

Strategy for
CUSTOMER
SOLAR &
BATTERY
STORAGE
in Our Communities



Seattle City Light



Welcome

Seattle City Light is pleased to present our strategy to expand equitable access to solar and battery storage for our customers and the communities we serve. This strategy reflects our commitment to deliver power that is affordable, reliable, and environmentally responsible—while modernizing our grid to support more customer-owned clean energy resources.

Customers told us they want clearer, faster, and more predictable processes for installing solar and battery storage. They also expressed a strong desire for more options that improve resilience and lower costs. This strategy is designed to achieve those outcomes. We engaged with community-based organizations, underserved and overburdened communities, large customers, and leading solar installers across the Pacific Northwest. Their experiences and recommendations directly shaped our work.

We have updated our interconnection guidelines, streamlined and automated key steps in the application process, and made customer service improvements so project timelines and requirements are easier to understand and navigate. These changes are already helping customers connect their clean energy systems with greater confidence and clarity.

We are also deepening our partnerships with the local clean energy industry and investing in technology upgrades that will strengthen our ability to integrate and manage solar and battery storage on the grid. Together with community and industry partners, we are advancing new resilience hubs, developing additional community solar projects, and preparing to expand customer programs so that all customers can participate in and benefit from the clean energy transition.

This strategy outlines our recent progress and the specific actions we will take over the next five years to make solar and battery storage more accessible, more predictable, and more impactful for all the communities we serve. We look forward to working together to build a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable energy future.

David Logsdon
Interim Chief Customer Officer
Seattle City Light

Why do we need a solar & battery storage strategy?

You can use solar and batteries to generate, store, and manage electricity at your home or business. These technologies are types of distributed energy resources (DERs). This strategy focuses on solar and battery storage, but in the future we also plan to advance other DERs.

DERs include rooftop solar panels, battery units that can store energy for later use, and electric vehicles that can store electricity and send it back to the grid. DERs also include smart thermostats and heat pump water heaters that can automatically adjust their energy use to run during non-peak hours when electricity rates are lower.

Our customers and communities have told us they want access to clean, local energy. This strategy helps us meet your needs and holds us accountable. We are using the strategy to:

- **Increase access to solar and battery storage.** We are designing programs to expand access to solar and battery storage so that all

our customers can take advantage of the financial and environmental benefits.

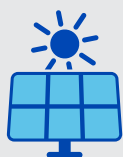
- **Make the process easier.** We are adding new tools to easily track applications to install solar projects from start to finish.

- **Plan for the future.** We are preparing for more solar and battery storage now to reduce strain on the grid and avoid expensive system upgrades that could raise costs later.

- **Support resilient communities.** We are partnering to create community resilience hubs that are trusted, accessible spaces that offer community support services like back-up power generated from solar and stored in batteries.

City Light customers have already installed nearly 10,000 solar projects on their homes or businesses. We expect solar and battery storage adoption to continue increasing in our area. We are preparing our systems so we are ready to support this growing demand.

Distributed Energy Resources Allow You to Generate, Store, and Manage Power



Solar Panels



Wireless Communications



Inverters



Battery Energy Storage (standalone)



Smart Meters



Heat Pump Water Heaters (grid-responsive)



Battery Energy Storage (EV)



Commitment to Energy Equity and a Just Transition

We are committed to creating opportunities for all our customers to access reliable, clean, and affordable energy. To meet these goals, we are focusing on engagement with customers, community organizations, and community leaders, especially those representing overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.¹ Until recently, many of these customers have been unable to take advantage of local renewable energy technology and resources to supplement their energy needs. We understand that to become more inclusive, it is our responsibility to make these opportunities known to our customers to build awareness, address historic harms, and remove barriers to participation.



¹ For the remainder of this document, "priority populations" is used to represent "overburdened communities and vulnerable populations" The RCW 70A.02.010 (HEAL Act) includes definitions of "overburdened communities" and "vulnerable populations." These terms are also used in the Clean Energy Transformation Act, the Climate Commitment Act, and other climate change policies and programs. For a map of overburdened communities see the [Washington Environmental Health Disparities MAP](#).



Solutions for Everyone

Solar and battery storage should be accessible to all, including customers who do not own homes, and/or lack rooftop space or financial resources. This strategy outlines several ways City Light can meet customer needs by offering financial incentives to reduce upfront costs, rate structures that compensate customers for solar energy they generate, and innovative programs like community solar.

Solutions at Your Home or Business

A big part of our shared energy future is ensuring customers can produce and store their own power if they choose. Generally, customers achieve this by storing electricity in battery systems at their homes and businesses using power generated from their own solar panels or from the grid.



