

9/14/2021

# EBCCE Community Solar Program:

Information Session #2 for  
Prospective Community  
Sponsors - Letters of  
Commitment



# Agenda

## 1. Welcome!

## 2. Community Solar Program Overview

- Program Summary
- Program Benefits & Structure
- Sponsor's role

## 3. Sponsorship Letter of Commitment

- Process overview
- Evaluation of Commitment Letters
- CPUC requirements

## 4. Next Steps, Upcoming Events, & Resources

# Welcome!

- **Intended audience for this presentation**
- **Access to slides**
- **Q&A at the end**

# EBCCE Community Solar Program Overview

# Program Overview

- The CPUC in 2018 adopted Decision 18-06-027, creating the community solar program. The program promotes the development of renewable generation in communities historically left behind in clean infrastructure development. Pursuant to the Decision, EBCE may implement its own community solar programs in its service area.
- EBCE's Community Solar program allows customers to receive **100% solar energy at a 20% discount** on their electric bills. The CPUC has allocated approximately 1.6 megawatts (MW) of program capacity to EBCE.
- The program requires a **community sponsor** of the project and will result in projects **located within five miles** of the community it serves.

Community Solar Program	
Program Size:	~1.6 MW (serves ~450 customers)
Participant Requirements:	At least 50% of participants must be residential customers who are CARE/FERA eligible; all participants must live in a DAC
Other Requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Community Sponsor</li><li>▪ Located within 5 miles of community served</li><li>▪ Workforce development requirements</li></ul>

# How does it work?

**Community-based organizations— including local nonprofits, schools, or local government agencies – partner with solar project developers to sponsor projects on behalf of nearby residents within a Disadvantaged Community (“DAC”).**

*Note:*

Projects may have more than one Sponsor.

The Sponsor does not need to host the project on-site.

# Program Benefits

## Benefits to Eligible Residential Customers:

- 100% local solar energy
- 20% electric bill discount on top of CARE or FERA discounts
- Contribute to growth of local solar

## Benefits to Eligible Sponsors:

- 100% local solar energy (or up to 25% of project output)
- 20% electric bill discount, if located in a disadvantaged community
- Funding for marketing, education and outreach to educate and recruit customer subscribers
- Contribute to growth of local solar

# Sponsor Role

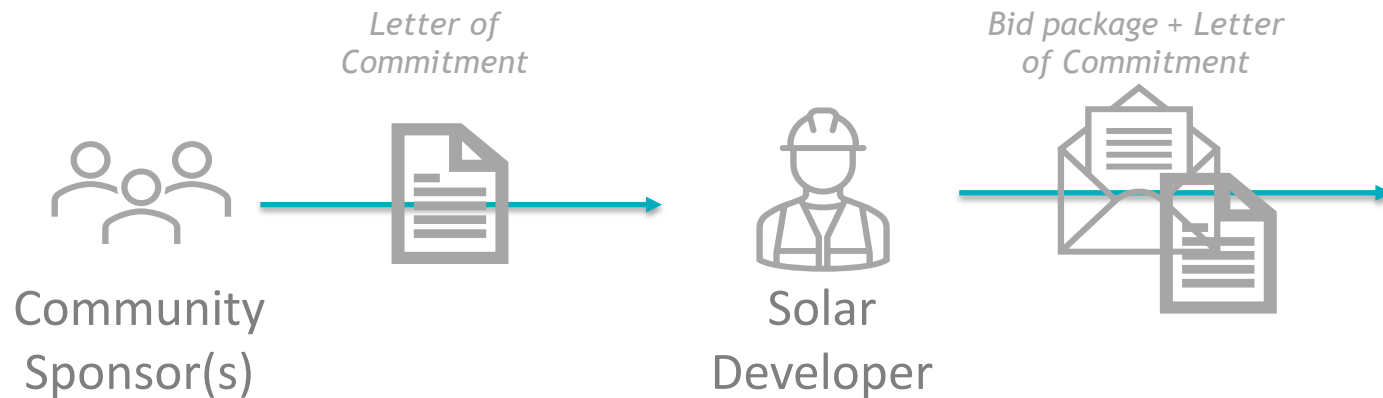
- **Help project developers and the community come together.**
  - Identify any community-suggested project sites
  - Work with EBCE to conduct outreach and create interest in subscribing to the project
  - Provide a Letter of Commitment



# Sponsor Commitment Letter

# Process Overview

- The CPUC requires that project developers obtain a **Letter of Commitment** from a project sponsor.
- The prospective sponsor provides the letter to the project developer, who includes it in their bid package to EBCE in response to EBCE’s Community Solar Request for Offers (“RFO.”) Responses to the RFO are due December 10, 2021.



