



## Marketing and Outreach Plan

Outline a marketing plan that describes methods to create community awareness around the Solarize Mass/ Solarize Mass Plus program. Describe ways in which a joint marketing strategy between the Municipality, the volunteer team, and the selected Installer could increase the number of sign-ups for a solar site assessment and expand solar PV adoption and/or additional technology the community. Provide a plan for implementation, including methods to engage additional community members and volunteers. This could include an outreach activity timeline, expected volunteer activity hours, preliminary goals for community participation and solar PV adoption and or additional technology during the program. Include information on where community events could be held, including the Meet the Installer community meeting.

(Please note, that though there is an opportunity to update before the installer selection process, this section and the following [Marketing and Outreach Plan & Solarize Mass Plus] will be made public as a part of the installer selection process, so be as thorough as possible.)

The city will partner with the selected installer as well as with community agencies (including Northern Berkshire Community Television, the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, and Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts [MCLA], as well as with other partners identified as awareness of the program expands within the community) to support the solar coach in promoting the program and encouraging participation.

Marketing will include

- Solarize kickoff event to be held following volunteer training and installer selection, to include an overview of the program, information about supported technologies, and an opportunity to meet the volunteer team and installer; the number and location of events to be determined by solar coach

Outreach will include

- Promotion in traditional media (print, radio, community access television)
- Informational mailings
- Social media promotion through City of North Adams and collaborating agency channels
- Presence at community events (e.g., Northern Berkshire Community Coalition monthly forums; the North Adams Farmers' Market, etc.)
- One-on-one email and telephone consultations between the solar coach and interested residents and businesses
- Other strategies as appropriate based on need and interest

## Solarize Mass Plus (required if applicable):

*(If not previously described in marketing and outreach plan)* Indicate additional technology. Include information on how you will model outreach to include the additional technology and why your Community may be a good fit for each additional technology. **Be sure to use your review of the Plus Technology Selection (pages 11-13 of the RFP) as a point of reference.**

In addition to the base Solarize Mass program, the City of North Adams intends to participate in Solarize Mass Plus by supporting a solar hot water program. Survey data shared by the Town of Williamstown indicates that there are few solar hot water installers in the northern Berkshire region, which creates a condition of limited system deployment and low consumer awareness. We anticipate that the solar coach and volunteer team will develop informational materials about solar hot water and distribute these at launch events, as well as online, to build awareness and generate leads.

## **Marketing Plan**

### **Williamstown Solarize Plus Campaign**

The COOL committee, Solar Coaches and volunteer team will work with the Town and selected installers to conduct a comprehensive marketing campaign that builds on the interest of residents and community networks to promote the Williamstown Solarize Plus program.

Staffing: Solar Coaches, Volunteer leaders, community volunteers

In addition to the selected solar coaches, we have many community members who have expressed interest in helping with outreach (31!) through our community interest survey. We will also be drawing on the volunteer work of the COOL Committee community members listed above, as well as other local civic and non profit organizations that have expressed interest in promoting Solarize Plus technologies.

Strategies:

A variety of strategies, employed below, will be used to educate residents about Solarize Plus technologies and promote the Solarize Plus campaign.

**Solarize Plus Kick-off event(s):** We will conduct one to three kick-off events and information sessions about the Solarize Plus technologies. We plan to hold the events at a centrally located venue such as the Williamstown Elementary School auditorium, the Williamstown Youth Center, and the Mount Greylock High School Auditorium. At that time the program will be introduced to the community, along with key staff and volunteers. Volunteers will provide an overview of the technologies, ownership and financing options, state and federal incentives, and description of the Solarize Plus program, including the benefits of having a Mass Save energy assessment to identify opportunities for making homes more energy efficient. We will introduce the Solar Coaches, and when possible invite one or more homeowners who have installed Solar Plus technologies to talk briefly about their experience. We will work with Willinet, a local cable access station, to tape the session and re-broadcast it several times for those who were not able to attend the initial session. We may also Facebook live the program streaming it on the Williamstown Solarize Plus Facebook page.

**Postcard mailers:** We will send two custom postcard mailings to Williamstown households (approximately 3000). The first mailing will promote the Solarize Plus Meet the Contractor events, and the second will update residents about program dates and deadlines mid campaign.



