



### Case File No. 21-0029 Medtronic Solar Project



Blaine Planning Department / 10801 Town Square Dr NE / Blaine, MN 55449 / (763) 785-6180











## Medtronic Solar Project TC Solar MV LLC

# Medtronic

## **Conditional Use Permit – City of Blaine**

PIN 053023120035

**APRIL 7<sup>TH</sup>, 2021** DAN ROGERS JULIAN WHITE

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## **OVERVIEW**

TC Solar MV LLC on behalf of Nokomis Energy and Medtronic, Inc. submits this application for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to the City of Blaine Planning Commission for a Photovoltaic Ground 1MW Solar Energy System under the City of Blaine Zoning Ordinance Chapter 31.34, for a system located in the Heavy Industrial(I-2A) District. A code amendment has been requested concurrently with this item to allow for ground mounted solar arrays as an accessory use by conditional use permit in the Heavy Industrial(I-2A) District. The project site plans, and project renderings are attached.

TC Solar MV LLC will consist of approximately 3,300 panels on roughly 7 acres of vacant land directly east of the Medtronic Mound View Campus. This solar array is expected to operate on the property in the interim for 20 years, with the ability for Medtronic to extend the contract OR buy out the project and have it removed at any time during the term. Once operating, this project will deliver over 2,000MWh of clean, local energy annually to the Campus facility with only the sun as feedstock, equaling over 20% of the Campus' annual electric needs. Any excess energy that is not consumed by the building, will be sent back into the electric grid and used within the community.

The Solar Garden consists of steel driven posts embedded in the ground, with solar modules attached to the top of the posts, tracking the sun east to west throughout the day, sitting approximately 10-ft off the ground at the highest point. This project utilizes silicon based solar panels which have an anti-glare coating. There are no hazardous materials in the system, and no noise other than typical transformer humming would be present within the fence. We have proposed to enclose the system with a 7-foot-tall fence to restrict access to the system from unqualified personnel. The site will be accessible at the northwest corner through a locked gate on a 14' wide driveway. The cover plantings inside the footprint of the system will be a combination of low growth native crops and a seed mix that promotes pollinator friendly habitats consistent with MN Stat. 216B.1642 as required. A preliminary cover crop mix blend is attached, along with example planting plan.

3<sup>rd</sup> Party Engineering has been commissioned to perform wetland, hydrology, historical, ecological and an environmental survey to ensure the site is suitable for development. Construction is targeted to occur between Oct 2021 to June 2022. Proposed working times would be between the hours of 7am-7pm on Monday thru Friday. Weekend work may take place if there are significant project delays due to weather. These hours are flexible and we intend to work with the community to control noise and disturbance. A more detailed construction schedule can be made available to the City as needed.

An Operations and Maintenance contractor will be hired by TC Solar MV LLC. This team would consist of an electrician, as well as a groundskeeper to ensure the system is operating safely and the landscaping is properly maintained. Each would independently visit 3-6 times a year depending on necessity. While onsite, the technician checks equipment for proper operation. While onsite, the groundskeeper mows, manages vegetation, and verifies storm water management is properly working. A Maintenance Plan is included for more detail.

## **MAINTENANCE PLAN**

TC Solar MV LLC will have a long-term maintenance plan to ensure safety, reliable operation, and production of the system. Monitoring and metering equipment installed on site will alert the maintenance team in real time of a system performance issue. Maintenance teams are required to have proper safety plans and equipment in place to perform all work. Details of the plan are finalized at construction once final system design is complete. The final plan for the site can be requested at any time after construction. Maintenance of systems can be broadly defined in two categories:

#### Preventative Maintenance

The following items are performed on a routine basis.

- Mechanical checks one to two times per year a technician visits the site. While on site the technician checks bolts and piers for any loosening or corrosion. When an issue is discovered a set of corrective actions is defined, executed and a full report is logged.
- Electrical checks one to two times per year a technician visits the site. While on site the technician checks the major electrical components (panels, inverters, safety switches) and connections to ensure proper working order. When an issue is discovered a set of corrective actions is defined, executed and a full report is logged.
- Groundskeeping three to six times per year a technician visits the site. While onsite, the technician mows, manages vegetation, and verifies storm water management is properly working.

