

# 3G ENERGY CORP.

Powering renewable energy projects and solutions in Ottawa and across Canada



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Produced by Sean O'Reilly and Written by Molly Shaw

Since 2001, 3G Energy Corp. has facilitated in the design, development and construction of more than 150 megawatts of renewable energy projects across Canada — enough clean, green energy to power more than 70,000 homes. The Ottawa-based renewable energy solutions company, focused primarily on wind and solar power, is taking a different stance in a market flooded with larger players.

“3G is a renewable energy consulting company and developer for institutions and municipalities seeking an entry into wind and solar projects” explains Graham Findlay, president and general manager of 3G. “Our customers are First Nations, cooperatives, nonprofits and public entities — the once ‘underdogs’ so to speak in the renewable energy game.”

Now that the industry has peaked in Ontario, 3G recently shifted focus to wind projects in western Canada. Findlay and former partner Brian Barr founded the business in 2001 with a shared vision that the burgeoning low-carbon economy could produce new and exciting business opportunities. “Ontario went through explosive growth in the wind and solar energy business,” says Findlay. “The consumer is getting great pricing today, but the industry is making modest returns relative to opportunity cost and deals are scarce. It is still an industry with active government control over demand for generation, and small players have had a tough time finding sustainable success.”





Findlay and Barr were the founders of Vector Wind Energy Inc. before launching 3G in 2007. “With Vector we had projects in the three Maritime Provinces and all western provinces except Alberta,” says Findlay. “We expanded across the country, but as a junior publicly traded company, our successes in winning energy contracts drained our resources. That’s the quirky world of small resource companies and so Vector was eventually sold in 2007 to Canadian Hydro Developers Limited, then the largest independent renewable energy developer in Canada.”

### NEW BLOOD. NEW ENERGY

After the acquisition, Findlay and Barr launched 3G and expanded into both solar and wind power. Today Findlay oversees the technical and engineering challenges involved in 3G’s projects, bringing more than 25 years of engineering and project management skills to the company.

After Brian Barr’s retirement in mid-2015, a new partner, Rob Miller, joined 3G, departing a large energy company for the fun of a small early-stage player. Miller focuses on business development for 3G, while Findlay is responsible for the company’s overall strategy. Miller has over 10 years in senior positions with large renewable energy companies and he spearheaded large wind and solar projects in eastern Ontario.

“He was looking for sparkle in his career and I asked him to join us, again,” says Findlay. “He’s experienced and energetic and he wanted to be a partner in our small operation. Rob is a great

asset to the company — he has technical depth and a full understanding of the energy project development process. It’s so ironic that we hired him 10 years ago in the Vector days when he was looking for an entry to the business, and now he’s back.”

With many ongoing projects and lots of work on the horizon, Findlay says 3G relies on talented advisors to get the job done. “We don’t need a large team because we have a great network of consultants working for us as-needed, in any province.” he says.

### KEY CONNECTIONS

With the central Canada market less frothy compared to the early 2000s, 3G is now targeting expansion in new markets in Alberta, British Columbia and even Jamaica. Over the last eight years in business, the company has developed key, strategic supplier relationships, including a partnership with Canadian Solar Inc. (CSI). CSI is a vertically-integrated manufacturer of silicon, ingots, wafers, cells, solar modules and custom-designed solar power applications.

For the last five years in Ontario, 3G provided engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) services, and contract building of both wind and solar projects, typically under 5 megawatts. Working with CSI, 3G was involved in the CSI development and completion of two large ground-mount solar projects in eastern Ontario, totaling 17 megawatts.

Another essential linkage is 3G’s involvement with Paris-based EREN. Through partnerships established with local developers, EREN has





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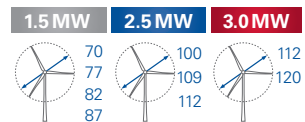
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accumulated a portfolio of 240 megawatts of renewable energy assets in operation and under construction in regions around the world, and over 1.5 gigawatts of assets under development. EREN contracted with 3G in early 2015 to explore and create development opportunities in Canada. “It’s great to partner with a company like EREN — folks who are experienced, sophisticated and endowed with huge resources. That goes beyond just money, but skills and technical resources,” says Findlay.

