

SUMMARY OF DRAFT COMMUNITY SOLAR ACTION PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF MONTAGUE

DRAFT PREPARED BY

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AND
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(IN COORDINATION WITH MONTAGUE SOLAR PLANNING COMMITTEE)

INTENT OF PLAN

To help guide future solar development within the Town of Montague by providing specific actions town residents, committee/board members and officials can take:

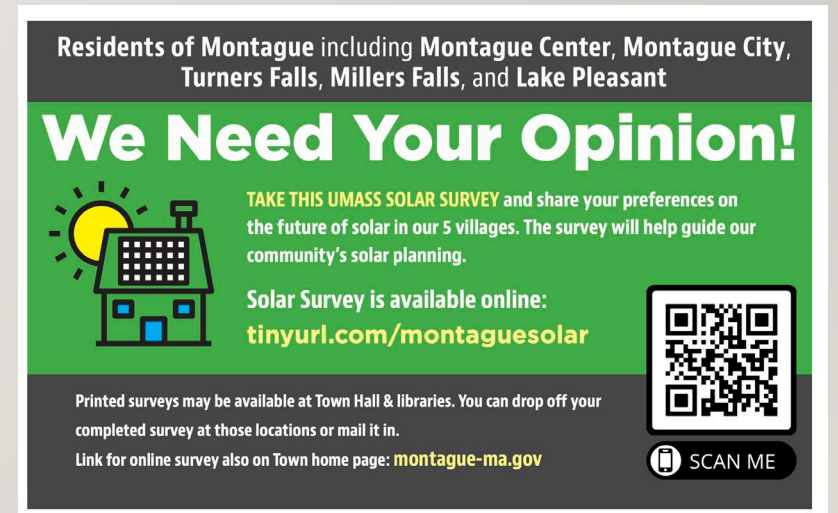
- To develop solar on municipal properties
- Promote solar on residential and commercial properties
- Encourage solar development on locations preferred by the community
- Adopt bylaw amendments & permitting processes in line with residents' preferences

SOME SOLAR PREFERENCES IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENTS TO UMASS COMMUNITY SOLAR SURVEY

Town residents surveyed about opinions, attitudes & preferences on the future of solar in Montague

- UMass mailed over 600 surveys to residents across town
- Survey promoted to wide range of organizations and at local stores on fliers with link & to survey
- Hard copies available at Town Hall, libraries, and Senior Center
- Posted on Town website home page
- Posted on Town email/text alerts to residents

249 Montague residents responded to the survey



Residents of Montague including Montague Center, Montague City, Turners Falls, Millers Falls, and Lake Pleasant


We Need Your Opinion!

TAKE THIS UMASS SOLAR SURVEY and share your preferences on the future of solar in our 5 villages. The survey will help guide our community's solar planning.

Solar Survey is available online:
tinyurl.com/montaguesolar

Printed surveys may be available at Town Hall & libraries. You can drop off your completed survey at those locations or mail it in.

Link for online survey also on Town home page: montague-ma.gov



SCAN ME

The flyer features a green background with a white house icon and a sun. The text is in white and yellow. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner, and a 'SCAN ME' button is below it.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY SOLAR SURVEY RESULTS

- Highly supportive of solar development on previously disturbed and developed sites such as rooftops, gravel pits, parking lots, for larger solar arrays
- Prefer little or no development of ag land & natural, undeveloped spaces (70-93% opposed to solar on these lands)
 - Want less than 20% of solar on natural or ag land
 - About 50% support agrivoltaics allowing farming under solar panels & along edges of farmland
- Strong support for solar on municipal properties & commercial rooftops & parking lots
- Residents want opportunity to be part owner of a project (e.g. community solar)

WHAT'S IN THE COMMUNITY SOLAR PLAN?

Lots of info to help the Town plan the future of solar, informed by community preferences

- Grid capacity for solar across town
- How much solar needed to meet town's clean energy needs
- IDs potential municipal & commercial sites for larger solar arrays
- Estimates solar capacity across variety of sites
- Next steps for planning for solar
- Tables with action items, start year, responsible parties

TABLE OF PUBLICALLY OWNED PROPERTY WITH LARGE ROOFTOPS GOOD FOR SOLAR

Structure/Ownership Status	Street Address	Total Roof Area (sf)	Estimated Technical Solar Potential (kW)
Franklin County Technical School	82 Industrial Blvd	154,104	1,511
Turners Falls High School	222 Turnpike Rd	93,048	913
Foreclosed Property (owned by Town of Montague)	20 Canal Rd	49,589	486
Sheffield Elementary School	40 Crocker Avenue	45,506	446
Hillcrest Elementary School	30 Griswold St	34,544	339
Department of Public Works	128 Turners Falls Rd	28,804	282
Shea Theater/Crocker Cutlery Apartments	61 Third St	27,254	267
Turners Falls Water Department	226 Millers Falls Rd	26,310	258
Public Safety Complex	178 Turnpike Rd	22,971	167
Turners Falls Airport	36 Industrial Blvd	14,592	106
DPW Garage	500 Avenue A	12,722	93
Town Hall	1 Avenue A	11,881	87
Turners Falls Airport	Millers Falls Rd	9,369	68
Water Treatment Facility? (Town of Montague)	34 Greenfield Rd	8,714	63
Sheffield Elementary School	35 Crocker Ave	8,081	59
Fire Station	28 Old Sunderland Rd	8,065	59
Turners Falls Airport	36 Industrial Blvd	6,939	51
Warehouse (Town of Montague)	20 Canal Rd	6,742	49
Water Treatment Facility? (Town of Montague)	92 Green Pond Rd	6,025	44

Table 1. Publicly owned properties with large areas of roof available for solar.

SUGGESTIONS FOR UPDATING SOLAR BYLAWS

With review by Town Counsel, the town may wish to consider the following updates to the solar bylaw: (See Section 7 in draft plan)

- Clarify solar parking canopies bylaws
 - Include them explicitly in the building-mounted solar category, or to add a separate category for these systems, allowing them by right with a building permit in all districts (while perhaps requiring Site Plan Review for systems over a certain size).
- Clarify the definition of accessory solar
- Consider introducing medium-scale solar by right or up to a certain size/area
- Expand zoning for large scale solar, while simultaneously imposing additional restrictions related to placement on forest, wildlife habitat, & ag lands

SUGGESTIONS FOR UPDATING SOLAR BYLAWS (CONTINUED)

Forest clearing:

- More clearly define forest clearing.
- Bylaw could be altered to allow for tree clearing with off-site compensatory mitigation.
- A “mature tree” does not appear to be defined in the bylaw.
- Consider establishing a “lookback” period for tree removal.
 - If no “lookback” in bylaws, property owner could log the majority of a forested property and then sell or lease the property to a solar developer in the subsequent year, without violating the provisions of the bylaw or allowing for town oversight.
 - This has happened in other towns!

SUGGESTIONS FOR UPDATING SOLAR BYLAWS (CONTINUED)

Pesticide use bylaw:

- The restriction in the town's current bylaw on herbicide use may conflict with MA Dept. of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) authority over pesticide use.
- The town may wish to check with Town Counsel.

ENCOURAGE PLANNING BOARD TO REVIEW PLAN, ESP. SECTION 7 ON MUNICIPAL ZONING, BYLAWS & PERMITTING

Thank you for taking time in your packed agenda to start this conversation about the solar planning in our town!

