



# Little Prairie Solar Project

Champaign County, IL

Zoning Use Case: 144-S-24

Env. & Land Use Committee: April 10, 2025





## Team Introductions



**David Holly**

BayWa r.e. Development Manager



**John Crosby**

BayWa r.e. Senior Permitting Manager



**Patrick Fitzgerald**

Meyer Capel Local Counsel







# Project Highlights



Up to **135 megawatts (MW)** of renewable energy



Proposed project includes up to **135 MW** of accessory **battery energy storage**



Increase of an est. **\$18 million** in **property taxes** to Champaign County compared to taxes under existing **Ag Use**



Will support an est. **176 jobs** in **Champaign County** during peak construction



Enough electricity to power approximately **35,505 American homes** \*



Champaign County can continue to be a **leader in the regional landscape** by investing in a diversified power generation portfolio



\* Calculation Source: Clean Power Annual Market Report | 2023 | American Clean Power



# Development Timeline



| 2022  | 2023  | 2024   | 2025 to 2028  | 2029  |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Preliminary Site Analysis</li><li>■ Land Partnerships</li><li>■ Interconnection Application</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Land Partnerships</li><li>■ Interconnection Study</li><li>■ Preliminary Design Analysis</li><li>■ Site Research &amp; Study</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Public Outreach</li><li>■ Stakeholder Outreach</li><li>■ Site Diligence Studies</li><li>■ Local Event Participation</li><li>■ Interconnection Study</li><li>■ Special Use Permit</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Special Use Permit</li><li>■ Offtake</li><li>■ Interconnection Study</li><li>■ Interconnection Agreement</li><li>■ Zoning Use Permit Review</li><li>■ Procurement</li><li>■ Construction Kick-off</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Construction Completion</li></ul> |



# Community Engagement Activities

- 3/21/2024 - Tailgate meeting for Prairie Solar 1 and Little Prairie Solar projects held at Witt park in Sidney
- 5/15/2024 - Little Prairie project notification letters from BayWa r.e.
- 8/16/2024 - Second Little Prairie project notification letters (after SUP submission and prior to ZBA hearing) from BayWa r.e.
- 8/20/2024 and 8/21/2024 - In-person meetings with adjacent landowners
- 9/16/24 - Tax Abatement Agreement with Heritage School Board
- 9/19/2024 - Project Open House
- 11/7/2024 - Battery Storage Safety Webinar (recording shared on project website)
- Constant coordination with Sidey Fire, hosting future BESS safety training, Response Plan finalization, continued site tours














