted as an accessory use and may be roof- and/or ground-mounted.

The Carroll County Code does not provide a specific definition for CSEGS. As a commercial use, under the current Code, CSEGS would be permitted in the Business and Industrial zoning districts. However, CSEGS would not be permitted in districts in which they are only permitted as an accessory use. Specific language within the definitions could prevent or restrict many of the typical use-cases.

Note that Planning staff, in coordination with Land & Resource Management staff, is comprehensively reviewing and updating the Zoning Code. As a proposal has not yet been presented to the Board or adopted as of the date of this report, requirements or revisions in the proposed Commercial, Industrial, or other districts could potentially change the current permitted uses and where they are allowed.



Carroll County Code Definitions

Solar Energy Conversion Facilities – An area arranged and dedicated to the construction, collection system principally used to capture solar energy and convert it to electrical energy. Large scale solar energy conversion facilities consist of free-standing ground based or roof mounted collection devices, associated panels and arrays and/or aggregations of panels and arrays, supporting equipment, including light reflectors, concentrators, heat exchangers, substations, utility interconnection infrastructure, electric infrastructure, transmission lines, battery banks and related structures and facilities. In such instances, the use is considered the "principal" use on the subject property and any other use on the site shall be subordinate. SOLAR ENERGY **CONVERSION FACILITIES** are designed to supply power at the utility level, rather than on-site or to a local user. These facilities are intended to generate electricity to be sold, for profit, to an electricity market through a regional transmission organization and an inter-connection with the local utility power grid and/or for direct distribution.

Solar Energy Conversion Facility, Accessory – A solar collection system consisting of one or more roof and/or ground-mounted solar collection devices and associated supporting equipment that is primarily intended to reduce on-site consumption of utility power by generating electricity solely for the use and/or benefit of the individual property owner upon whose property the device is situated. A system is considered an "accessory" facility only if it supplies power strictly for on-site use, except that when a property upon which the facility is situated also receives electrical power supplied by a utility company, incidental excess power generated, and not immediately utilized for on-site use, may be provided to the utility company in exchange for a credit. (§158.002 DEFINITIONS, Chapter 158, Zoning, Carroll County Code of Public Local Laws & Ordinances)



Net metering is "a solar incentive that allows you to store energy in the electric grid. When your solar panels produce excess power, that energy is sent to the grid and in exchange you can pull from the grid when your system is underproducing like during nighttime." (EnergySage. "Net Metering for Home Solar Panels." Retrieved June 7, 2018, from

Types of Net Metering



Source: Institute for Local Self-Reliance. Retrieved 2018-Jun-29 from <u>http://www.ncsl.org/Portals/1/HTML_LargeReports/SolarToolkit_2.htm</u>.

<u>https://www.energysage.com/solar/101/net-metering-for-home-solar-panels/</u>.) The customer is billed the *net* amount of the total electricity used from the grid. Utility companies use three different types of net metering to provide credit/value for the excess energy produced by solar energy generating facilities: **conventional, aggregate, or virtual** (see sidebar).

"Virtual net metering is the vehicle Maryland is using for its three-year community solar pilot program. Once the pilot ends, the Public Service Commission will make recommendations to the legislature for future virtual net metering legislation." (Solar United Neighbors. "Net Metering in Maryland." Retrieved April 10, 2018, from

https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/maryland/learn-the-issues-in-maryland/net-metering-in-maryland/.)

Types of Net Metering

- **Conventional** net metering connects an energy generating source to a single meter on a house or building. This is used for residential accessory systems.
- Aggregate net metering allows the power to be shared amongst several meters on one or more properties, as long as all of the properties are paid by the same customer. Currently, Maryland law (COMAR 20.50.10.07) offers aggregate net metering for agricultural customers, non-profit organizations, and municipal or county government customers. (National Conference of State Legislatures. "State Net Metering Policies." Retrieved April 10, 2018, from http://www.ncsl.org/research/energy/net-meteringpolicy-overview-and-state-legislative-updates.aspx.)
- Virtual net metering expands conventional net metering beyond a single customer. It allows net metering credits from one or more solar energy conversion facilities to be spread across multiple accounts.

Aggregate Net Metering Example The County is in the process of installing three solar projects within the county to serve County facilities and reduce the County's electric costs – located at Carroll Community College, Hampstead Wastewater Treatment Plan, and Hoods Mill Landfill. As an example of aggregate net metering, the total load gets applied to the County's three highest billed facilities.







