

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

---

DRAFT PREPARED FALL 2022-SPRING 2023 BY

VICTORIA HASKINS & CAROLINE WILLIAMS, UMASS STUDENTS,  
AND  
UMASS CLEAN ENERGY EXTENSION

(IN COORDINATION WITH MONTAGUE SOLAR PLANNING COMMITTEE)



# WHY DO WE NEED TO PLAN FOR SOLAR?

## TOWN LIKELY TO SEE LARGE EXPANSION OF SOLAR BECAUSE...

---

- 30% federal commercial & residential tax credits for solar installations available thru 2032
  - Municipalities & non-profits are eligible for direct payments in lieu of 30% tax credits
- MA bill H.3992 filed by TUE House Chair Roy to share costs of grid upgrades needed for solar interconnections
- Larger scale solar developers prefer to locate solar on farmland or in place of forests because costs less under current state incentives than on rooftops & parking canopies
  - Montague has abundant farmland and forests
- MA is encouraging & likely to further incentivize solar to meet mandated climate emission targets
- Solar costs are decreasing rapidly
- The possibility of new financing for solar from the state's new green bank

# INTENT OF SOLAR PLAN

---

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

- Develop solar on municipal properties
- Promote solar on residential and commercial properties
- Encourage solar development on locations preferred by the community
- Explore planning in line with residents' preferences & state laws



# 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](https://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](https://montague-ma.gov)



SCAN ME



# 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
- Estimate of solar needed to meet town's clean energy needs
- IDs potential municipal & commercial sites for larger solar arrays
- Estimate of solar capacity across variety of sites
- Ideas for next steps for planning for solar
- Tables with possible action items, start year, responsible parties

# TABLE OF PUBLICLY 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.

# SOLAR FORUM OFFERED BY UMASS CLEAN ENERGY EXT. FACULTY

---

## Opportunity

- To ask Clean Energy Ext. faculty questions such as:
  - What is Town's electric grid capacity and potential solutions to needs for upgrading grid
  - Solar zoning
  - How are other towns using solar plan?
- For department heads & related committees/boards to discuss ideas in draft plan, provide feedback & explore next steps
- To pro-actively identify ways the Town & community will help meet MA GHG emission targets
- To hear about economic benefits & incentives for solar
- To explore next steps such as including solar plans in Montague's comprehensive plan, an ad hoc committee, Town staff-led planning



# SELECT BOARD FEEDBACK ON TOWN PARTICIPATION IN SOLAR PLANNING?

---

- With the likelihood of solar expansion in our Town, the energy committee feels that it is critical for Town leaders to participate in a planning process
  - **Would like to see solar planning included in Town's comprehensive plan**
- What are the select board's thoughts on solar planning?
- Would you encourage related department heads & committees/boards to:
  - Include solar plans in Montague's comprehensive plan?
  - Attend a Solar Forum?
  - Participate in a solar planning process?
  - Explore next steps?

THE ENERGY COMMITTEE THANKS YOU FOR TAKING TIME TO START THIS  
CONVERSATION ABOUT SOLAR PLANNING IN OUR TOWN!

---

