

Project Overview & Objectives

Ashfield is committed to decarbonization and is utilizing solar to get there

Prior to 2026, Ashfield

- Developed a Community Solar Action Plan
- Directed a residential solar campaign
- Secured funding for solarization of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and Town Highway Garage

Ashfield is a small town with few municipal buildings

- The 5 town buildings use an average of 158,450 kWh of electricity per year¹
- Current Wastewater Treatment Plant and Town Highway Garage Solar²
- implementation are predicted to produce in excess of their energy usage
- 17% of houses have solar in Ashfield³
- Residential energy usage is a large part of the total energy use in Ashfield solar action⁴**

¹ Grace Theberge, *Community Solar Action Plan for the Town of Ashfield DRAFT* (UMass Clean Energy Extension, 2023).
² Madison Schofield, "Ashfield Secures \$870K Grant for Solar Project," *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, November 26, 2025, <https://gazettenet.com/2025/11/26/ashfield-town-solar-installation/>.
³ Theberge, *Community Solar Action Plan for the Town of Ashfield DRAFT*.
⁴ Theberge, *Community Solar Action Plan for the Town of Ashfield DRAFT*.

Community Outreach and Education

‘A Primer on Residential Solar Options to Reduce Energy Bills’ Ran in the Ashfield News

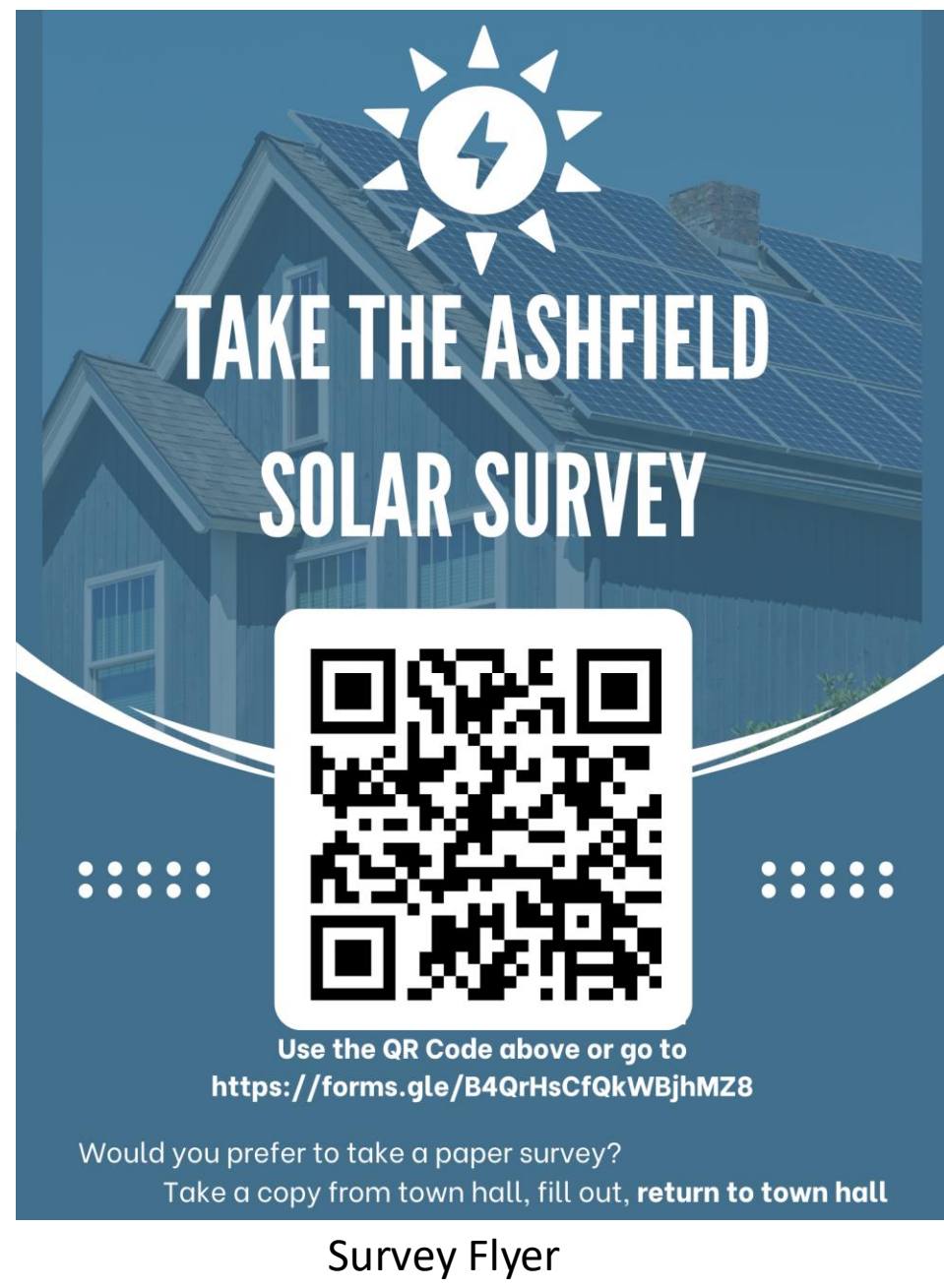
- Addressed common concerns about solar
- Explained various ownership and funding models
- Examined low interest loans and estimated payback times