Meet the Contractors Events: Once the contractors/installers have been selected, we will work with the MassCEC to sponsor one or more “Meet the Installer” informational presentations. These sessions will be a follow-up to the introductory session for those who would like more detailed information about site requirements and ownership and financing options. Information sessions will again be sited at a central location such as the Williamstown Elementary School, Youth Center or Mt. Greylock Regional High School. Because the installers may not be local, we will work with them to determine the most effective and practical strategies for Meet The Installer outreach.

Social media/online promotion: All information about Solarize Williamstown will be shared through multiple social media outlets. We will use our Williamstown Solarize Plus Facebook to post information and updates and do promoted posts using marketing funds. These posts will also be shared on municipal Facebook pages, the COOL Committee page, as well as community partners.

The COOL Committee website will be updated with an emphasis on promoting the Solarize Plus campaign. The Facebook page will contain profiles of existing Solarize Plus technology installations, and post regular updates such as announcements of outreach events, installer selection, and milestones in the reaching program goals. The Town of Williamstown website will also provide information about Solarize Plus, and a link to the Facebook page.

Customized signage, and yard signs: Large/sandwich board signs will be posted in one or two visible locations such as Williamstown Town Hall, public library, and the town green in front of First Congregational Church. Participants will display Williamstown Solarize Plus yard signs.

Traditional media: We will utilize local print media including our regional daily newspaper; local public access television; radio; and a local movie theatre to do blanket marketing around the launch of Solarize Williamstown and ongoing promotion including feature stories, interviews, public service announcements and calendar listings. Local newsletters both paper and online such as the electronic newsletters from area schools. We will also do flyers in the common locations in town including libraries, community bulletin boards, and storefronts.

Tabling at public events: We will plan to do informational tabling at the Williamstown Farmers Market (on Saturdays throughout the summer), Berkshire Grown holiday farmers markets, outdoor festivals in each community, and other community establishments that permit tabling such as the local cooperative community grocery store, and local Community Supported Agriculture farms. The tabling will be conducted by a combination of the solar coach and volunteers.



Informational presentations: The solar coach will hold community information sessions at various venues such as Williams College, the public library, Wild Oats Food Cooperative, the First Congregational Church of Williamstown. When practical, these sessions will be scheduled to include the contractors/installers.

One-on-one: The Solar Coaches will be available to respond to questions one-on-one via email and phone. The towns will provide a dedicated phone number for the Solar Coach, and that number will be listed on all promotional literature.

Business and organizational outreach: We will seek invitations to present at meetings of Greylock Together, Williamstown Chamber of Commerce, and Williamstown Rotary Club. This will allow targeted outreach to the business community.

We will promote use of the HEAT loans for solar hot water, and the solar loan program for solar PV.

We will also promote the Solar Access program enabling moderate income households to install solar PV and air source heat pumps and the Community Solar opportunities as appropriate.

**Solarize Mass Plus (required if applicable):**

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**SOLAR HOT WATER**

Based on previous experience and the results of our community survey we believe there to be a considerable market for households that stand to benefit from solar hot water. When we previously participated in the Solarize program, many households did not have adequate roof area or solar exposure for Solar PV but might have an appropriate site for a solar hot water system. Of the 81 respondents so far to our community interest survey, 41 were interested in learning more and 32 expressed interest in possibly purchasing solar hot water. There is a limited number of solar hot water installers in our region, and awareness and utilization of the technology is low. We envision sharing information prior to installer selection at a launch event, including a fact sheet about solar hot water, to help build interest and generate leads.

## BATTERY STORAGE

Williamstown has a high percentage of environmentally concerned residents as evidenced by numerous early adopters and of community members with resources to try new technologies. We think that many people who already own solar PV will be interested in battery storage, and new adopters of solar PV will be excited to learn about this nascent technology. 26 survey respondents indicated interest in possibly purchasing a battery, and 56 expressed interest in learning more. We anticipate and hope our Solar PV and battery storage installers, if they are different, will collaborate to help us devise marketing strategies to explain the co-benefits of pairing these two technologies including how they can save people money. We also anticipate great interest in learning how battery storage can be utilized when people are not grid connected due to power outages and remote building sites. We envision sharing information prior to installer selection at a launch event, including a fact sheet about battery storage, to help build interest and generate leads.