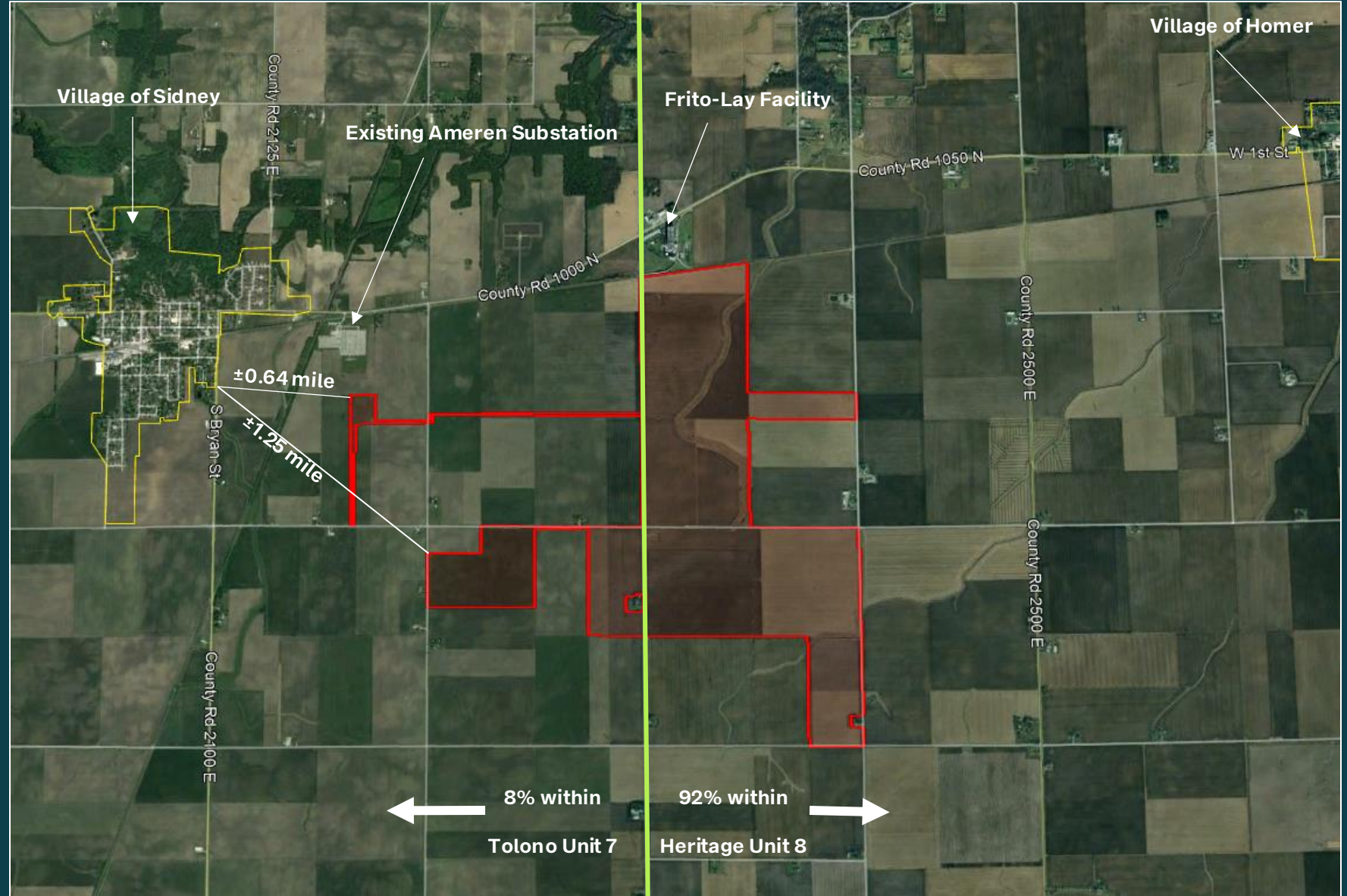
# Project Location

## LEGEND

-  Little Prairie Solar Project Boundary
-  School District Boundary

## Project Specifications

-  Project Boundary: 1,047.0 acres
-  Total PV Array Acres: 655.8
-  PV Array Fenced Acres: 785.4
-  Total BESS Acres: 4.1
-  BESS Fenced Acres: 6.8