With EREN at its side, 3G sees attractive wind energy opportunities in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia and possibly solar opportunities in Alberta, but Findlay says this won’t happen overnight. “We’re certain we’ll get there, but development in this industry takes time,” he says. “When you’re anticipating market restructuring in provinces, change at such large levels goes slowly at first. But then it explodes on a massive scale and we need to be there with appropriate resources when that happens. This is why we’ve aligned ourselves through partnerships with like-minded people.”

With these connections, 3G is incredibly busy. Offering the full scope of planning, financing, constructing and

renewable project management, 3G delivers more value to its customers. “3G operates from a unique standpoint where we can be an adviser or act as a developer, or both,” says Findlay. “We partner with the customer to suit their particular needs.”

**RENEWABLE SOLUTIONS FOR FIRST NATIONS**

3G takes on projects that are a bit out of the normal box, says Findlay. “Most of our solar competitors simply act as vendors or constructors for retail customers; they’re in business to deliver the completed system and that’s it,” he says. “We take on projects that are more complex because of the customer relationship. Usually there’s something quirky about what we take on.”

One example is 3G’s work with several First Nations, such as the M’Chigeeng First Nation in Ontario. 3G has been working with the M’Chigeeng First Nation as advisers on energy projects and employment creation initiatives. 3G worked with M’Chigeeng over 10 years to build an array of wind and solar generation projects and energy self-sufficiency planning, resulting in a cleaner, sustainable future for generations of M’Chigeeng.



“We stepped in to deliver more opportunities to people and communities looking to get into the energy market that otherwise would have been left behind,” says Findlay.

3G continues to help First Nations that want to add alternative energies to the local economy. “We’re also engaged in northern British Columbia on a large wind project with a First Nation,” says Findlay. “There’s plenty of mining in this region, but the indigenous peoples want renewable energy so we’re working to fashion an agreement in which they become partners upon completion and we do the heavy lifting, the development and deployment work.”

This project includes a goal of 30 to 40 wind turbines and 150 megawatts in generation capacity within five years. “There’s also a major pipeline of additional wind projects on the horizon for British Columbia and Alberta, particularly if those two provinces link their grids and bring low cost wind energy into Alberta from British Columbia,” adds Findlay.

### A STEADY STREAM OF NEW WORK

In Ottawa, 3G recently finished a unique cooperative housing project that recently reached occupancy. “This job included solar panels configured as window shading on the south facing wall — nothing like this has been done in Ottawa before,” notes Findlay. “3G helped the architects with the structural attachment scheme, an assignment that was considered too weird for other companies to bother with. And early this year we powered up a 400-kilowatt solar system at Mapleton Organic Dairy near Guelph, Ontario.”

Our best wishes to **3G Energy Corp.** on their recognition from Canadian Business Executive and the acknowledgement of their many achievements. We are proud to be associated with such a respected industry leader and are happy to be a part of their success.



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The company recently initiated a solar farm in Jamaica and submitted a bid into a request for proposal (RFP) in January 2016. “There’s a lot of work to be done and Rob is tackling this project,” says Findlay. “We bring major benefits, such as our partnerships with EREN and CSI and financing backing. The people of Jamaica respect us and so far things are going well. Now it’s just a matter of putting our heads together to win a competitive bid.”

“We’ve formed great connections and we’ve done it all through word-of-mouth; we don’t do much advertising,” reveals Findlay. “With this foundation, there is a wealth of opportunity for 3G to mobilize and build. We have a couple of very busy years ahead of us.” With a steady stream of renewable energy projects coming in, 3G Energy Corp. is riding the wave and enjoying every exciting opportunity and new connection. •





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