EBCE Community Solar Request for Offers (“RFO”) - responses due December 10, 2021

# Evaluating Letters of Commitment

## How will EBCE evaluate the Letters of Commitment submitted as part of the RFO?

EBCE will take the strength of Community Sponsors' Letters of Commitment into consideration when evaluating projects submitted in response to the Community Solar RFO. The guidelines included here are intentionally broad, in order to accommodate varying approaches to outreach and organizational capacity, and to enable organizations to propose approaches to sponsorship that are uniquely tailored to their communities.

**Letters of Commitment must contain the CPUC-required elements described on the next slide.**

**In addition, letters that demonstrate the following will be scored most highly:**

- **Clear outreach goals**, including outreach strategies for reaching multi-lingual customers or residents with limited access to the internet.
- **Demonstration of interest from community members.**

# Sponsor “Commitment Letter” CPUC Requirements

The CPUC requires that project developers obtain a **letter of commitment from a project sponsor** that includes:

1. “Demonstration of substantial interest of community members in subscribing to project;
2. Estimated number of subscribers, with justification to ensure project is sized to likely demand;
3. A preliminary plan to conduct outreach and recruit subscribers [which may be conducted in conjunction with the developer and/or EBCE]; and
4. Siting preferences, including community-suggested host sites, and verification that the site chosen for the bid is consistent with community preference.”

# Breaking it down: Commitment Letter Part #1

## 1. “Demonstration of substantial interest of community members in subscribing to project”

- **What this could look like:**
  - Examples of evidence of interest might include things such as online signatures from community members who support hosting a project in their community, description of prior efforts to site solar or other energy-generating resources in the community, or simply attestation by a Sponsor organization acting on behalf of a community that such interest exists.

*Note: The details included here are intended to serve as illustrative or helpful examples only. They are not requirements and are not intended to be prescriptive.*

# Commitment Letter part #2

## 2. “Estimated number of subscribers, with justification to ensure project is sized to likely demand”

- **What this could look like:** *There are various methods an organization could use to estimate the number of subscribers, including:*
  - Staff time-based estimate: Estimated number of subscribers based on the number of residents your organization feels you can reach effectively, based on your outreach plan, staff capacity for outreach, etc.
  - Geography-based estimate: Estimated interest based on plans to reach out to a specific geographic area, building, etc.
  - Other approaches.
- **Note:**
  - EBCE’s solar capacity allocation for this program is approximately 1.6 MW, which we expect can serve about 450 customers.

# Commitment Letter part #3

## 3. “A preliminary plan to conduct outreach and recruit subscribers” (which may be conducted in conjunction with the developer and/or EBCE)

- **What this could look like:**
  - Describe target audience, marketing strategies (e.g., media content, organizing, partnerships, leveraging other programs), outreach goals, guiding principles, plans for evaluation or tracking of metrics. Inclusion of an estimated budget is helpful but not required.
- **Resources**
  - EBCE’s preliminary Community Solar Marketing, Education & Outreach Plan (*please email [sweaver@ebce.org](mailto:sweaver@ebce.org) for a copy*)
  - [Map of disadvantaged communities](#) in EBCE’s service area
  - [List of disadvantaged community census tracts](#) in EBCE’s service area

# Commitment Letter part #4

## 3. “Siting preferences, including community-suggested host sites, and verification that the site chosen for the bid is consistent with community preference.”

