

Request to appear before the Board of Selectmen

Unless the issue is an emergency, all requests need to be furnished to the Town Administrator no later than noon on the Thursday prior to the Board Meeting.

Name: Susan Carr

Date: May 13th, 2016

Phone Number: 603-554-6996

Email: infonewboston@gmail.com

ACTION DESIRED: Please specify what action you desire the Board of Selectmen to take as a result of your presentation. Please be as specific as possible.

Presentation and information on the SolarizeUP NH campaign for Residents to learn about solar installatino.
No cost to the Town and no contract or liability.

New Boston Energy Commission would be town group to "host" campaign. Campaign runs approximatelt 14-16 weeks mid June-Mid October.
Friday-AM May 13, 2016, Jack Munn from the SNHPC will provide summary pages for Selectmen to review.
(See Attached)

PREVIOUS STEPS TAKEN: Please indicate any attempts that you have made to resolve this issue prior to asking to appear before the Board of Selectmen. If current procedures require that you place your request elsewhere prior to possible action by the Board of Selectmen, the Town Administrator shall inform you at the time you complete this form.

Previous discussions last year.

Print Form



Solar Up NH: Round Three

Request for Proposals from SNHPC Communities

Applications accepted through **May 20, 2016**.

Questions or clarifications about this RFP should be directed to Jack Munn, Chief Planner at SNHPC: jmunn@snhpc.org or (603) 669-4664.

This RFP is available online at:



Program Summary

Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) requests proposals from municipalities (“communities”) located within the SNHPC Region to participate in Round Three of Solar Up NH to take place in the summer and fall of 2016. **Solar Up NH teams from local communities will be matched with competitively chosen solar photovoltaic (“PV”) installers to make residential and small-scale solar PV energy more accessible and affordable for residents, businesses, non-profits, churches, agricultural organizations and municipalities throughout the region.**

SNHPC and SmartPower working together will select up to eight (8) communities (or partnerships of two or more adjacent communities) within the 15-town SNHPC Region (see: www.snhpc.org) to participate in Round Three of Solar Up NH. Applications will be evaluated competitively.

Once selected, communities will work with SNHPC and SmartPower to choose their own solar PV installer partner(s) through a separate Request for Proposal (“RFP”) process. The selected solar installer(s) will offer customers one time reduced competitive pricing for the installation of direct-ownership of solar PV systems during the campaign, free site visits, collaboration in community outreach, and installation and warranty services. Each community and partner installer, with support from SNHPC and SmartPower, will develop and implement a **16-18 week**



community outreach campaign with the first launch in June and the second launch in September 2016 with the goal of lowering the cost of solar energy and doubling the number of existing solar PV installations in their community at the start of the program.

A successful Solar Up NH campaign is dependent on committed and well-connected volunteers, particularly in identifying creative ways to get the word out within their community about Solar Up NH. Effective volunteer teams will work collaboratively on a variety of outreach approaches tailored to their community. Your purpose as volunteers is to encourage as many residents as possible to consider going solar, especially residents who may never have considered solar otherwise.

The purpose of Solar Up NH is to significantly ramp up the rate of solar adoption in the SNHPC Region and eventually throughout the state. Solar Up NH accomplishes this by encouraging a positive conversation about solar energy throughout the region, and by demonstrating numerous solar success stories. Communities interested in Solar Up NH should also consider how they might leverage the “Solarize Buzz” to further other local energy efforts (e.g. municipal solar projects and outreach around energy efficiency).

Rounds 1 and 2 of Solar Up NH which took place in 2015 within the SNHPC Region were very successful. Seven communities participated; 152 residents signed up for solar installations; the cost of these installations were lowered on average 10% depending on the system installed – roof or ground mount, and the number of systems were more than doubled in each of the seven communities creating over 1.35 MWs of new clean and renewable energy for the region. For more information on Solar Up NH see the website at: www.SolarUpNewHampshire.com.

SECTION ONE – Detailed Opportunity Summary

A. Program Goals and Overview

i. Program Goals

Solar Up NH is a program of SNHPC and SmartPower aimed at making small-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) energy more accessible to residents in New Hampshire. Solar Up NH will:

- A. Lower the cost of solar energy by reducing customer acquisition costs and transferring those savings directly to residents;
- B. At least double the number of solar PV installations in each community over the course of a 16-18-week outreach campaign; and
- C. Significantly ramp up adoption of solar throughout the SNHPC Region in a way that can be sustained and expanded statewide.

ii. Program Overview

Solar Up NH is designed to overcome common barriers to going solar at a residential and small business scale:

A) Trust

- Solar Up NH is coordinated by SNHPC and SmartPower and championed by a “core team” of dedicated community volunteers.
- Solar Up NH has a successful track record in communities from Rounds 1 and 2 (Bedford, Goffstown, Frankestown, Candia, Chester, Deerfield and Derry).
- Solar Up NH outreach is designed to provide residents with safe and accessible ways to learn about solar, meet neighbors who also want to learn about solar, and take the next step when they’re ready (e.g. a free site visit, signing a contract to go solar).
- Solar Up NH is designed to be as transparent as possible. All Solar Up NH pricing is posted online, along with details about the Solar Up NH program, contact information for the volunteer team and SNHPC and SmartPower staff and partner solar installers.

