



# Renewable Communities 2021

## Massachusetts cities and towns leading the way to 100% renewable energy

### Springfield: Community solar

In December 2019, a 4.7-megawatt community solar array was powered on in the city of Springfield, providing energy to 500 subscribers.<sup>1</sup>

The solar project was built on top of a former landfill that was capped in 2012.<sup>2</sup> In March 2018, the Springfield city council approved the sale of the site for development as a solar array. Tom Matthews, project manager for Springfield's Office of Planning and Economic Development, said at the time that "the blighted lots will be transferred into productive parcels that will improve the area."<sup>3</sup>

Low-income residents participating in this community solar project receive a 50 percent discount in their energy costs under Citizens Energy Corporation's JOE-4-SUN program, resulting in savings of up to \$300 per person each year.<sup>4</sup>

The project is also expected to reduce municipal energy costs. Springfield is purchasing a portion of the solar array's output at a 20 percent discount, allowing the city to save roughly \$1.2 million over twenty years.<sup>5</sup>

These efforts align with Springfield's climate action and resilience plan. The plan, adopted in 2017, aims to reduce emissions by 80 percent by 2050 and increase solar power to 10 percent of the community's energy consumption by 2022 and 50 percent by 2050.<sup>6</sup> The climate plan calls for increased access to solar for low-income residents, with a goal of signing up half of all low-income accounts to receive discounted electricity through community solar projects.<sup>7</sup>

1. "4.7-MW community solar array in Massachusetts comes online," Kelly Pickerel, Solar Power World, 16 December 2019, <<https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2019/12/4-7-mw-community-solar-array-in-massachusetts-comes-online>>.

2. "Crane Foundry Sand Landfill - Oak Street, Springfield Post-Closure Use - Solar Farm," Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, 17 August 2018, <<https://www.mass.gov/doc/springfield-crane-foundry-sand-landfill-8172018/download>>.

3. "Springfield sells old Indian Orchard landfill, Chapman Valve parcel for reuse as solar farms," Peter Goonan, MassLive, updated 30 January 2019, posted 13 March 2018, <[https://www.masslive.com/news/2018/03/springfield\\_sells\\_old\\_indian\\_o.html](https://www.masslive.com/news/2018/03/springfield_sells_old_indian_o.html)>.

4. "4.7-MW community solar array in Massachusetts comes online," Kelly Pickerel, Solar Power World, 16 December 2019, <<https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2019/12/4-7-mw-community-solar-array-in-massachusetts-comes-online>>.

5. "Joe Kennedy Dedicates Low-Income Solar Array in Springfield," Citizens Energy Corporation, 13 December 2019, <<https://www.citizensenergy.com/post/joe-kennedy-dedicates-low-income-solar-array-in-springfield>>.

6. Strong, *Healthy & Just: Springfield's Climate Action and Resilience Plan*, Office of Community Development, City of Springfield, June 2017, <[https://www.springfield-ma.gov/planning/fileadmin/community\\_dev/DR/CARP\\_FINAL\\_REV\\_2017.pdf](https://www.springfield-ma.gov/planning/fileadmin/community_dev/DR/CARP_FINAL_REV_2017.pdf)>, 5 and 47.

7. *Ibid.*, 47.