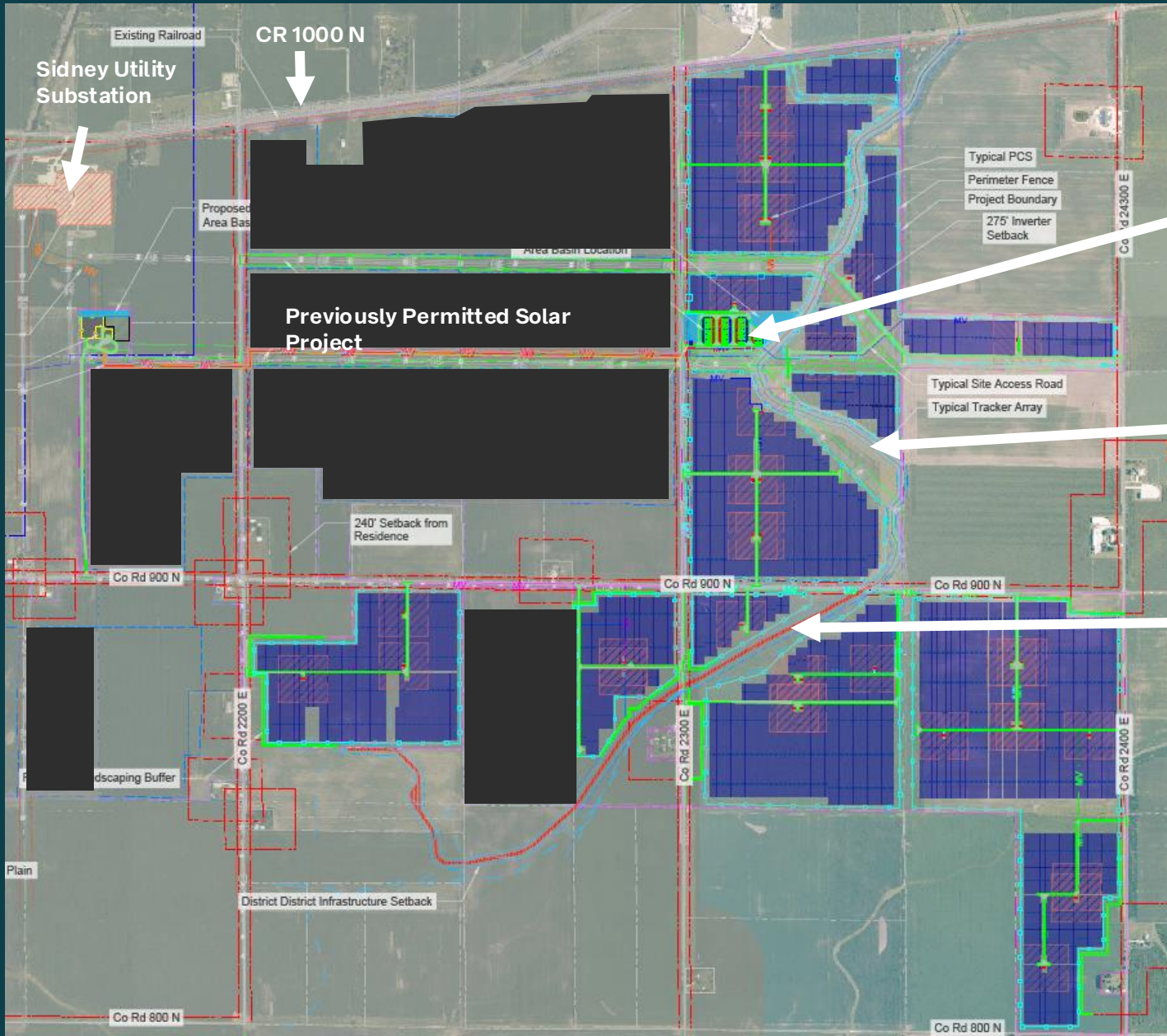


# Conceptual Project Site Plan

## March 7, 2025 Revision

**LEGEND**

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | Project Boundary / Special Use Permit Boundary |
|  | OE Existing Overhead Line                      |
|  | Existing Easement                              |
|  | Existing Railroad                              |
|  | Existing Contours                              |
|  | HV High Voltage Line                           |
|  | Proposed Fence                                 |
|  | MV Proposed MV Cable                           |
|  | 0.5 Mile Sidney Village Municipal Setback      |
|  | 65' Road Setback                               |
|  | 10/20' Side and Rear Setback                   |
|  | 20' Fence Setback                              |
|  | 50' District Drain Tile Setback                |
|  | 75' Overhead C/L Setback                       |
|  | 240' Setback from Residence                    |
|  | 275' Inverter Setback                          |
|  | Solar Array                                    |
|  | Access Roads                                   |
|  | Proposed Landscape Buffer                      |
|  | FEMA Flood Plain                               |
|  | Project Substation                             |
|  | PCS Station (35)                               |
|  | Prairie Solar 1 - Permitted SUP in 2019        |



Accessory Battery Storage Facility

Avoiding & Buffering Open Drainage Ditches

Avoiding & Buffering Underground Drainage Lines

Setbacks and Vegetative Screening Buffers Throughout per the Zoning Ordinance Requirements

### Project Specifications

- Project Boundary: 1,047.0 acres
- PV Array Fenced Acres: 765.5
- BESS Fenced Acres: 6.8





# BESS Fire Safety

## Coordination with Sidney Fire Protection District



Prepared a Draft Hazard Mitigation Analysis



Prepared a Draft Emergency Response Plan



Continued coordination - site tour and future ERP training



Sidney Fire consulted with IL Fire Service Institute (IFSI) - no revisions or suggestions recommended