B) Complexity

- Solar Up NH has a proven and popular website dedicated to the program (www.SolarUpNewHampshire.com), with many useful resources all in one place (e.g. the Solar Up NH FAQ, financing guide, energy efficiency and solar energy resources).
- For many people, the most complicated aspect of going solar is not knowing where to begin. Solar Up NH is all about providing an easy starting point: check out the website, come to an event, and sign up for a free site visit.

C) Cost

- Solar Up NH outreach helps reduce typical customer acquisition costs and can lead to numerous installation jobs for partnering installers. These factors help installers bidding on Solar Up NH to offer competitive pricing discounted below their typical installation prices.
- Financing may be necessary to make solar feasible for many residents and businesses. Solar Up NH has put together a guide to help residents understand their financing options, and we continue to work with local lenders to improve those options.

D) Inertia

- A critical component of any Solar Up NH program is its deadline. Residents must sign a contract with the partner installer by a certain date in order to take advantage of the special one-time pricing offer. This deadline helps motivate residents to take action.
- The one-time pricing structure serves as a motivator for residents to talk with their neighbors about Solar Up NH and encourage one another to take action. More neighbors going solar means lower prices for everyone.

B. The Solar Up NH Process

Solar Up NH follows a four-step process:

1. Apply to be a Solar Up NH Community

2. Select a Partner Installer
3. Launch a 16-18 Week Outreach Campaign
4. Celebrate and Consider Next Steps

Step One: Apply to be a Solar Up NH Community

Respond to this Request for Proposals (“RFP”) by **May 20, 2016** to be considered for Round Three of Solar Up NH this summer and fall (see Page 11 for instructions). SNHPC and SmartPower will select up to four communities in the summer and fall campaigns. Strong applications will demonstrate the following:

- A committed group of volunteers with relevant experience working on successful community-based projects and creative ideas for Solar Up NH outreach;
- Endorsement from local leaders (elected/appointed officials, respected individuals);
- Interest from local residents in renewable energy;
- Efforts to team up with neighboring towns to form a single Solar Up NH community. See Page 11 for guidelines.
- Intent to harness the public attention, contact lists, and energy “buzz” generated by Solar Up NH for other energy projects after your Solar Up NH campaign is finished.
- Intent to use Solar Up NH as a means of establishing or revitalizing a town energy committee.

Step Two: Select a Partner Installer

Each Solar Up NH Community will identify a team of three volunteers to serve on a selection committee to choose a partner installer. Each Solar Up NH Community will also work with SNHPC and SmartPower to develop a Community Profile identifying requests and solar related information specific to each community. SNHPC and SmartPower will post this Community Profile on the Solar Up NH website which can then be used as part of the Request for Proposals (“RFP”) from solar installers. SNHPC and SmartPower will collect bids from installers, distribute bids to the appropriate selection committees, and facilitate a selection process which will include:

- Short-List Workshop – This three-hour workshop (typically scheduled 3-6pm) will orient selection committees to the selection process and provide support as the committees choose installers to interview.
- Interview Day – Each selection committee may interview as many installers as they like based on the bids submitted, and other selection committees are welcome to sit in on any/all interviews.

SNHPC and SmartPower provide criteria for evaluating installers. Community selection committees are responsible for assigning value to these criteria and selecting a partner installer on behalf of their community. The selection committee must be able to clearly describe its process and the considerations behind its choice. Criteria include:

- Relevant experience of the installer company and its staff;
- Overall quality and value of the proposed services and equipment;

- Reliable implementation – the installer’s ability to provide timely and high-quality customer service and installation services given the expected volume of leads generated by Solar Up NH outreach, as well as to collaborate with community volunteers;
- One-time competitive discounted pricing and cost adders proposed by the installer are clear and offer good value;
- Unique or creative offerings – e.g. unique technologies offered, unique business model, creative outreach ideas;
- Response to Community Profile – how has the installer tailored its bid to address characteristics and/or requests specific to your community?
- Commitment to growing the region’s solar market – see below.

The goal of Solar Up NH is to increase the rate of adoption of solar in our region and sustain that momentum beyond the timeframe of this program. Strong installer partners will demonstrate commitment to building the market for solar energy in the SNHPC region and beyond their participation in Round 3 of Solar Up NH. SNHPC and SmartPower recommend the following considerations for selecting an installer with strong ties to the region and state.

