

Solarize Yakima Partnership Proposal

Background

Spark Northwest is a non-profit organization that accelerates the shift to clean energy in communities across the Northwest. Since 2011, Spark Northwest has launched 21 Solarize campaigns in Washington and Oregon, galvanizing over 950 homeowners to install solar and unleashing \$21 million in local economic activity. To date, our Solarize Northwest program has resulted in over 5 megawatts of installed solar.

Solarize is a group purchase campaign that simplifies the process of going solar, reduces the upfront cost, and educates residents. Local jurisdictions have chosen to host Solarize campaigns for a variety of reasons: to deliver economic development, support energy independence for residents and businesses, fulfill climate action plans, and respond to citizen interest in solar energy. We work with local community groups, lenders, the electric utility, and local government, to select qualified installers, deliver educational workshops, and track installations to completion, ensuring a positive experience for participants.

Spark Northwest is currently partnering with Yakima Valley Conference of Governments to deliver a Solarize campaign in Grandview, Mabton, and Sunnyside and the surrounding rural areas. Both partners hope to expand the program to other areas in the Yakima Valley with future campaigns, including the City of Yakima.

2019 Opportunity

To deliver a nine month Solarize campaign, Spark Northwest invests significant time and resources. Our work is funded by fee-for-service contracts or by grants from foundations or governments. In 2019, Spark Northwest anticipates funding from a US Department of Energy grant to cover our costs of providing services to selected communities as part of the *Solar Plus* project.

Spark Northwest is currently seeking partner communities for 2019 Solarize campaigns and may select up to 5 communities that are ready to commit staff time and resources to hosting a Solarize campaign on behalf of their residents. We will select partners on a rolling basis between now and January 15. Partners must confirm interest and identify a staff lead for the project by December 31 at the latest.

Partnerships

Solarize relies on local partners to recruit volunteers, identify outreach opportunities, and complete outreach through their own channels. Past partners include Seattle City Light, University of Oregon, neighborhood and community groups, and numerous city governments. Each community and campaign is unique, and partner roles respond to the interests, expertise, and resources of each partner. Below is a proposal for partnership between the City of Yakima, YVCOG, and Spark Northwest, to be refined by each partner in a memorandum of understanding.

Suggested Roles:

Campaign Manager: *Spark Northwest Staff*

Provides comprehensive campaign training, leads the installer selection process, supports the workshops, hosts webpage registration and participant tracking, and conducts final reporting and evaluation. Provides unbiased solar technical expertise in all elements of the campaign.

Local Campaign Lead: *Yakima Valley Council of Governments*

Provides coordination of partners and knowledge of the local community. Coordinates outreach and volunteer recruitment. Schedules and delivers public workshops.

Community Partners: *City of Yakima, Community Groups, TBD*

City of Yakima acts as the face of the campaign in the community, recruits volunteers, amplifies the campaign via city communications, and ensures solar permitting follows best practices to expedite solar installations. The City can also provide city venues for meetings and workshops. Other community partners can join the effort to assist with outreach and recruit volunteers.

Community Selected Installer: *TBD*

The community selected installer supports outreach (mailings, farmer's market tabling, etc.) presents at workshops, provides site assessments to interested workshop attendees, completes installations, and tracks and reports customer outcomes.

Timeline

1: Campaign Training/Kickoff (Month 1)

Spark Northwest delivers a customized training to partners, volunteers, and City staff. The three-hour training equips partners to run a successful Solarize campaign and lays the groundwork for the team partnership.

| Spark Northwest | YVCOG | City of Yakima |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Lead Training, Provide Materials and Templates</i> | <i>Host Training; Invite Volunteers</i> | <i>Invite Volunteers; Announce Training through City channels</i> |

2: Installer Selection (Month 2)

Spark Northwest works with the community to competitively select a solar installer or team of installers to be featured at Solarize workshops in return for guaranteeing a group price. We coach the team through a transparent, defensible process that results in the best value for the community and a fully engaged installation partner. Note: This is not a procurement process; the only contracts signed are between the solar installer and the homeowner who purchases an installation.

| Spark Northwest | YVCOG | City of Yakima |
|--|---|--|
| <i>Provide template RFP; Issue RFP; Guide committee through the process of review, interview and selection. Sign MOU</i> | <i>Coordinate venue for committee meetings.</i> | <i>Provide venue for committee meetings.</i> |

3: Grassroots Education & Outreach (Months 3 – 6)

Spark Northwest will guide and support the grassroots outreach effort by the City of Yakima campaign lead and community partners. We will provide the proven messages and materials, facilitate the Outreach Committee launch, and co-lead the first educational workshop.

| Spark Northwest | YVCOG | City |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Provide Workshop PowerPoint; Provide Outreach Templates.</i> | <i>Convene Outreach Committee; Coordinate Outreach; Schedule and Deliver Workshops.</i> | <i>Provide workshop venue; publicize workshops and outreach; attend committee meetings; Attend Workshops</i> |



4: Designated Webpage & Participant Tracking (Months 3 – 9)

Spark Northwest will host a dedicated campaign webpage to serve as the Solarize Yakima homepage and track customer contact from initial registration through installation.

| <i>Spark Northwest</i> | <i>YVCOG and City</i> | <i>Installer</i> |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Host campaign website and online registration; track and report participant status</i> | <i>Receive periodic updates on campaign numbers</i> | <i>Provide updated participant status weekly</i> |

5: Reporting & Evaluation (Month 9)

Spark Northwest will provide final reporting and evaluation to enable the City of Yakima to measure Solarize impact.

| <i>Spark Northwest</i> | <i>YVCOG and City</i> | <i>Installer</i> |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Conduct survey and prepare Final Report</i> | <i>Celebrate!</i> | <i>Provide final cost data</i> |

Next Steps

Department of Energy must approve funding for 2019, and we anticipate this decision in November. If funding is confirmed, we will move forward immediately with confirmation of our 2019 partners. Spark Northwest and the City of Yakima can then refine roles, sign a Memorandum of Agreement and kick off the campaign in early 2019.