Approves of proposed SUP BESS conditions in concurrence letter prepared for the ZBA



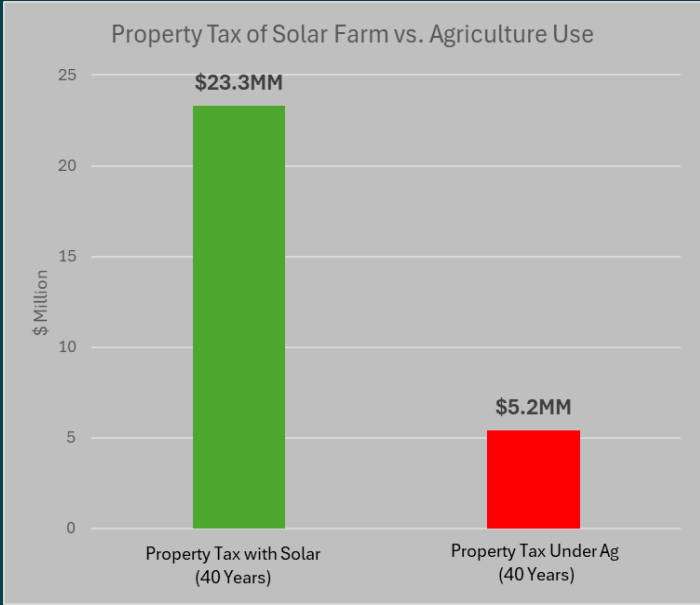


# Solar is a Passive Neighbor and a Strong Contributor

- **Low Operational Impact on County Services, Roads, and School District Resources**
- **Passive Land Use Throughout Operations**
- **Temporary Land Use**
- **Increased Property Tax Revenues**
  - Delta of **+\$18MM** of projected property tax revenue over 40 years from a passive solar farm compared to existing agriculture use

| Taxing Jurisdiction      | Year 1           | 40 Years            |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| County Govt.             | \$113,197        | \$3,041,355         |
| Sidney TWP               | \$29,048         | \$780,451           |
| Sidney Road & Bridge     | \$50,834         | \$1,365,789         |
| Sidney Fire Protection   | \$32,638         | \$876,915           |
| Forest Preserve District | \$14,510         | \$389,861           |
| Parkland College 505     | \$72,525         | \$1,948,579         |
| Heritage CUSD #8         | \$522,212        | \$13,954,152        |
| Tolono CUSD #7           | \$36,598         | \$983,303           |
|                          | <b>\$871,562</b> | <b>\$23,340,405</b> |

\*Projections inclusive of tax abatement agreement with Heritage CUSD #8 jurisdiction



\*Total projected taxes to County inclusive of all taxing jurisdictions

\*Source: SER Economic Analysis report; dated DEC 2024



# Little Prairie Solar Complies with Zoning Ordinance

## Summary of Findings

- Facility will be in compliance with all Illinois Pollution Control Board sound regulations.
- Facility will accommodate all drainage tile requirements.
- Landscaping goes above and beyond requirements
- Coordination has been conducted with local fire department.
- All protected wildlife, archeological resources, and environmentally sensitive areas have been avoided.
- Setbacks from Adjacent Residences are met with exception of one inverter with a reduction of 50 feet.







## Requested Waivers

Three (3) waivers approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals:

#1

Roadway Upgrade & Maintenance Agreement: Execute with relevant local highway authorities after consideration of the SUP and prior to a zoning use permit application