Launched Residential Solar Survey

- Asked resident who read the article to take the survey
- Placed flyers in community hubs to further encourage residents to participate
- Set up paper copies for residents who did not wish to reply online

Analyzed Survey Results

- Began evaluating results

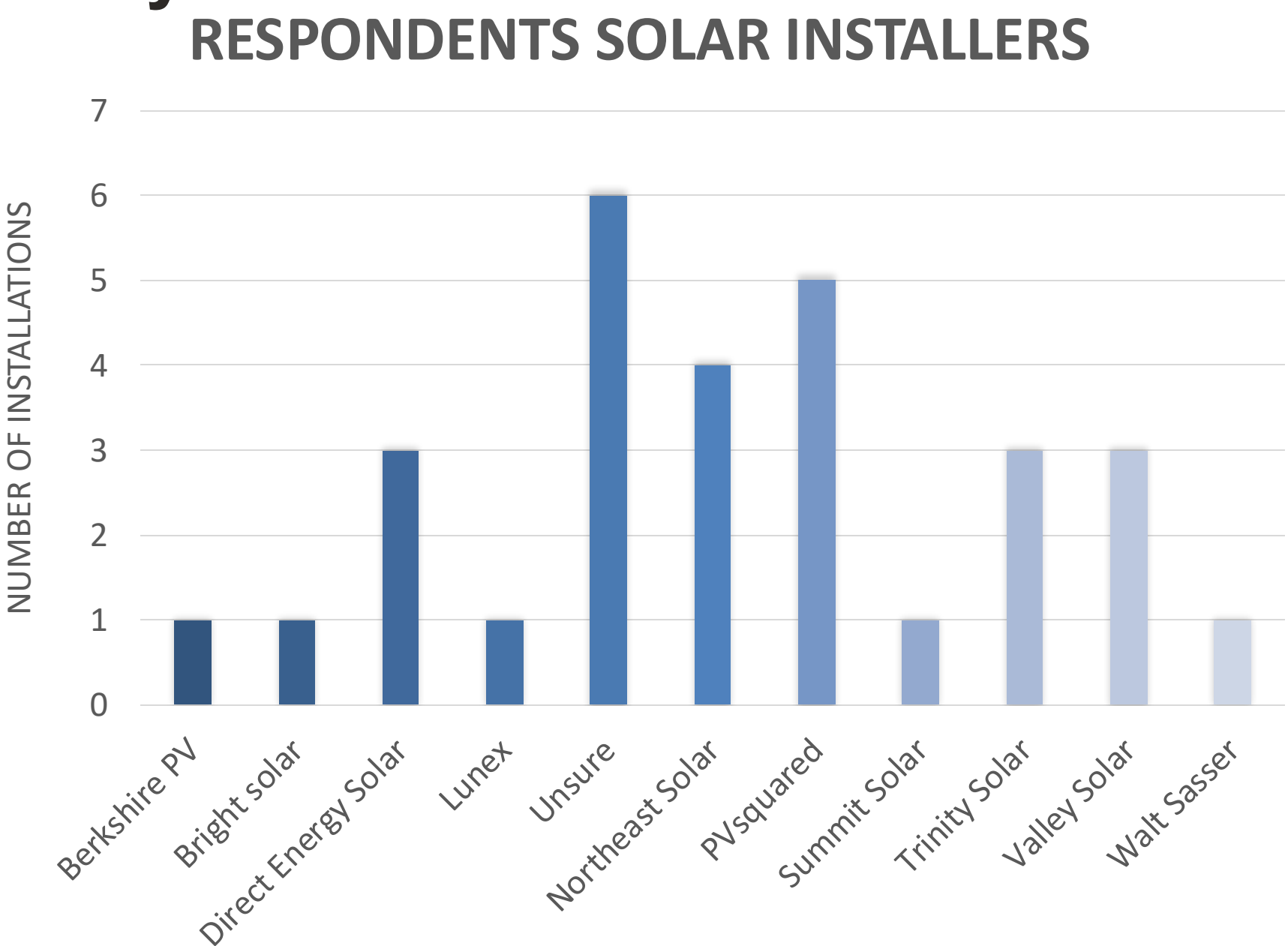


Deliverables and Findings

Key findings from the survey

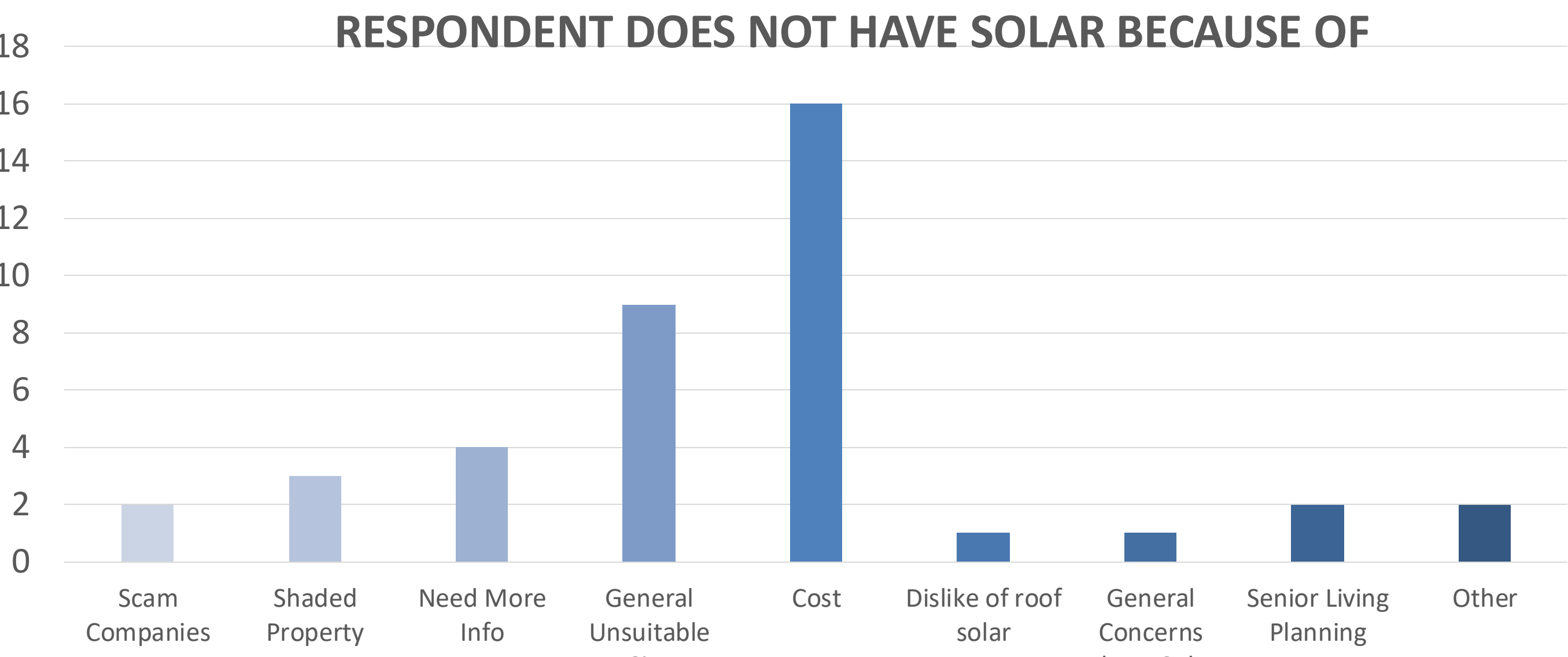
For those with solar

- 100% are happy that they have solar
- The most common issue with those who have solar is that companies close or sell their contract creating confusion for the homeowners



For those without solar

- The number one reason for not having solar was cost
- This was closely followed by site suitability concerns



No respondents disapproved of solar

- Anecdotal evidence suggest there is some resistance to residential solar
- Increased efforts to engage these constituents will continue

Critical Note: Based on estimates from the Solar Action Survey (Cite) and FRCOG solar permit data, there are approximately **206 Residential Solar Projects**

Meaning **23.01% of homes in Ashfield have solar.** 45% of Respondents reported having solar in the survey, indicated the survey is **not representative of Ashfield as a whole.**¹

¹ Grace Theberge, *Community Solar Action Plan for the Town of Ashfield DRAFT* (UMass Clean Energy Extension, 2023).