Community Solar Structure or Ownership

According to the U.S. Department of Energy's *Guide to Community Solar*, community solar ownership can be structured in several different ways, each with distinct costs, responsibilities, and benefits. Primary factors that vary between the different structures include allocation of costs and benefits, financial and tax considerations, and other legal issues. Community solar projects that might be proposed fall into three categories:

- 1. Utility, where a local utility company owns or operates the project;
- 2. **Special purpose entity (SPE)**, where a business entity, such as a partnership or limited liability corporation, owns the project; or
- 3. **Non-profit**, where the project is financed through tax-deductible charitable contributions to a qualified non-profit organization.

(U.S. Department of Energy (2010, November). *Guide to Community Solar*. Retrieved April 3, 2018, from <u>https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy11osti/49930.pdf</u>.)

Ownership/Structure

Utility – In this structure, a local utility company owns or operates the project. Customers participate by paying either an up-front amount or an ongoing payment (subscription). In exchange, customers receive a payment or credit on their electric bills that is proportional to 1) their contribution and 2) how much electricity the solar project produces. Usually, the utility company or an identified third party owns the solar system itself. The participating customer has no ownership stake in the solar system. Rather, the customer buys rights to the benefits of the energy produced by the system. A customer may choose to enter into an agreement with a local utility company to purchase energy produced by a specific solar installation at a specific rate for a specific period of time to serve as a hedge against rising energy prices in the future.

- Special Purpose Entity (SPE) A SPE is generally structured as a participant-owned community solar project in the form of a business entity, such as a partnership or limited liability corporation. Organizers may self-finance the project or partner with a tax-motivated investor in order to take advantage of tax incentives available to commercial solar projects. Depending on specifics of the SPE financing conditions, the participating customers would benefit from the power generated by the project, though the ownership status may change over time.
- Non-Profit In this model, the project is financed through tax-deductible charitable contributions to a qualified non-profit organization. The system could be used on-site with virtual net metering benefits conveyed to others or donated entirely to another entity, such as a school or church.





Community Solar Availability to Consumers

Along with a variety of ownership structures, CSEGS may be available to consumers in a number of different venues. Some examples include, but are not limited to:

- New residential developments that incorporate community solar installation into their design on shared space;
- Existing developments that may retrofit community solar installation into their design on shared space;
- New business parks/shopping centers that incorporate community solar installation into their design;
- Existing business parks/shopping centers that may retrofit community solar installation into their design;
- A non-profit, such as a school or church, with an installation designed to service multiple properties; and
- Non-profit energy assistance groups with projects dedicated to low- to moderate-income residents.

Venues available to consumers will depend on what is permitted by zoning in a given area, as well as the subscriber organizations available in that area.

Benefits of Encouraging Community Solar Projects

In addition to environmental benefits derived from reduced dependency on fossil fuels, the increased utilization of abundant solar energy in Carroll County can provide other benefits to residents, businesses, and the County government. Access to community solar power can provide:

Economy

- Monetary savings derived from efficiencies of scale of larger solar installations;
- More consumer options, thereby increasing competition in the marketplace, and economic benefits to consumers through lower prices and increased innovation;
- A greater integration amongst county businesses, civic organizations, and residents;
- Potential to increase the number of solar industry jobs in the county plus additional tax revenue from the construction of solar projects;
- Benefits to participant-owners from tax incentives, the sale of renewable energy credits produced by the facility, greater energy security, and a higher rate of return on investment/participation costs;
- Opportunities that could serve to attract or retain businesses and residents that desire competitive energy pricing or prefer environmentally conscious options offered by community solar, thereby remaining competitive with other counties in securing associated tax revenue and economic vitality;





Costs

- Lower price of producing electricity, the savings from which could be directed to sectors of a region that would benefit the most;
- Generally lower maintenance costs for solar farms;
- Project cost savings ranging anywhere from 4 cents to 24 cents per kiloWatt hour (kWh);
- Potentially faster home sales for those homes equipped with clean energy systems;
- A payback period that exceeds the length of the contract; (In Maryland, the payback period could range from 12 to 16 years for rooftop solar, but this could be different for a community solar project.);

Residents

- No upfront costs;
- Potential for immediate savings;
- Access to solar energy and monetary savings for residents who otherwise might not be able or willing to install a photovoltaic (PV) system, such as renters or those with densely wooded properties;
- A more environmentally conscious, renewable energy option for residential customers;
- An attractive feature for potential home-buyers and sellers where SPE-sponsored projects are established as part of new subdivisions or redevelopment;
- Ability for non-profit sponsored projects, such as installation of a CSEGS at a church, school, or community center, to benefit residents directly and indirectly;
- Non-profit energy-assistance projects that provide lower cost energy to low- and moderateincome county residents;
- Offer rural service territories to take advantage of lower solar facility rates;

Environment

- Environmental conservation by use of a renewable energy which emits no carbon and is attractive to the growing environmentally conscientious population; and
- A lower carbon footprint for the county as a whole through reduction in dependency on fossil fuels.