- Does the installer have a history of solar installations in the region?
- Has the installer participated in Rounds 1 and 2 of Solar Up NH in 2015 or other solarized programs in NH and other states?
- Has the installer demonstrated a commitment to growing a strong market for solar in SNHPC and throughout NH?
- Are relevant members of the installer team based in or near the region?
- How far will the installer have to drive to reach your community?
- Where is the installer’s business headquarters located?

The community selection committee will be responsible working with SNHPC and SmartPower in selecting a solar installer(s) partner¹ for Round Three of Solar Up NH. Once selected, the partner installer(s) will enter into a contract with SNHPC and SmartPower to effectively carry out Round 3 of the program. There will be no official, written agreement between the municipalities and the selected installer. SNHPC and SmartPower will facilitate a conversation to lay out terms for a good faith partnership between the Solar Up NH volunteers and the selected installer. SNHPC and SmartPower will act as mediator should any miscommunication or conflicts arise between program partners.

Step Three: Launch a 16-18 Week Outreach Campaign

Each core volunteer team will work with its selected installer, with support from SNHPC and SmartPower, to develop and implement a strategy for collaboration and outreach during the 16-18-week campaign. Two campaigns will take place in Round Three. Launch of the first campaign will start up in June 2016. Launch of the second campaign will start up in September 2016. Activities include the following:

- Select and share a date/time/location for a Solar Up NH Launch Event;

¹ Installers may bid as a consortium of two or more partnering installers. Partnering installers will still offer consistent, one-time special pricing and a single point of contact.

- Pre-Launch Meeting facilitated by SNHPC and SmartPower with the core volunteer team and selected installer to discuss launch event and plan the outreach campaigns;
- Launch Event – presentation and Q & A to kick off the campaign;
- 16-18 weeks of outreach aimed at reaching as many residents as possible, especially those who may not have considered solar otherwise, and encouraging them to learn more and schedule a free site visit (see example “Solar Up NH Community Outreach Outline or Plan” for examples, available online at www.SolarUpNewhampshire.com;
- Program deadline December 31st;
- Close-out meeting to reflect on the process and consider next steps; and
- Follow-up survey of volunteers and participants to inform future rounds of Solar Up NH.

Solar Up NH is meant to catalyze many small-scale solar PV installations in each participating community, mainly residential installations. Any resident of a participating community can contact the selected installer to receive a site visit and quote based on the equipment and one-time special pricing outlined in the installer’s bid. Residents must sign a contract with the selected installer by the program deadline in order to receive the special pricing.

Residents in Solar Up NH communities are free to seek bids and work with other installers at any point in the program. This is an important message for the core volunteer team to share. Any installations contracted during the Solar Up NH program with non-Solar Up NH installers will be celebrated (with permission from the homeowners) but will *not* be counted as progress toward the special one-time pricing established by the Solar Up NH installer.

SNHPC and SmartPower are committed to working with municipalities, small businesses, non-profit and farm enterprises as well as residents in Round Three of Solar Up NH. In addition to outreach efforts in partnering towns, SNHPC and SmartPower will work with core volunteers to address unique challenges and opportunities with respect to going solar. Based on our experience so far in Round 1 and 2 of Solar Up NH communities should expect:

- 50-120 attendees at each Launch Event;
- 250+ inquires/leads for information per community through the website;
- 100 to 200 requests for site visits per community; and
- 30+ signed contracts for solar installations.

These figures will vary depending on the size of the community and the outreach methods employed.

Step Four: Celebrate and Consider Next Steps

After announcing and celebrating their solar successes, SNHPC and SmartPower will help community volunteers think through what happens next. We will ask volunteers to consider:

- What have you learned from the Solar Up NH program and who can you share that with?
- How many residents expressed interest in Solar Up NH but did not go solar? Why not? How can you plug them in to other energy-related opportunities?
- How can you leverage the attention and momentum of your Solar Up NH efforts to take on other community energy projects (e.g. establish/revive an energy committee, launch

an outreach campaign around energy efficiency or sustainable transportation, build support for a municipal or community solar project)?

SECTION TWO – Application Process

A. Eligible Applicants

All communities within the SNHPC Region are eligible to submit a proposal (see www.snhpc.org website for map of region).² SNHPC and SmartPower will review proposals and select up to eight communities from within this region for Round Three of the Solar Up NH program.

B. Information Session for Interested Communities

An information session for interested communities will be held on **Thursday, May 11th from 5:30 to 7:00 PM in the Conference Room, SNHPC Office, 438 Dubuque Street, Manchester, NH 03102**. Community members are strongly encouraged to attend if there is any interest in or curiosity about the program. Attendees are encouraged to come prepared with questions about the program and/or the application process.

