Washington Builds

NEWS

# Washington State Green Bank Announces First Project Investment Supporting Expanded Solar Installation at Pullman High School

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The Washington State Green Bank is announcing its first project investment, supporting an expanded solar installation at Pullman High School that will more than double the originally planned system size.

The project marks the first time Washington State Green Bank has deployed its own capital to support a clean energy project and represents an important milestone for the organization. Established in 2024, the Green Bank moved into a more operational phase in 2025 following the hiring of Executive Director Eli Lieberman, building the partnerships and financing tools needed to begin moving projects from concept to implementation.

Pullman High School was originally planning for a smaller rooftop solar installation through support from the Washington State University Community Solar Expansion Program. But because of the size and energy needs of the school, project partners saw an opportunity to make a much larger impact with additional solar capacity.

Expanding the project required additional financing, creating a challenge for the project team. As a newer developer, Zero Emissions Northwest faced barriers accessing the amount of capital needed to support a larger project. To help bridge that gap, the Washington State Green Bank provided credit support through a loan guarantee to Craft3, which was then able to offer additional financing that made the larger project possible.

Originally designed as a 131.8-kilowatt direct current rooftop solar system, the project will now expand to approximately 265.64 kilowatts, increasing solar generation capacity by more than 100 percent and creating a system more appropriately sized for the school's needs.

“This project demonstrates exactly why the Green Bank was created,” said Eli Lieberman, executive director of Washington State Green Bank. “Innovative financing partnerships can help unlock projects that otherwise might not happen while creating benefits for schools, communities, developers and the broader clean energy economy.”

“We, Zero Emissions Northwest and Partners for Rural Washington, are absolutely thrilled with the Green Bank’s support of our Giving Grid solar project atop Pullman High School as it will help create a significant and lasting impact for that school district & community. Eli and his team were responsive, creative, and capable as we worked with Craft3 for the term financing. Our goal now is to find more school districts and replicate the concept” said David Funk, President and Founder of Zero Emissions Northwest.

“We’re proud to work with Zero Emissions Northwest and the Washington State Green Bank on the Pullman High School project, which shows how innovative financing structures can help scale up projects that reduce greenhouse gases and save money. It’s good for businesses, communities, and the environment,” said Elisabeth Zeller, CEO of Craft3. “We look forward to deepening our partnership with the Washington State Green Bank to accelerate Craft3’s investment in commercial energy efficiency and community scale renewable energy.”

The Green Bank’s participation was made possible in part through a $50,000 Strategic Development Fund grant through the U.S. Green Bank 50 network, helping strengthen the organization’s capacity and creating flexibility to support this first investment.

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## About the Washington Builds (FKA Washington State Green Bank)

Washington Builds is a 501(c)(3) financial institution that provides accessible and affordable financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects for Washington residents, businesses, and agriculture that reduce costs, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and create jobs statewide.

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