Partnering with the Port of Seattle

We are excited to partner with the Port of Seattle to implement key actions from our Customer Solar and Battery Storage Strategy. We will work to significantly decrease maritime industry emissions and reduce pollution and environmental disparities in neighboring communities. As part of this partnership, the Port of Seattle, Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA), and City Light are implementing a joint strategy to reduce emissions from Seattle's working waterfront. The [Seattle Waterfront Clean Energy Strategy](#) (SWCES) is a shared roadmap to electrify the Seattle waterfront and install the clean, reliable energy needed to enable the maritime industry's transition away from fossil fuels.

The Port will require massive amounts of new renewable energy to power everything, including vessels that may transition to electricity. As a near-term solution, the Port is investing in solar power to reduce its demand on the grid. City Light is committed to partnering with the Port to assess how solar and battery storage can meet new energy demands.



We greatly value the partnership we have established with City Light. We are building on our shared clean energy vision, breaking down barriers, and establishing a new kind of utility relationship.

-Alex Adams, Senior Manager, Maritime Sustainability at the Port of Seattle



Solar at the Port

The Port has installed five solar arrays across its Port properties. These include installations at Net Shed 5 at Fishermen's Terminal, the rooftop of the Pier 69 headquarters building, and most recently two arrays installed at Shilshole Bay Marina's new Central and South Customer Service Facilities. Additionally, at Fishermen's Terminal, the Port is renovating the historic Ship Supply Building into the Maritime Innovation Center. Designed to meet strict Living Building Challenge standards, it will also feature a solar array. These projects demonstrate the Port's commitment to meet increased energy needs through conservation and renewable sources.



