STARFIRE COMMUNITY COALITION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Starfire Project?

Starfire surface coal mine has been mined for decades and much of it is now reclaimed mine land serving as pastureland and wildlife habitat. Starfire Solar project will be constructed in up to four phases on the surface of this reclaimed mine land. The first phase of 210 MW will be constructed on approximately 1,385 acres at the intersection between Breathitt, Knott, and Perry Counties.

What is the Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky (FAKY)?

A non-traditional community Foundation with a 15 year long history of distributing grants for small businesses, schools, flood relief and other community focused supports across Southeastern KY. FAKY hosts the bnCommunity, a fund advised by Breathitt, Perry, Knott, and Floyd Community Foundations. A payment schedule for this fund for BrightNight to follow can be secured in a Community Benefits Agreement.

What is a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA)?

A CBA is an agreement signed by a community coalition and a developer, identifying a range of community benefits the developer agrees to provide as part of the development, in return for the community's support of the project. At the bottom of this FAQ you can find a link to more information about CBAs.

What is a Community Coalition?

A Community Coalition is a group of neighborhood associations, faith-based organizations, unions, environmental groups and others representing the interests of a community that will be impacted by development(s).

What is the Starfire Community Coalition?

The Starfire Community Coalition is a group of community advocates from Breathitt, Perry, Knott, and Floyd Counties that are opening a dialogue with BrightNight Power and local communities about how tools like a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) might help ensure the Starfire Project delivers meaningful local benefits.

How can community representatives mobilize for CBA negotiations?

CBAs are achieved in 3 phases:

- Coalition Building
  - Organizing a broad-based coalition of community interests and recruit stakeholder organizations, hold public meetings and maximize turnout with help from local leaders
- Agreement Development
  - Drafting and negotiating the CBA with BrightNight to reflect community priorities
- Implementation
  - Monitoring the success of the CBA and maintaining the accountability of all parties involved

What are some of the benefits for communities?

- A fair payment schedule for the bnCommunity Fund through the Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky
- Direct hire of local workers for the Starfire Project
- Training and apprenticeship programs for solar electricians
- The Community Coalition can help represent the interests of locals and negotiate with future developers

What is the economic impact of local-hiring commitments?

Without local-hiring commitments, communities can fail to gain from the economic benefits associated with additional and/or greater salaries in their neighborhoods. In fact, both developers and community members benefit when synergistic development models are employed. With CBA safeguards, developers experience reduced risk, while communities profit from improved cost/benefit positions.

Why are CBAs great for developers?

- CBAs are instrumental in disseminating information, thereby rallying support from community members
- Increased community support subsequently reduces project risk for developers, as city government incentives to cooperate increase
- Public subsidies, as well as state and/or local government approvals, may be acquired more readily by developers.

Are CBAs new taxes or tax breaks?

CBAs are neither new taxes nor tax breaks. Tax breaks are usually negotiated in public-private partnerships (PPPs), not CBAs. CBAs are private agreements between one or more developers and a community coalition. Although they can be linked to PPPs, they are usually independent vehicles. Also, donations to a community benefit fund agreed upon from a CBA are separate from Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) payments for the respective development.

How does the process for achieving a CBA start?

- Research development proposals in their region to identify any that have the potential to offer benefits to the residents they will be operating near
- Organize a broad-based coalition of community interests and recruit stakeholder organizations
- Hold public meetings and maximize turnout with help from local leaders
- Engage the developer with sustainable community objectives, via open dialogue as well as transparency

What makes for a strong and successful CBA?

- Community interests are well-represented
- CBA process is transparent, inclusive, and accessible
- Concrete, meaningful benefits deliver what community needs
- Clearly defined enforcement mechanisms ensure developer accountability

Click here or scan the QR code for more information on CBAs

Adapted from the U.S. Department of Energy Community Benefit Agreements FAQ: https://media.milanote.com/p/files/1TkIRb1Hr0wIfr/4yQ/CBA%20FAQ.pdf