- **What this could look like:**
  - Provide verification that the community supports the chosen project site.
- **Resources**
  - [Google Earth Map](#) file of DACs and Solar Siting Survey for Alameda County
    - Note: the Solar Siting Survey was previously conducted by Clean Coalition for EBCE as part of EBCE’s Local Development Business Plan process

*Note: The details included here are intended to serve as illustrative or helpful examples only. They are not requirements and are not intended to be prescriptive.*



# Next Steps, Upcoming Events, & Resources

# Next Steps: Interested in sponsoring?

## 1. Begin connecting with solar project developers. EBCE is here to help!

- Fill out our [sponsor interest form](#) and we will feature your organization on our website as a potential sponsor.
- Attend “Community Sponsor/Developer Matchmaking Event” on September 28th.

## 2. Begin thinking about Letters of Commitment.

- Send questions to EBCE at [sweaver@ebce.org](mailto:sweaver@ebce.org).

## 3. Stay up to date on RFO activities.

- Join our mailing list for the upcoming Community Solar Request for Offers [here](#) (check the box for “Solicitations and requests for proposals”)

# Upcoming Events for Sponsors & Developers

- **Fri., September 24, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. PST:** RFO webinar (register [here](#))
- **Tues., September 28, 2021:** “Matchmaking event” for Sponsors & Developers
- **Tues., October 12, 2021:** Sponsor Info Session III [Topic: TBD]

# Additional Resources

## Questions?

- Please email Sam Weaver ([sweaver@ebce.org](mailto:sweaver@ebce.org)) and JP Ross ([jross@ebce.org](mailto:jross@ebce.org))

## More Information:

- EBCE Community Solar Program and interest forms: <https://ebce.org/community-solar/>
- RFO website: <https://ebce.org/communitysolarrfo/>

# Q&A

# Appendix

# 2021 Community Solar RFO Schedule

Date /Time	Event
Ongoing	Respondents may register online to receive notices regarding the RFO.
August 17, 2021	<b>Info Session I.</b> Information Session for Prospective Community Sponsors.
September 13, 2021	<b>Issuance.</b> EBCE issues RFO.
September 14, 2021 (tentative)	<b>Info Session II.</b> Additional Information Session for Prospective Community Sponsors (if needed).
September 20, 2021	<b>Questions Due.</b> Deadline to submit questions for Respondent Webinar.
September 24, 2021	<b>Webinar.</b> Respondent Webinar for RFO at 2:00 p.m. PPT.
September 28, 2021 (tentative)	<b>Event.</b> “Meet-and-Greet” for Prospective Community Sponsors and Solar Project Developers.
September 29, 2021	<b>Final Questions.</b> Final deadline to submit questions.
October 5, 2021	<b>Q&amp;A Posted.</b> EBCE to post Q&A document, inclusive of <u>all</u> questions.
October 8, 2021	<b>Notice of Intent to Offer.</b> Final deadline to submit NOI to Offer.
October 12, 2021 (tentative)	<b>Info Session III.</b> Additional Information Session for Prospective Community Sponsors (if needed).
December 10, 2021	<b>Offers due by 5:00 p.m. PPT on December 10, 2021.</b> Offers, including all required files and related information, must be submitted via Dropbox.
February 7, 2022	<b>Project Selection.</b> Anticipated date EBCE will notify Sellers via email of selection or waitlist status. EBCE may select Offers according to the eligibility and evaluation criteria described in Sections 3 and 4.
March 16, 2022	<b>Presentation to EBCE Board.</b> Target date for approval of Offers by EBCE Board of Directors.
March 22, 2022	<b>Standard Contracts Sent.</b> Anticipated date EBCE will send standard contract for execution to all Sellers.
April 1, 2022	<b>Target Execution Date.</b> Seller submittal of executed standard contract.
May 2022	<b>Advice Letter Filing of Executed PPAs.</b> Anticipated date EBCE will submit PPAs for CPUC Approval via Tier 2 advice letter.

