

Marketing and Outreach Plan

Outline a marketing plan that describes methods to create community awareness around the Solarize Mass 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 within 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 during the program. Include information on where community events could be held, including the Meet the Installer community meeting.

In gauging interest, the City and some QCAN volunteers have already collected names and contact information (addresses, email addresses, and/or phone numbers) of between 326-517 Quincy residents and business owners interested in having their properties' assessed for solar suitability. (Comparison of the lists for overlap has not yet been done.) Volunteers have also already reached out to several Quincy organizations. Many of these groups support this program (see emails), and several are willing to use their contacts to further outreach efforts. While we consider this just a start, it does provide a large number of leads from day one for the selected Installer.

Marketing of the program will continue with several activities on both the volunteer and municipal side. Efforts will take advantage of strong relationships with diverse groups, and will include traditional and newer ways of advertising the program.

Volunteers

There is already a demonstrable strong commitment from several Quincy Climate Action Network (QCAN) volunteers to promote this program, including an intern from Eastern Nazarene College.

Additionally, over 250 respondents from the Survey Monkey indicated a willingness to help promote the program, including 100 respondents who indicated their willingness even if their properties do not qualify. We also expect to contact Quincy residents who already have solar installations, to see if they would be willing to promote the Solarize program to other residents, since people with PV are among those most enthusiastic about spreading the adoption of solar.

Community Events

The City sponsors several large community events that occur within the timeline of the program. These include the Christmas Parade (Sunday after Thanksgiving), the Lunar New Year (February), and Flag Day (June 14). Also in Quincy, Eastern Nazarene College holds a Homecoming Fair in late November. These events are typically attended by 1,000s of Quincy residents. Volunteers expect to use these as opportunities to collect names and contact information requesting solar assessments. Depending on the event, there will either be a table set up or volunteers will walk among crowds to talk about the Solarize program and enlist participation.

Sporting Events

Youth sports are extremely popular in Quincy, and there are soccer, baseball, softball, track club, and basketball leagues. Matches are well attended by parents and others. Volunteers are expecting to attend several sporting events with the expectation of popularizing the program and signing up households for assessments.

Religious Community Outreach

There are 42 churches, 1 Buddhist temple and 1 mosque within the City of Quincy. The City expects to write and send a letter describing the program and ask leaders of these faith communities to inform congregants of the opportunity. The City recently sent a letter to religious groups and other nonprofits as part of a new Help for Energy Hogs programs sponsored by National Grid and staffed by HEET, a Cambridge nonprofit energy efficiency group.

Chamber of Commerce

The Quincy Chamber has almost 600 members and an active email list of 1,000s. The Chamber has agreed to announce the program through its social media networks, which reach small businesses and Quincy residents who are business owners. The City will work with the Chamber to publicize the program and Solarize events.

Public Library

The Main Branch and branch libraries have glass display cases that may be used to publicize photovoltaic books and other resources, and to announce Solar 101 and Solar 201 meetings and milestones. Volunteers will work with library staff on this outreach.

Quincy Access TV (QATV)

Quincy's Solar Coach currently co-produces a show focused on climate action for QATV. We expect to produce a program about the Solarize Program, and announce the Solar 101 and 201 meetings and remind residents of upcoming deadlines through public service announcements.

Public Newspapers

Quincy is served by both the Quincy Sun and the Patriot Ledger. The Quincy Sun is a weekly paper with a circulation of 7,000; the Patriot Ledger is a regional daily paper with a weekday circulation of 38,500 and weekend circulation of 45,400. Volunteers anticipate writing letters to the editor(s) for publication about the Solarize program, and to contact reporters to see if feature articles can be written. Municipal staff will prepare press releases. Community meetings will be listed in the community notices calendar. Additionally, the City is exploring purchasing occasional advertising announcing community Solar 101 and 201 meetings.

Municipal Employees

Some percentage of City staff are residents of Quincy. The City has discussed including an announcement of the program to all municipal employees with the City's Human Resources staff. The announcement may be included as a separate flyer along with the distribution of employees' paystub.

Electronic School Bulletin Boards

There are highly visible electronic bulletin boards outside Quincy High School on Coddington Street near Quincy Center, and for the Central Middle School on Hancock Street. A third electronic bulletin board is planned for North Quincy High School. The City has discussed using these signs to announce upcoming meetings about the program with the School Department. Because of their visibility, they can reach a wide audience who just happen to be near the schools.

Social Media

The School Department has a website, Facebook page, and Twitter feed. The School Department accounts have 3,000 followers, and they agreed to announce the program and upcoming meetings if Quincy is selected. They also have email addresses for 7,000 parents of the 9,500 students attending

Quincy Public Schools. Under the Community Notices section, they expect to send email blasts about Solarize Quincy to their list of parents, as well as faculty and staff, many of whom are Quincy residents.

The Planning Department has agreed to create a webpage for the Solarize program. Additionally, the home page of the City of Quincy's website includes articles of interest for Quincy residents and businesses. Quincy CityLink and Quincy Twitter will also announce meetings and milestones for the Solarize Program. These will be updated by Planning Department staff.

Posters announcing Solar 101 and 201 meetings

We expect to print posters prominently announcing the community meetings. Quincy has several neighborhood business centers, and volunteers expect to ask businesses to post the announcements in store windows and on community notice bulletin boards. Additionally, Eastern Bank and Quincy Credit Union (QCU) will be contacted about displaying information about the program in their lobbies. They have previously agreed to the use of their space for announcements of other community programs. We will also inquire about announcing the program meeting dates in QCU's Quarterly Newsletter. QCU has 30,500 members.

Lawn Signs

The City permits placement of lawn signs on private property. Volunteers will distribute Solarize lawn signs from either the MassCEC and/or the selected Installer, to further raise awareness of the program.

Linguistic Minority Outreach

Quincy is unique in that 25% of its population is Asian. The majority of Asian Quincy residents are of Chinese heritage. Some percentage of the Asian residents and business owners are non-English speakers, and the City makes special efforts to make sure that language is not a barrier to opportunity. City staff include an Asian Ombudsman, and the City's Constituent Services representative for the past several years is also Asian. The City expects to translate some information, including meeting announcements into Mandarin, so that lack of knowledge of the English language does not preclude someone from learning of the program.

Timeline

Although Quincy has not yet been selected, we already have contact information for a sizable number of possible participants and volunteers.

Should the City be selected in this round, we expect to use November through January, shoring up the number of volunteers and assigning tasks based on interest and availability. We will also book the public meeting venues and announcement translators during that time.

We expect to front-end load our marketing efforts, concentrating in February, March, April and May. Except for the well-attended Flag Day Parade, or in the unlikely event that sign up has not met our expectations, we expect to ease off our outreach sometime in May, and use the remaining weeks to make sure that households are reminded of the June deadline, so they have sufficient time to have their questions answered.

Meeting space

There are a number of suitable locations for Solarize meetings for the general public. All have access to microphones, computers and projectors, and have access to public transportation. These include:

Quincy HS Auditorium- 550+ capacity

Central Middle School Auditorium – 450+ capacity

North Quincy HS Auditorium – 400+ capacity

Thomas Crane Public Library Meeting Room – 125 capacity

Quincy Innovation Center Meeting Room – 100+ capacity

Our preference would be to meet at the largest venues, and we want to discuss having more “local” meetings given the scale of the City. We will also need to check the availability of specific locations on specific dates before finalizing meeting space.