C. Application Deadline

Responses to this RFP must be received by SNHPC by **4:30pm on Friday, May 20, 2016**. Proposals should be in PDF format and attached to an email sent to Jack Munn at jmunn@snhpc.org. Please label your proposal materials clearly. Jack can be contacted directly if you have any questions, concerns, or technical difficulties in submitting your proposal.

D. Questions and Contact Information

Please contact Jack Munn, Chief Planner at SNHPC, with any questions (contact information below).

Jack Munn
jmunn@snhpc.org
(603) 669-4664

E. Guidelines for Communities Interested in Applying as a Coalition

Municipalities interested in partnering with one or more neighboring municipalities can indicate such interest in their application, with the following considerations in mind:

- There is no limit to the number of municipalities that may partner as a single Solar Up NH community, though typically we recommend no more than three partners.
- Each municipality will be responsible for an individual application and must clearly state which other municipalities have been identified as partners.

² Municipalities outside SNHPC' service area may be eligible to apply in partnership with one or more municipalities within the service area. Please contact Jack if you are interested in such a partnership.

- The partnering communities must jointly submit a letter signed by representatives from each community explaining the decision to partner, including any relevant examples of prior collaboration among the partnering communities.

SECTION THREE – Proposal Requirements

A. Proposal Requirements

Required:

- A letter from a high ranking municipal leader³ (i.e. Mayor, Selectboard Chair, Town Manager with support from the Selectboard), containing the following:
 - Statement of commitment to Round 3 of the Solar Up NH program, including the installer selection process and partnership with a single solar installer for the duration of the program.
 - Articulate why your community is well-positioned to take full advantage of the opportunities presented by Solar Up NH.
 - If your community wishes to partner with a neighboring municipality, please clearly indicate which municipalities will be partnering. (*Note: A separate joint letter from all partners will detail why this partnership is desirable.*)
 - Identify a primary program contact (typically a lead volunteer) for the Solar Up NH program in your municipality. Include an explanation of this individual’s interest and commitment, along with any relevant experience in community outreach.
 - Identify other individuals and organizations that will be able to assist the lead volunteer throughout the program (including other core volunteers, existing groups that can be tapped for support, and any other relevant community resources).
- Completed Applicant Community Contacts and Signature Form (Attachment A, see Page 15)
- IF APPLYING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER MUNICIPALITIES:* Letter (*suggested one page*) jointly from the lead program contacts identified in each partnering municipality, explaining the decision to partner and any relevant examples of prior collaboration.

Optional:

- Thoughts on Community Outreach (*not to exceed two pages*)
 - Potential Partners – examples include elected officials, municipal staff, appointed or volunteer energy committee members, grassroots organizations, religious community groups, fraternal organizations, PTAs, real estate professionals, or other resources unique to your community. How you plan to utilize these partnerships to help you spread the word about Solar Up NH?

³ This letter can be submitted after your application if you indicate the date of the governing board meeting.

- Community Outreach Ideas – examples include community surveys, email outreach, tabling at local events/markets/fairs, local media outreach, social media, flyers in town mailings, program link on town website, email discussion list outreach, etc. This initial brainstorm will be very helpful later on if you are selected to be a Solar Up NH community.
- Any Special Requests (*not to exceed one page*)⁴
 - If applicable, you may outline (in bulleted form) any special requests or requirements you may want to ask of installers bidding to partner with your community. SNHPC will work with participating communities to formalize and release a “community profile” which can include a special requests section. Special requests may include, as an example, requests for:
 - Marketing support (such as paying for an insert in a particular town mailer or participating in a particular town event),
 - Specific equipment (such as American-made panels, a solar hot water option, etc.), or
 - Certain types of installers (such as specifying how near to your town the installer must be located).
- Personal Statements (*not to exceed two statements, and no more than 250 words each*) – from any committed community groups, partners, or identified solar ambassadors.
- Letters of support (*not to exceed two statements, and no more than one page each*) – from interested parties, including local grassroots organizations, local solar installation companies, elected officials, appointed town commission members, etc.

B. Evaluation Criteria

Commitment to Clean Energy and Sustainability: Record of or clear articulated interest in expanding renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives in the community. Communities demonstrating the intent to leverage Solar Up NH in working toward a longer-term goal of promoting community sustainability will be highly competitive.

Project Leadership: Ability of designated main contact and lead volunteer to successfully coordinate a volunteer team and coordinate a variety of public outreach efforts.

Project Volunteer Team: Level of commitment and capacity for support from individuals and organizations listed as key partners.

Creative Thinking: Openness to creative outreach and active partnership.

Unique Qualities and Resources: Any unique community qualities or resources articulated and able to be leveraged to promote Solar Up NH.

⁴ This can be finalized after your application submittal and if your community is selected.