



## Beacon Wind to repower community with renewable energy facility

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### **\$1.75 million investment directly into community for new Technology and Media Center**

Astoria, NY – Today, Equinor and bp announced two major initiatives focused on Astoria: the purchase of the Astoria Gas Turbines site from NRG to repurpose it as a converter station connecting renewable offshore wind power to the New York grid, and a substantial investment in community resources to serve the youth of Queens. Equinor and bp were joined at the event by Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer (D-NY), as well as elected officials including State Senator Toby Ann Stavisky, Assemblymembers Zohran Mamdani, Jessica González-Rojas and Juan Ardila, and Queens Deputy Borough President Ebony Young.

The future converter station, named the Astoria Gateway for Renewable Energy (AGRE), will replace the decades-old plant with a new source of renewable power for New York. The AGRE station will receive 1,230 megawatts of renewable energy – enough to power 1 million homes – generated by the Beacon Wind offshore wind project, located 60 miles off the eastern tip of Long Island, beginning in the late 2020s. The NRG facility is planned to cease operations and will begin decommissioning in May 2023. Pending permit approvals, Beacon Wind will begin site preparations in 2025, making AGRE one of the first fossil-to-renewable infrastructure repurposing in New York City.

Equinor and bp also announced a \$1M partnership through Beacon Wind for a community-based Technology and Media Center, coupled with a sponsorship of \$750,000 over ten years to support a Science and Technology program, for underserved youth at the Variety Boys and Girls Club of Queens (VBGCQ). The new state-of-the-art Technology and Media Center will become a focal point for educating Astoria's youth. The investment in curriculum development of a science and technology training program will help provide inclusive early education opportunities to local youth over the long-term, an important element of the workforce development pipeline needed to access the renewable energy jobs that are coming to New York.

“These investments in Astoria demonstrate the commitment of offshore wind to New Yorkers. Beacon Wind will bring an important new source of renewable power to a neighborhood marked by its industrial past, and now, community access to world class education on offshore wind through the Variety Boys and Girls Club. These classes will provide opportunities to underserved communities to obtain family-sustaining careers. Milestones like this are only possible due to New York’s favorable environment for investment and business, and we are excited for many positive developments to come,” said **Molly Morris, President of Equinor Wind US.**

“After years of successful organizing to stop the pollution from NRG’s gas plant in Astoria, the site will now be used to connect renewable, offshore wind power to the New York grid, which will create clean energy and good, green jobs,” said **U.S. Senator Charles Schumer.** “For too long, the people of western Queens have borne the brunt of the consequences of having New York’s polluting power plants in their backyard. A rebuilt NRG gas plant would have been yet another unfair burden for the community and the environment, but this new project will bring cleaner air and family-supporting jobs to the community, as well as long-term investments in science and technology training for Queens’ underserved youth.”

**bp senior vice president offshore wind Matthias Bausenwein** said, "These initiatives show how our offshore wind projects can advance the energy transition while supporting people and communities. Our investments will provide new resources for the youth of Queens and create a critical connection for bringing clean power to the New York grid."

"Equinor's commitment to create a gateway to our future here in Western Queens is a transformative moment for our community. The transition of the NRG site from fossil fuel to clean renewable wind power is a game changer for reducing respiratory illness and improving health. The energy transition needs champions like Equinor to help us move past the status quo of fossil fuels to create Renewable Row with clean power for our families to breathe easier. The partnership with the Variety Boys and Girls Club of Queens and Equinor to create the Equinor Media and Technology Center will help us bring this energy transition to life spurring the scientists of the 21st century right here in Western Queens. Thank you to Equinor for this monumental investment in our greatest resource, our children, and your vision to build a brighter, greener future," said **Costa Constantinides, CEO Variety Boys and Girls Club of Queens.**

“New York State and its partners are unwavering in our shared commitment to building an inclusive clean energy economy and these investments by Equinor and bp are emblematic of

that private-public mission," said **New York State Energy Research and Development (NYSERDA) President and CEO Doreen M. Harris**. "Together, we are not only leading the nation in offshore wind development – we are also leveraging these projects to create opportunities in historically underserved communities starting with the next generation of workers and today's youth."