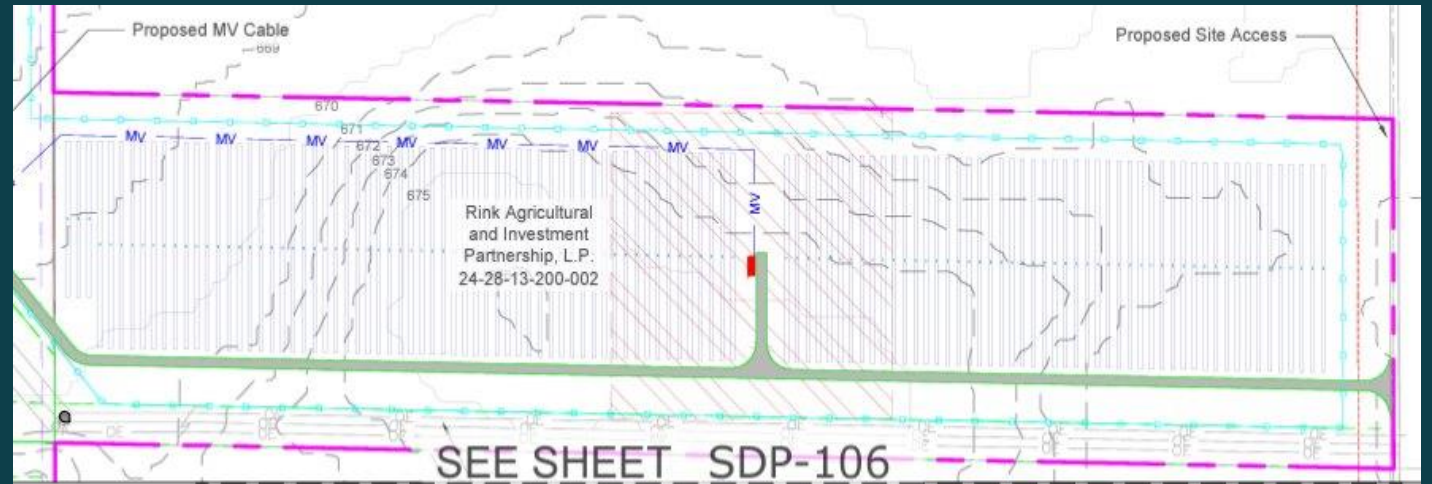
#2

Proximity to Village Boundary: Locate the project less than 1.5-mile of the Village of Sidney Municipal Boundary - farther than previously approved solar project

#3

Inverter Setback Adjustment: Requesting a 225-foot setback (in lieu of 275 feet) from one solar inverter to the fence line on Parcel ID: 24-28-13-200-002

Note: Nearest structure is located more than 2,000 feet away





# Preliminary Landscape Plan Complies with Zoning Ordinance

## Vegetative Screening Buffers - 25' wide

- Mix of native evergreen trees & large shrubs w/pollinator groundcover
- Proposed within 1,000' of dwellings to meet ordinance requirements
- Modified to accommodate adjacent landowner requests
- Bee & Butterfly Habitat Fund – Solar Synergy Program
  - Pollinator habitat serves secondary habitat purpose to comply with zoning ordinance
  - Two permanent seed mixtures
  - Testing for improved soil health
  - Pollinator habitat monitoring

**The Bee & Butterfly Habitat Fund**  
A NextGen Conservation Solution

LANDSCAPE BUFFER, TYP.

COUNTY ROAD 2200

INTERNAL ARRAY AREA  
EXTERNAL BUFFER AREA  
15' O.C. TYP.  
7' O.C. TYP.  
15' O.C. TYP.  
100'-0"  
FENCE, TYP.  
8' MIN. TYP.  
MAINTENANCE ACCESS OFFSET, TYP.  
EVERGREEN TREE/SHRUB, TYP.  
LARGE SHRUB, TYP.

25' LANDSCAPE BUFFER MIN.

NATIVE EVERGREEN TREE  
NATIVE EVERGREEN SHRUB  
ARRAY AREA SEED MIX  
BUFFER AREA SEED MIX

EVERGREEN TREE/SHRUB, TYP.  
LARGE SHRUB, TYP.  
VEGETATION SHOWN AT 5+ YEARS GROWTH  
OPEN AREA POLLINATOR SEED MIX, TYP.





# Environment & Land Use Committee Request

## Request to ELUC

- Seeking vote of recommendation from the Environment and Land Use Committee



## Little Prairie Solar Compliance

- Addressed Fire Safety - Sidney Fire has concurred in formal letter from Fire Chief & Board of Trustees
- Designed to meet the County ordinance requirements
- Addressed Sound - Project meets County ordinance requirements and is below IPCB standards
- Executed Agriculture Impact Mitigation Agreement with state of IL
- Increased source of property tax revenue from a passive, temporary land use on private property





**Thank you!**

**Little Prairie Solar Project Team**





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