# Eligibility

## **Community (project location):** *The solar project must be...*

- Located in a Disadvantaged Community (“DAC”), and
- Within 5 miles of the customers’ community (defined according to its census tract borders)

## **Customers:** *Customers subscribed to the project must be...*

- Located in a DAC that is within 5 miles of the solar project
- At least 50% of customer subscribers must be low-income

## **Sponsors:** *Organizations sponsoring the project must be...*

- Non-profit, community-based organizations, local governments, or schools
- In order to be eligible for the 20% bill discount, sponsors must also be based in a DAC that is within 5 miles of the project and be an EBCE customer



# A Note on Disadvantaged Communities (“DACs”)

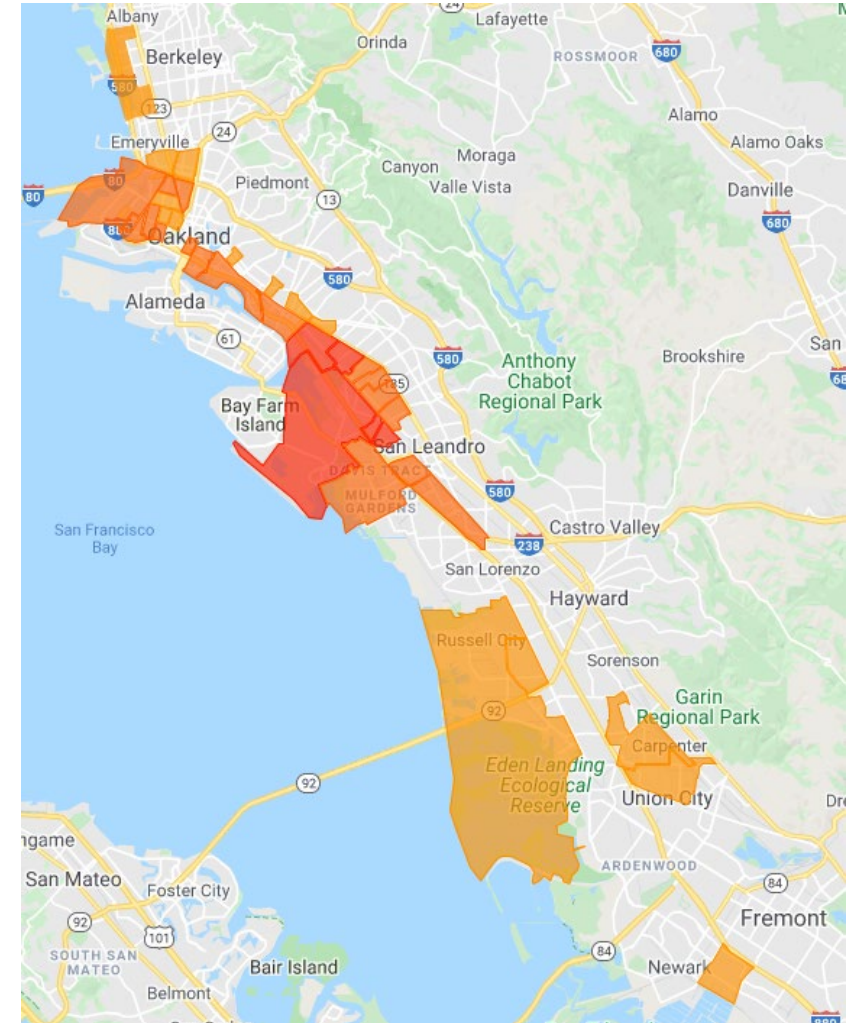
## What is a “DAC”?

- For purposes of the program, DACs are defined geographically as the **25% highest-scoring census tracts in CalEnviroScreen 3.0**, a scoring methodology developed by CalEPA.
- The CPUC defines DACs in the following way:
  - “Disadvantaged communities refers to the areas throughout California which most suffer from a combination of economic, health, and environmental burdens. These burdens include poverty, high unemployment, air and water pollution, presence of hazardous wastes as well as high incidence of asthma and heart disease.

