Request for Information (RFI)

On Community Shared Solar Systems for Potential Subscribers in Framingham, Natick, and Wayland.

# Issue date: July 3rd, 2019

# Information due: July 26th, 2019, by 12:00 pm

Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

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### Project Description & Objectives

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (“MAPC”), the regional planning agency serving the 101 cities and towns in the greater Boston area, frequently provides joint procurement and technical assistance services to municipalities in our region. Through our collective procurement programs, MAPC solicits bids and selects vendors on behalf of the municipalities we represent, allowing municipalities to save time and money by contracting with an MAPC-selected vendor instead of conducting individual local procurements. Similarly, MAPC has run Requests for Information (RFIs) for communities in order to help them to identify vendor information and inform decision-making.

In this manner, MAPC, in coordination with the Towns of Natick and Wayland and City of Framingham (“the Municipalities”), now seeks to gain information on the Community Shared Solar (CSS) market serving MetroWest communities.

**MAPC would like to obtain information that will allow MAPC and the Municipalities to understand what CSS systems are currently available or in development stages to residential, commercial, non-profit, and municipal subscribers in the MetroWest communities.** In particular, the Municipalities seek to encourage CSS projects that will target low to medium income (LMI) communities, renters, and others who have previously lacked access to solar. The Municipalities are interested in collecting and sharing this information with their communities as a way to increase access to solar, and plan to publicize information collected through this RFI through an online platform.

This document is a Request for Information only. MAPC and the Municipalities will not make any award of a contract and may not take any further action on the basis of this Request for Information.

### Timeline

MAPC Posted: Wednesday, July 3rd, 2019

CommBUYS Published: Wednesday, July 3rd, 2019

Questions Deadline: Friday, July 12th, 2019, by 12:00 p.m.

MAPC Response to Questions: Wednesday, July 17th, 2019, by 5:00 p.m.

Proposal Due Date: **Friday, July 26th, 2019, by 12:00 p.m.**

MAPC reserves the right to conduct interviews, anticipated August 12th-23rd

### Request for Information (RFI)

MAPC is issuing this Request for Information (“RFI”) to solicit responses from providers of CSS to the questions and categories described below. This RFI is intended solely to obtain information to assist the Municipalities with:

* Understanding the current and projected Community Shared Solar project offerings serving MetroWest;
* Encouraging solar project developers to develop CSS projects serving MetroWest;
* Providing transparent and clear information to help inform community members; and
* Increasing community member awareness, access, and participation in Community Shared Solar.

Information provided by developers will be compiled by MAPC and the Municipalities for the purposes described above. We encourage respondents to submit all information by Friday, July 26th. Respondents may include information not explicitly requested if they believe it may address the objectives of this RFI.

**Submission Sections**

The following outline is to assist in the development of your response, and for ease of review:

1. **Cover Letter -** A brief summary of your response signed by an authorized company representative on company letterhead;
2. **Narrative Proposal -** As described below;
3. **Community Solar Developer Profile and Project Details Form -** As described below;
4. **Sample contract -** A sample contract that includes the developer’s subscription or PPA agreement with a residential customer/subscriber, specifying all terms and conditions. If applicable, include an agreement with a commercial customer/subscriber as well.
5. **Appendices -** If necessary to understand your response, include sample marketing materials**;** or other background information
6. **A glossary -** If necessary to understand your response, include a glossary of terms used.

There is no page limit for this RFI response; however, MAPC asks that responses be provided as summaries and explanations of CSS projects and procedures rather than simply a compilation of raw documents or marketing materials. Supporting documentation will be accepted in Appendices, but the Provider must indicate which portions of the supporting document are relevant to this RFI in the “Additional Notes” column of the Developer Profile and Project Details Form. Additional details may be requested by MAPC in follow-up correspondence. MAPC reserves the right to conduct interviews with any or none of the respondents.

Narrative Proposal:

Please respond to the following with a brief narrative description.

* Please describe your firm and summarize available Community Shared Solar Projects in 1-2 short paragraphs. This may include project-specific information such as location, eligible subscribers, anticipated date of operation and other key information. Please also include an estimate of how many subscribers you are targeting. Additional information is requested in the Developer Profile and Project Details Form below.
* Marketing and Communications Strategy: Please describe how you plan to market this project to potential subscribers and off-takers. In your answer, address the following questions:
	+ What are your methods for marketing this project in the region?
	+ What information do you typically provide to potential customers in the project marketing?
	+ Is this approach the same or different from previous CSS project you have managed? Why?
	+ What areas of Massachusetts are you targeting with your marketing?
	+ Please include sample marketing materials either in an appendix or link to online materials.

### Developer Profile and Project Detail Form:

Please use the attached Developer Profile and Project Detail form to address the following topics:

1. **Firm information and experience**
2. **Project Information (may include multiple projects if applicable)**
3. **Pricing Structure and Customer Financing Options**
4. **Access for Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) Customers**

Interested parties are invited to respond to this Request for Information (RFI). Information that any respondent submits will be considered as voluntarily offered and with the understanding that this RFI is for information gathering and dissemination purposes only. All information provided in a response becomes subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Statute. This is not a formal solicitation. Formal solicitations may or may not be issued as a result of and/or subsequent to this RFI, as the information received may help to inform MAPC or the Municipalities in the potential development of a Request for Proposals (RFP) or Invitation for Bids (IFB) in the future. No contract will result directly from this RFI.

### Submission Instructions

Questions and requests for clarification should be addressed in writing to Sasha Shyduroff via e-mail at SShyduroff@mapc.org**.** MAPC will post the RFI and answers to questions on the agency’s website at: <https://www.mapc.org/about-mapc/legal-notices-meetings/>and on CommBUYS so that all potential respondents may have access to the answers.

We encourage response submissions electronically via e-mail to SShyduroff@mapc.org by 5:00 pm on Friday, July 26th, 2019. Responses after this time may or may not be considered now or at a later date.

MAPC shall not be liable for any costs or expenses incurred by any Provider in connection with this RFI or any response by any Provider to this RFI. No compensation will be paid to Providers for responding to this RFI. The costs and expenses incurred by a Provider in the preparation, submission, and presentation of the response are the sole responsibility of the Provider and shall not be charged to MAPC.

This document is a Request for Information only. MAPC will not make any award of a contract and may not take any further action on the basis of this Request for Information. Provider’s response will be treated only as information to MAPC and the Municipalities for whatever use MAPC and the Municipalities deem appropriate.

Ownership of all data, materials, and documentation originated and prepared for MAPC pursuant to this RFI shall belong to MAPC and the Municipalities, and shall be subject to public inspection in accordance with the Massachusetts Public Records Law. Trade secrets or proprietary information submitted by the Provider shall not be subject to public disclosure under the Massachusetts Public Records Law, unless otherwise required by law or a court.