Deliverables

- A summary of the survey findings
 - Synthesis of data
 - Recommendations around pursuing solar implementation campaigns
 - Clear list of barriers faced by Ashfield residents pursuing residential solar
- The Ashfield News Article, which includes a resources section

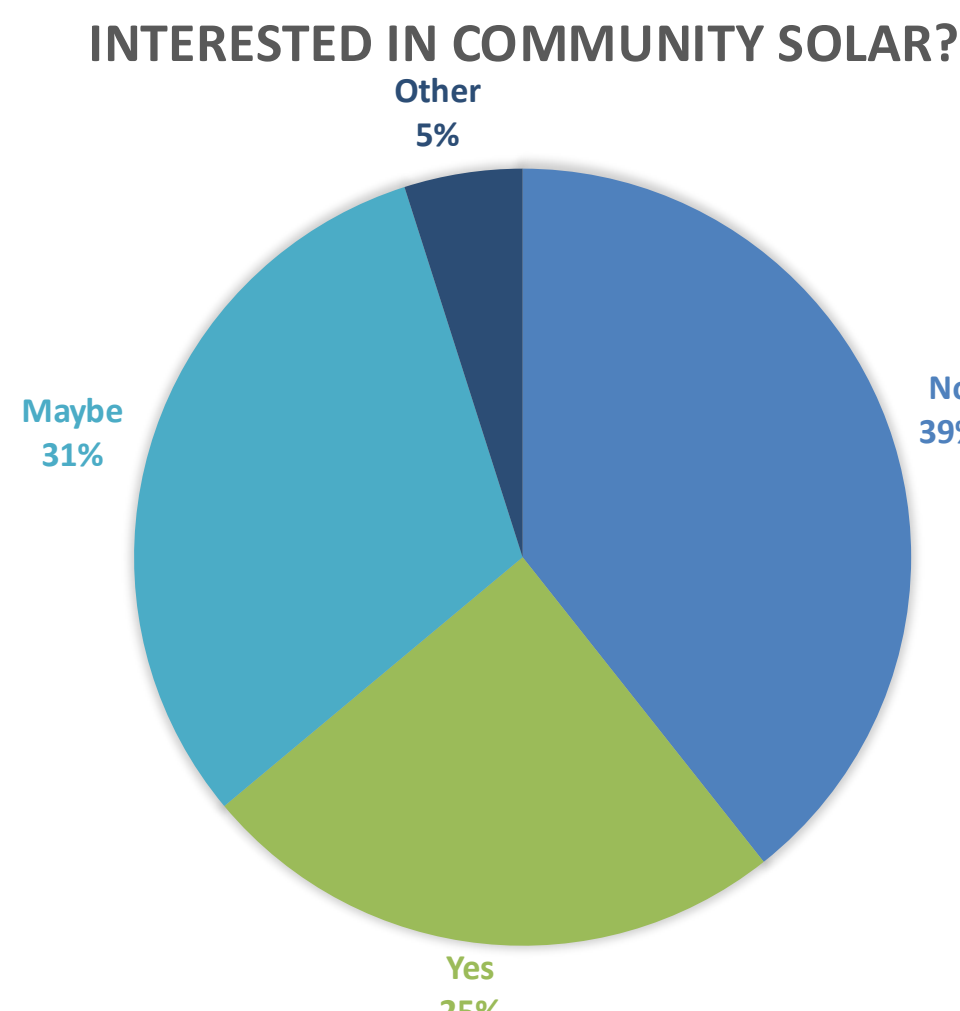
Main Takeaways

On Going Education About Solar is Helpful

- Residents need reliable information about reputable companies
- Residentits want assistance accessing financial resources for solar
- Preliminary survey results indicate a desire for information but uncertainty of who to trust

Ashfield Residents are Interested in Learning More About Community Solar

- Survey respondents expressed interest in community solar
- Community solar is a popular option for those without the ability to procure their own solar
- Residents expressed an interest in learning more about potential savings and how community solar works



Beyond Solarization

- Ashfield Residents are interested in implementing solar at home, but adoption is not suitable, wanted or possible for every community member
- Without factoring in increased energy usage due to decarbonization, Ashfield will need to implement additional efforts to procure renewable energy just to cover residential use

Ashfield is considering launching an additional residential solarization campaign. To assess the value of it, understanding residents concerns, barriers and overall sentiment towards solar is imperative

Planning beyond solar is also impacted by how much solar is anticipated to be built in Ashfield. If the results indicate that new residential solar projects are unlikely to happen the Energy Committee will focus energy towards other decarbonization efforts.

Acknowledgements

Ashfield Energy Committee Chair: Alexandra Osterman

Ashfield Energy Committee Members: David Chandler, Rick Chandler, Brian Clark, Ellen Leue and Mary Quigley

Ashfield Town Clerk: Alexis Fedorjaczenko

Ashfield Town Administrator: Paul McLatchy III

Prepare of Ashfield Community Solar Action Plan: Grace Theberge

FRCOG FCCIP Program Administrator: Gabriella Grise

CELT Leaderhsip Team & Each Survey Respondent