#### **Reactive Maintenance**

Monitoring equipment and preventative maintenance are used to identify potential system safety and performance issues. Once an issue is identified a technician is assigned to the issue and corrective actions are executed.



Rendering of project looking from the MDT rooftop

## Table 2 - List of Commonly Performed Operations and Maintenance Activities

ltem	Activity
Monitoring	On-going tracking and verification of system performance, weather and equipment alerts.
Grounds Keeping	Manage all vegetation including mowing. Maintain all vegetative screening.
Solar Module Inspection	Inspect for cracks and general damage. Inspect for dirt, vegetation and other potential shading issues. Perform electrical checks for proper performance characteristics. Cleaning will utilize only water from a sprinkler/hose head.
Racking & Mounting Inspection	Inspect for damage, corrosion and loose connections.
Inverter Inspection & Maintenance	Inspect for corrosion and general damage. Confirm proper ventilation and environmental seals. Inspect all electrical connections and wires coming into and out of the units. Complete manufacturer recommended maintenance activities.
DC Electrical Inspection	Inspect DC runs from solar panels to inverters for damaged/loose wires and debris.
AC Electrical Inspection	Inspect AC runs from inverter to switchgear for damage/loose wires and debris.
Switchgear Inspection	Inspect switches for proper functionality. Inspect connections for appropriate torque. Inspect latches and environmental seals.
Monitoring Inspection	Inspect existing monitoring systems for functionality. Complete manufacturer recommended maintenance activities.
System Repair	Perform all necessary work as determined by inspections.
Warranty Administration	Administer defective components and file warranty claims.



Nokomis 1MW Project

#### Wetland Delineation

TC Solar MV LLC has discussed the project with the Rice Creek Watershed District. No potential wetlands are present on within the project; however, we will still be submitting to the RCWD and USACE for no loss determination. This will be received prior to commencement of construction.

#### Decommissioning & Site Restoration

TC Solar MV LLC commits to both our neighbors and permitting authorities that we will decommission and restore the site at the end of the system's serviceable life or if the system becomes a discontinued use. The project owner will be responsible for all costs associated with decommissioning.

All equipment will be removed within one (1) year from the day the system is no longer in service or discontinued. A system shall be considered out of service at the end of the CSG's useful life unless a plan is submitted to the City of Blaine Board of Commissioners outlining the steps and the schedule for repowering the system.

Once initiated, decommissioning will occur within a period of sixty (60) days. Removal of modules, inverters, wiring, electrical equipment, racking and foundations, fencing, underground wires and conduit and concrete pads will be removed and recycled or disposed of in a suitable manner. After all equipment is removed, the Project site will be restored to a condition comparable to its pre-construction use if the Project site will once again be used for agricultural. If holes are created when infrastructure is removed, they will be back-filled and covered with topsoil. Unless requested otherwise, permanent access roads constructed on the Project will be removed.



#### About Medtronic

Medtronic plc (www.medtronic.com), is among the world's largest medical technology, services and solutions companies – alleviating pain, restoring health and extending life for millions of people around the world. Medtronic employs more than 90,000 people worldwide, serving physicians, hospitals and patients in more than 150 countries. The company is focused on collaborating with stakeholders around the world to take healthcare Further, Together.

Medtronic recently committed to achieving zero net carbon emissions by FY2030, including obtaining more than 50% of their energy from renewable sources by FY2025. This project represents one of a number of large, clean energy projects Medtronic is investing in to support their sustainability goals.

#### About Nokomis Energy

Nokomis Energy is a Minneapolis based energy developer with a mission to accelerate local energy adoption through equitable partnerships. We specialize in understanding the full development process from origination, to technology, to long-term operation. Through a combination of development and consulting services we use distributed energy to deliver economic and social benefits to local communities.

## Thank you for your consideration!