## Can I find a map of DACs?

- Yes!
  - CalEPA maintains a map at this website:  
<https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/sb535>
  - EBCE has developed this Google Maps-based tool for our service area:  
<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1jC7HCRCop-xGM9wlgYXX18Sdq9ENZDD&usp=sharing>

Snapshot of DACs in EBCE’s service area\*

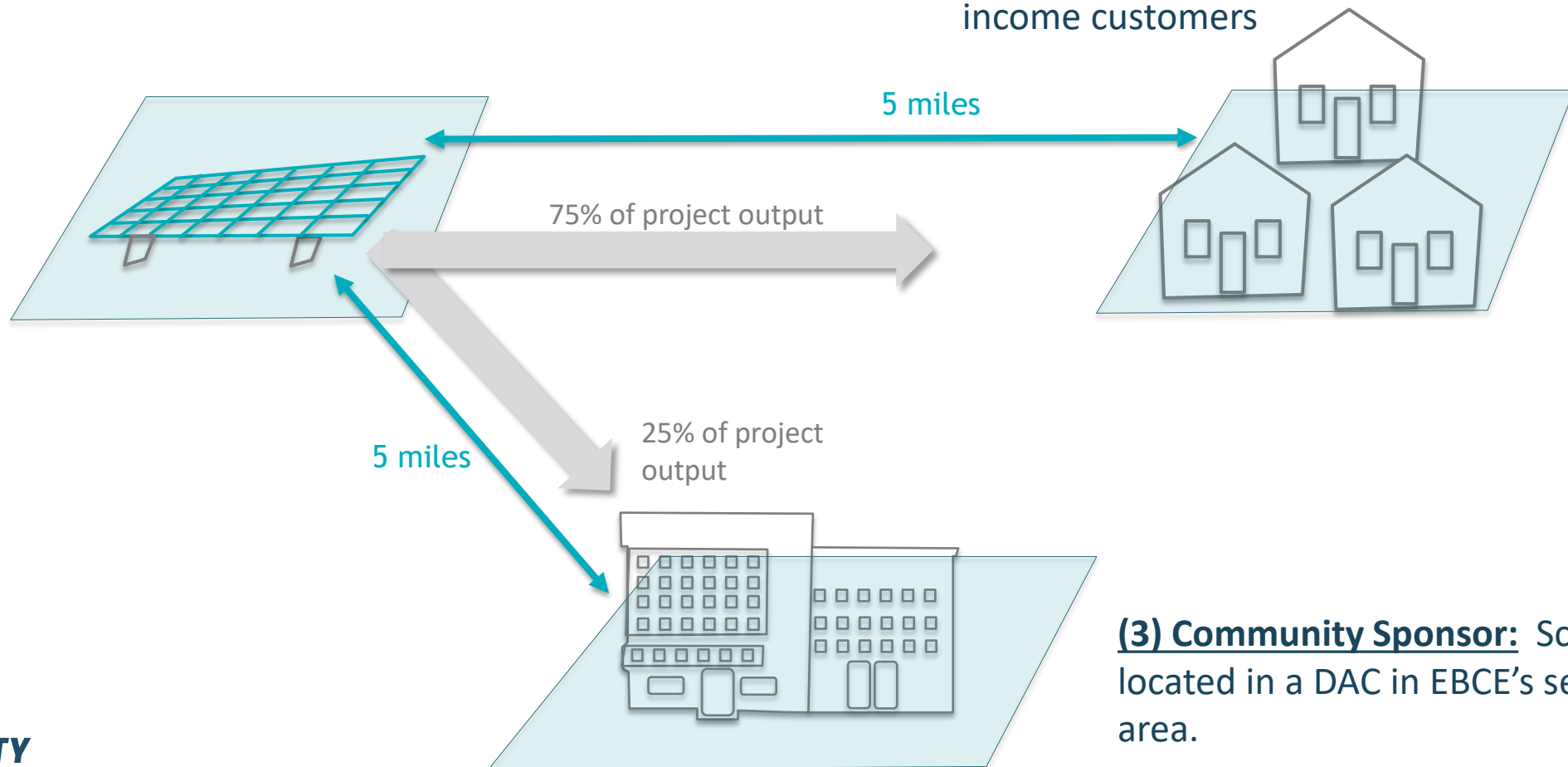


\*EBCE cities with DAC census tracts include: Oakland (25), Tracy (16), San Leandro (3), Hayward (2), Union City (2), Emeryville (4), Berkeley (1), Newark (1)

