

Solstice to Offer Community Solar to New Bedford Residents

Drive around any neighborhood in New Bedford and you can't help but notice roofs lined with solar panels.

That's because solar panels are a win-win for everyone involved. They bring down energy costs for homeowners and provide renewable, sustainable energy for the planet.

But whole swaths of people – 80% of Americans – have never been able to take advantage of the benefits of solar power. Don't own a home? Too many trees or other obstructions around your roof? Can't afford the upfront costs?

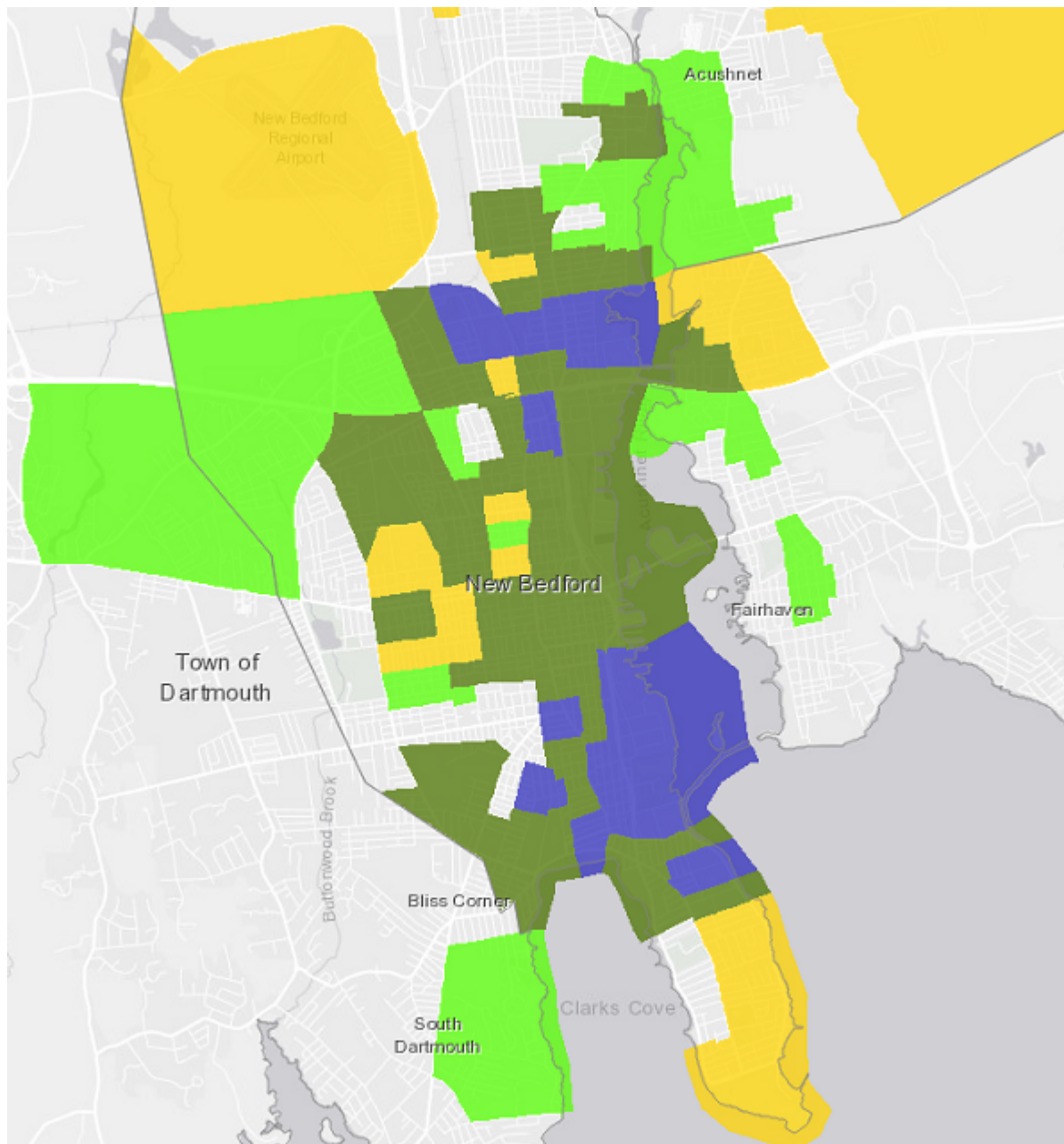
Now there's a new type of solar, specifically designed for under-served communities that aren't typically given an opportunity to save money while doing good for the planet. It's called community solar and it's coming to New Bedford, thanks to **Solstice**.

Solstice was founded outside of Boston in 2014 by Steph Speirs and Sandhya Murali to offer every community access to clean solar energy at no cost to customers. Speirs was even named the 2022 Ernst & Young New England Entrepreneur of the Year award winner.

So how does it work? What's the catch? Nothing is truly free, right? Well, this is.

The way **Solstice** works is different from most solar companies. Instead of slapping solar panels on your roof and changing out your electric meter, Solstice builds solar farms and then offers customers a share of those farms. It's a lot like a community garden where everyone has their own section. Except there's no planting or weeding involved.

Eligible customers in New Bedford – mainly zip codes 02746 and 02740, or anyone living in the blue or green sections of **this map** – can save up to 20% off their electric bill with zero added costs.



“Community solar sounded like a great way to help the world in what little ways I can,” said Hilary Young, a Solstice subscriber from Orleans. “And when I found out I could save money, too, I thought that was amazing. When I compare my bills this year to the same time last year, my expenses are down.”

When starting **Solstice** originally as a non-profit, Speirs and

Murali made a point of offering clean energy to homes with limited incomes. One in four American families spend 7% or more of their income paying energy bills.

“Energy should be a human right,” Speirs said. “However, millions of Americans struggle to pay for it each month. Low-income communities and communities of color spend up to three times as much of their incomes on energy as other households.”

Demand for affordable clean energy is universal.

**With *no costs to join*,
community solar reaches traditionally
underserved communities to align
supply with demand.**



So how does a community solar farm work?

In just five minutes, eligible New Bedford residents can enroll in a solar farm that is already built and has been generating local, clean power for two years. You don't need to

purchase any panels; through the state of Massachusetts' community solar program, this solar farm's benefits are open to the public. By enrolling with Solstice, you can claim a portion of the solar farm equal to your home's energy use. You'll get credits for the energy your solar share produces, which will get subtracted from your monthly electric bills. You'll still pay for this energy, but at a 20% discount compared to Eversource's rates. This means your costs will be lower every month with no added fees. "We hear from community members that they almost don't believe how easy community solar is to sign up for and receive savings from," said Solstice's Sean Doucette. "Some folks don't look into it because it sounds too good to be true. We're here to share that this is a very real and awesome opportunity for New Bedford residents to go green and save."

So give **Solstice** a call at (866) 826-1997 **or** visit their **website** to sign up. They're more than happy to answer all your questions about your local community solar program and how you can save money while doing your part to help the planet.

"I've got a couple of kids and we talk about climate change and we don't want them to think that there's nothing you can do," said George Palmer, a Solstice solar subscriber. "If we can spread this, if we can get people more involved, we're really going to make a difference."

Website: <https://solstice.us/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/solarforgood>

