

## E&E Energywire

### N.Y. releases plan for 70% renewables by 2030

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The state of New York has released a plan detailing steps to bring zero-carbon power into congested, fossil-fuel-dependent areas like Manhattan. Pexels

Officials in New York have unveiled a draft road map for getting 70% of the state's power from renewables by 2030, a key milestone on its path to eliminating nearly all greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The **white paper**, published Thursday by staff at the New York Department of Public Service (DPS), traces a year-by-year arc of actions needed to hit the 2030 goal established in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, a climate law signed by Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) last summer. The report offers strategies for tackling the "central challenge" of decarbonizing New York City and surrounding areas downstate, among other details.

By 2026, all necessary contracts for renewable power should be in place, DPS staff concluded. Leading up to that date, the New York State Energy Research and Development Agency (NYSERDA) must ramp up renewable power deals by 40% annually, said the DPS, which houses the Public Service Commission, the state's utility regulator. Staff at the DPS drew up recommendations in the paper for New York utility commissioners, who have yet to formally approve them.

NYSERDA should also reform how it selects renewable projects to give greater preference to proposals considered more likely to be viable, as well as those offering more value to grid stability, DPS recommended.

The staff called for the state to study the feasibility of building offshore wind turbines in the Great Lakes — an idea that has gained traction in Ohio ([\*Energywire\*](#), May 22).

The white paper also took on the thorny challenge of decarbonizing New York City.

Home to two-thirds of the state's electricity demand, the city and its suburbs get nearly all of their electricity from fossil fuels; by comparison, 88% of power in the rest of the state comes from zero-carbon sources, a situation that officials have described as "a tale of two grids."

"A central challenge in achieving the [70% by 2030 target] will be increasing the penetration of renewable energy consumed in the downstate region of the State," DPS staff wrote.

The DPS white paper urges the state to offer a new tier of renewable energy credits to reward large-scale clean power developers who channel electricity into New York City's grid. That tier would likely apply to two types of resources: offshore wind and Canadian hydroelectric power.

For offshore wind, the credits would seek to direct the 9 gigawatts of new power mandated by the state into New York City instead of areas with a higher concentration of zero-carbon generation sources.

Based on the DPS road map, hydropower providers could be eligible for the credits if they did not need to build new dams, which often cause flooding that releases methane, or divert electricity supplies away from other buyers, which could fail to lower emissions if those customers turned to natural gas to fill the void.

Both of those risks have been raised by environmentalists and other opponents of the \$3 billion Champlain Hudson Power Express transmission line, a proposal that would carry hydroelectric power from Canada directly into the New York City neighborhood of Queens.

Spokespeople for Transmission Developers Inc. (TDI), the backer of the power line project, said Friday they were still reviewing the DPS white paper but praised it as an "impressive and thorough roadmap."

The Independent Power Producers of New York Inc. (IPPNY), whose members include natural gas generators as well as renewable, nuclear and other power providers, said they were still reviewing the document.

A study commissioned by IPPNY and the Sierra Club in January found that the Champlain Hudson project would have a "negligible" effect on emissions while raising costs for consumers. That finding drew a sharp response from the Canadian hydropower supplier, who called the study "shamefully irresponsible" ([\*Energywire\*](#), Jan. 29).

The 330-mile line, which TDI says could carry as much as 20% of the clean power needed to reach New York's zero-carbon goals, received permits from the state several years ago but needs new ones after TDI made changes to the plans. The state Public Service Commission is currently weighing whether to hold a series of new hearings on the project; last week, staff at the regulator sided with the developer in saying that isn't needed.

Sustainability staff in New York City's government say they're still reviewing whether to reach a deal to build the Champlain Hudson line, although Mayor Bill de Blasio has said publicly he plans to use it as a resource in the city's decarbonization drive.

New York will need to have about 106,000 gigawatt-hours of renewable electricity ready by 2030 to meet its goal, the DPS white paper estimated.

Some 63,000 GWh are already in operation, under contract or set to be procured via a separate program for distributed solar, DPS said, meaning nearly 43,000 GWh must still be added to the queue.

Staff said that buying "Tier 1" renewables — including large-scale wind and other resources expected to account for the bulk of the state's new clean energy — will raise the typical New York power consumer's monthly bill by 35 cents through 2026. Through 2035, new offshore wind will lead to another 81-cent monthly increase.