"Equinor's plan to decommission and remove NRG's old and unsightly propane tanks from Astoria is something the community has been seeking for years. This project will provide sustainable wind energy to Astoria and elsewhere, putting the community on a course to reach the renewable energy goals established in the NY Climate Change Act. Also, by providing funding for a Science and Technology Center for our underserved youth, Equinor is showing a true commitment to improving our community long term. Through the project and with the funding, Astoria will benefit greatly from offshore wind technology while providing our next generation with the education and tools needed to obtain quality jobs in this competitive and growing field," said **New York State Senator Toby Ann Stavisky**.

"This is an exciting time for our movement to transition the state's energy supply away from fossil fuel dependency and into a future that runs on fully renewable energy," said **State Assemblymember Juan Ardila**. "By repurposing these gas turbines to converters for offshore wind power, we are getting one step closer to providing Western and Central Queens residents with clean energy, and to achieve the goals set out in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA)."

"In a neighborhood that has experienced so much environmental injustice and has become known as Asthma Alley, I'm thrilled that Astoria's decade's old peaker plant will soon instead convert offshore wind to bring renewable, clean power to my constituents in Queens," said **Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas, whose district includes the site**. "I'm also pleased to see that Equinor and bp, through Beacon Wind, have committed to investing in the community. I thank all of the groups that we organized alongside to defeat the NRG plant, and congratulate Variety Boys and Girls Club of Queens CEO Costa Constantinides and the young leaders who will benefit from Equinor and bp's investment in a community-based Technology and Media Center."

"This investment in renewable energy is a step in the right direction to ensuring that we are lowering harmful emissions, providing our city with sustainable power, and rectifying the environmental racism that our neighbors in Astoria have historically faced," said **Council Member Julie Won**. "I commend Beacon Wind's commitment to powering our city with green

energy by the end of this decade, as well as investing in a science and technology program for our children.”

“The growing offshore wind industry has incredible potential to accelerate New York’s transition to clean energy,” said **Rohit T. Aggarwala, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection and Chief Climate Officer**. “Successful public-private partnerships are core to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and New York is committed to being the #1 city for offshore wind jobs by 2035.”

“This new source of renewable power and the science and technology program will advance environmental justice and educational opportunity,” said **Kizzy Charles-Guzmán, Executive Director, Mayor’s Office of Climate & Environmental Justice**. “As we re-envision communities that have been disproportionately harmed by pollution, we must simultaneously offer young New Yorkers a chance to become an integral part of our climate change response – starting today.”

Details of the sale from NRG to the Beacon Wind project are available through the New York Public Service Commission (PSC).

## About Equinor Renewables US

[Equinor](#) is one of the largest offshore wind developers in the world. Its work in the United States includes the development of two lease areas in New York, Empire Wind and Beacon Wind. The projects plan to provide New York State with 3.3 gigawatts (GWs) of energy – enough to power nearly two million homes – including more than 2 GWs from Empire Wind and 1,230 megawatts from Beacon Wind 1.

## About bp in the US

bp’s ambition is to become a net zero company by 2050 or sooner, and to help the world get to net zero. bp has a larger economic footprint in the United States than anywhere else in the world, investing more than \$140 billion since 2005 and supporting about 245,000 jobs. For more information on bp in the US, visit [www.bp.com/US](http://www.bp.com/US).

## About Beacon Wind

[Beacon Wind](#) is being developed by Equinor and bp and planned for an area of 128,000 acres in federal waters between Cape Cod and Long Island. The lease area was acquired in 2019 and is being developed in two phases. Beacon Wind 1 is on track to deliver 1.2 GW of renewable energy directly to New York City in the late 2020s – enough to power 1 million homes. Beacon Wind 2 has the capacity to generate another 1.2 GW of renewable energy for consumers in the US Northeast.

## Further information

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