Opportunities and Challenges to Encouraging Community Solar Projects in Carroll County

Despite the many benefits of encouraging or promoting community solar and access to it, certain challenges and potential barriers must be considered as well. Nevertheless, a holistic approach must be taken when determining possible impacts and outcomes of a decision to expand access opportunities. A balanced approach would consider consequences in other areas as well.

Maryland allows a maximum of 193 MW to be generated through CSEGS *statewide*, with a maximum of 2MW per facility. A 2MW facility would cover roughly **6 to 10 acres** of land. Estimates for the number of homes this might serve varies widely, but generally falls within **200-500 homes**.





In Carroll County, commercial solar ventures in the Agricultural and Conservation zoning districts were not included as permitted uses to achieve the County's goal of maintaining agriculture as the county's primary economic industry, and the County's subsequent significant investment in the Agricultural Land Preservation Program to facilitate its farmland preservation goal and heritage. This position was supported by the Agriculture Commission and the Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board.

Consequently, Carroll's most significant barrier to expanding where CSEGS could be located is the current limitation of the use of community solar to the Business (commercial) and Industrial districts, where the sale of energy for use off-site is a permitted use.

However, based on approximate acreage needs of 10 acres per 2 MW facility, roughly 46 properties zoned for Business or Industrial use might have land area available for ground-mounted CSEGS construction as of June 2018. Additional properties may be available to host CSEGS facilities if installed on rooftops, as more than one principal permitted use is allowed on a property. Therefore, since it is not the goal to serve every property with community solar, under current County zoning requirements, availability of buildable land in the Business and Industrial zoning districts to accommodate a full 2 MW-facility should not be a barrier. The number of 2 MW CSEGS are limited to 193 MW statewide, and further capped for each utility company.

That being said, CSEGS could compete with other businesses for available buildable/vacant land. If land values are conducive to CSEGS development, it could create the challenge of taking valuable commercial and industrial land out of the inventory for other businesses and economic development. If, at some point, the demand for land for CSEGS development exceeds the county's ability to accommodate both CSEGS demand and other economic development, additional land for both uses may be needed. If community solar installations prove sufficiently profitable for investors, land value within the Business and Industrial zones could theoretically increase to the extent that it becomes unaffordable to some current lessees.

The County Code does not address ownership. However, ownership and structure may impact determination of the use as commercial or accessory, which would also impact where a CSEGS may be allowed. *Since commercial solar facilities are already permitted in the Business and Industrial districts, the ownership structure would not impact that ability to install a CSEGS in these districts.*

Based on the current County Code and the definition of CSEGS, a CSEGS would not fit the intended purpose of the Residential zoning districts. The current accessory definition would restrict virtual net metering of a community solar facility in Residential districts. A community solar facility installed on land commonly owned by an HOA would still be considered a commercial use if it only serves the homes within that HOA ownership. It should be noted, however, that the zoning requirement only impacts the ability to construct a CSEGS facility in a Residential zoning district. *The zoning requirements do not prohibit a residential energy customer located in a Residential zoning district from subscribing to a community solar facility that is located elsewhere. A*





residential customer can subscribe to any CSEGS that is located within the same utility service area, even if it is in another county.

Non-profits most expected to apply to be a subscriber organization are those that provide energy assistance or promote solar or sustainable energy. Given the definition of an accessory solar energy conversion facility, a non-profit-sponsored facility would be considered a commercial use as well and would be limited to locating in the same areas as a utility-owned sponsor.

Cost and Cost Savings to Community Solar Energy Consumers

Because of the diversity of types of community solar projects and a lack of consistency among study approaches, there is a huge disparity in the determination of savings from distributed solar generation projects. Consumer savings depend on the cost of the solar subscription compared to the credit value received from the utility company. Savings can include the value of solar community energy costs

According to the US DOE, distributed generation is the term used when electricity is generated from sources, often renewable energy sources, near the point of use instead of centralized generation sources from power plants.

versus the increasing costs of utility prices in general. Studies in general show that solar power provides a substantial public benefit because it reduces electricity prices due to the displacement of more expensive power sources. (<u>https://www.brookings.edu/research/rooftop-solar-net-metering-is-a-net-benefit/#</u>)

- Utility rates will likely continue to rise in specific increments over time, given the past trend. According to the *Guidebook to Assessing Benefits and Costs of Distributed Solar Generation* by the Interstate Renewable Energy Council, project cost savings vary from 4 to 5.5 cents per kWh in one study to 21 to 24 cents per kWh in a study sponsored by the solar industry.
- According to EnergySage (<u>https://www.energysage.com/</u>, April 10, 2018), for every \$1 saved on energy costs, the value of the home increases by \$20. Additional studies have shown that homes equipped with clean energy systems sell twice as fast and at a higher price (3-4%) than similar homes in the same area. However, the correlation between home values and energy savings and systems can vary nationwide. These numbers may be different for Maryland.