# Sponsor Example (1 of 2): Offsite project

**(1) Project Site:** Rooftop or ground-mounted solar, located in a DAC in EBCE's service area.

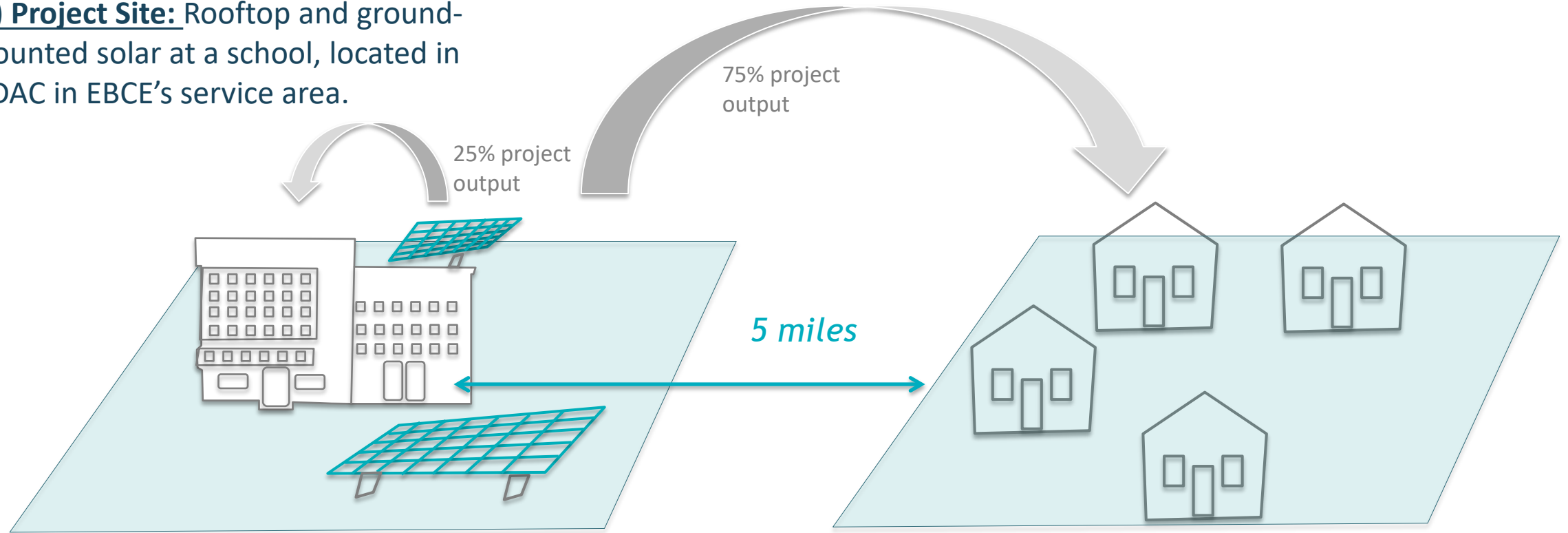
**(2) Customer Subscribers:** EBCE customers, located in a DAC that is within EBCE's service area; at least 50% of subscribers are low-income customers



**(3) Community Sponsor:** School, located in a DAC in EBCE's service area.

# Sponsor Example (2 of 2): Sponsor as site host

**(1) Project Site:** Rooftop and ground-mounted solar at a school, located in a DAC in EBCE's service area.



**(2) Community Sponsor:** School, located in a DAC in EBCE's service area, serving as site host.

**(3) Customer Subscribers:** EBCE customers, located in a DAC that is within 5 miles of the project site; at least 50% of subscribers are low-income customers.

# Sponsorship Process & Timeline

RFO stages

## Before RFO Due Date

August 17 - December 10

- Partner with a solar project developer
- Begin thinking about potential project sites, outreach plans
- Provide solar project developer with Letter of Commitment

## RFO period

December 10 - February 2022

- Solar project developer includes Letter of Commitment in bid package to EBCE
- EBCE selects projects through competitive process

## Project Selected

February 2022

- Begin outreach behalf of the community
- Once project is live\* and achieves required levels of low-income participation, subscribers begin receiving 20% bill discount