Potential Options to Address Community Solar Access in Carroll County

Several options for promoting community solar in Carroll County and potentially expanding access to CSEGS could be considered by the Board of County Commissioners. However, *expanding permitted commercial (principal) use of solar to the Agricultural, Conservation, and Residential zoning districts is not included for consideration, given previous and current policy direction to limit commercial solar operations in the Commercial and Industrial zoning districts.*





With this in mind, options to promote access and remove unintended barriers to community solar include minor revisions to address structure and ownership, as well as public outreach. More than one option could be pursued.

- 1. <u>New Zoning Definition and Provisions for CSEGS</u>: A new definition for CSEGS could be added to \$158.002 and provisions incorporated to \$158.153 Solar Energy Conversion Facilities.
 - a. Language to specifically allow virtual net metering could be incorporated to the definitions to ensure that community solar would not otherwise be precluded. (Virtual net metering is not expressly prohibited. It is the commercial sale for use by another property.)
 - b. CSEGS could be added as an allowable use in appropriate zoning districts.
 - c. While principal use (commercial) CSEGS may already be permitted in Business and Industrial districts, additions or changes to the definition could clarify that construction of non-profit principal use CSEGS is included as a permitted commercial use.
 - d. Alternatively, defining CSEGS as a specific, individual use and subsequently listing it in zoning districts where it would be permitted, may give the Board more flexibility regarding where and how these types of uses should be permitted.
- 2. <u>Community Solar as Accessory for HOAs</u>: The accessory definition of solar energy conversion facilities could be amended to incorporate virtual net metering for CSEGS installed on commonly owned property within a HOA and that serves only those properties which are HOA members or common property owners. Additional stipulations and conditions would need to be considered to address issues that may be impacted, such as open space requirements and percentage of active or passive recreation required of that open space.
- 3. <u>Community Solar in Employment Campus</u>: Solar energy conversion facilities are not currently permitted in the Employment Campus district. Revisions to this district could allow solar facilities, whether as commercial, accessory, or community solar facilities, on rooftops and/or in parking lots as parking canopies.
- 4. <u>Solar Canopies in Parking Lots</u>: The current zoning text could be amended to allow solar canopies in parking lots. Not only does this create an opportunity for additional areas for CSEGS, it also provides several other benefits:
 - Additional economic use for parking areas,
 - Shading for vehicles,
 - Shading for the pavement, reducing ambient air temperature, and
 - Charging stations for electric or hybrid vehicles.





Possible Next Steps if the Board Moves Forward to Encourage or Expand Community Solar Opportunities in Carroll County

With the Maryland PSC Pilot Program underway and nearing completion, the policy landscape regarding community solar installations may soon be shifting. If the Board desires to expand opportunities to develop community solar or raise awareness of its availability, the County will need to be prepared.

- Public Outreach Materials: Develop public outreach materials to raise awareness of county residents and businesses of community solar and the State's pilot program.
- Code Amendment: Board direction to research and recommend language to amend the Code to incorporate CSEGS as needed to accomplish the Board's direction, with possible subsequent direction to move forward with drafting an ordinance to amend the Code. This could include any or all of the following (in no particular order):
 - 1. Draft a definition of CSEGS to add to Chapter 158, Section 002 Definitions;
 - 2. Determine if and how specific mention of virtual net metering needs to be added;
 - 3. Recommend language to allow HOAs to install a CSEGS on common property managed by the HOA for the benefit the HOA members;
 - 4. Recommend language to allow solar canopies over parking lots and parking structures; and/or
 - 5. Recommend language to allow community solar projects in the Employment Campus, along with the specific circumstances in which that could happen.

Since the current County Zoning Code does not restrict residents and businesses in the county from subscribing to any community solar project in their utility's service area, this opportunity is open to those customers.

After several CSEGSs have been established, the Board may have more information available to determine if additional opportunities are actually needed based on the demand in Carroll County for development of commercial solar arrays in the county and the availability of community solar subscriptions for Carroll customers. Having any of these options ready to move forward would allow the Board to take action more quickly at that time.