Pier 69 Solar Project



*Shilshole Bay
Marina Solar
Project*



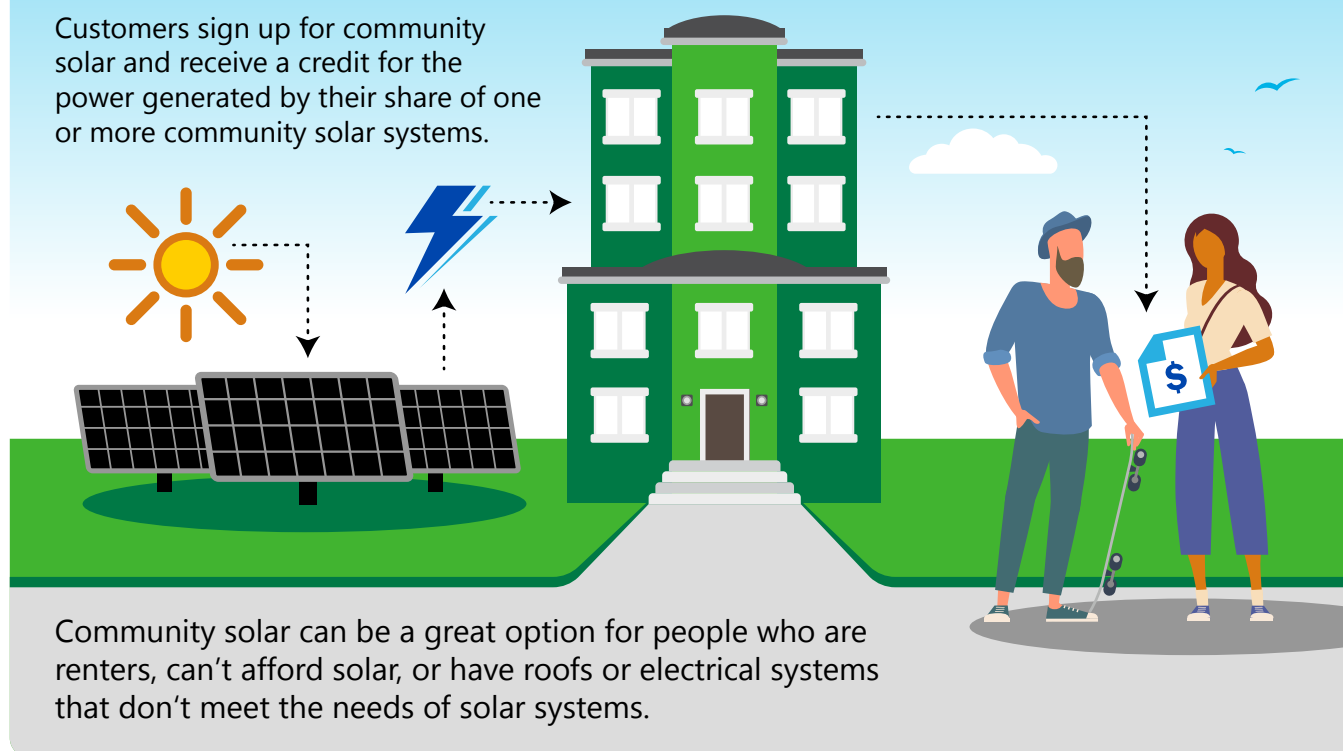
Solutions in the Community

We are committed to creating a shared energy future with our customers, regardless of their home ownership status or income. That includes plans for a revitalized community solar program offering access to the financial and environmental benefits of solar to all customers.

We plan to work with communities to build new community solar projects. We are focusing on City properties and buildings that serve communities, like schools, community centers, and libraries, paying special attention to buildings in areas with high concentrations of priority populations. A community solar program will let renters and customers who cannot install solar panels, get financial and environmental benefits from a shared community solar project. It could also include installing batteries paired with solar that may provide communities with power when the power goes out.

How does community solar work?

Customers sign up for community solar and receive a credit for the power generated by their share of one or more community solar systems.





Mini Mart City Park

[Mini Mart City Park](#) is a nonprofit art gallery and community space in Georgetown. It was built on an old gas station site. In 2025, Seattle's Office of Sustainability and Environment partnered with Mini Mart City Park to install solar panels and a backup battery. The goal is to provide a safe place with electricity for the community during a power outage.



Responding to Community Input

The actions in this strategy are based on feedback we gathered as part of an extensive stakeholder engagement process. In 2023, we engaged three main groups: commercial customers with large power needs,² community organizations, and solar and battery installers and developers. We interviewed them to collect feedback on prior experiences with solar and battery storage. We also asked what they would like to see in our products and services. In 2024, we continued this outreach with Community Liaisons from the Department of Neighborhoods (featured above).

Our customers and stakeholders told us they want:

- Access to local clean energy.
- Increased education opportunities related to solar.
- New programs and outreach tailored to help small and large customers.
- More solar panels in community used spaces.
- Effective multi-lingual outreach materials.
- Increased accountability to customers.
- Easy enrollment and reduced sign-up barriers.
- Easy-to-understand, fast processes and guidance for connecting solar and battery storage to City Light's distribution grid.
- Financial and environmental benefits of solar shared with priority populations, including workforce development and opportunities to host solar projects for financial compensation.
- Clarity around any changes to net metering.



² Large customers have a maximum power demand of 1,000 - 9,999 kW.

Strategy Details

For Customer Solar and Battery Storage in Our Communities

Our Strategy Is Already Underway

We have begun implementing the first phase of our strategy to accelerate solar and battery storage while providing reliable, low-cost, carbon-neutral utility power.

Completed and In-Progress Actions (2023-2026)

We are trying to make it easier for customers to connect solar and batteries to our grid. On January 2, 2026, we published the [DER Interconnection Handbook](#), which standardizes the end-to-end interconnection process for DERs. Standardizing this process will reduce technical barriers, lower the cost to develop solar and battery storage, and accelerate deployment. In 2026, we also began updating our online platform so customers can more easily submit service applications for solar and batteries.

We are optimizing existing programs and developing new programs to reduce upfront costs for customers and expand access to solar and battery storage. We are also improving customer materials and working with the public to identify potential locations for community solar and community resilience hubs.



- **Streamline and Automate Interconnection Application Reviews**
We are conducting a multi-year process to improve customer experience across programs. This includes a future interconnection platform that will allow customers to track the status of a project they've submitted to the utility.

- **Design New Customer Solar and Battery Storage Programs**
We are designing programs to reduce upfront technology costs for customers. This includes optimizing existing programs such as net metering and developing new programs such as solar credit allocation and various financial incentives.

- **Provide Customer-Friendly Resources**
We are developing a series of non-technical, informational documents, such as [frequently asked questions](#) for the interconnection review and approval process for solar and battery projects. We are also updating customer agreements, forms, and our website.

- **Identify Siting for More Community Resilience Hubs and Community Solar Projects**
We are identifying potential sites for community resilience hubs aligned with the [Seattle Green New Deal](#) and the City's Climate Action Plan and resilience planning efforts. We are designing a new community solar program and identifying project sites that could serve as resilience hubs. We are prioritizing options for income-eligible customers.

- **Require That All New Projects Have Telecommunications Functionality**
We are requiring all new solar and battery storage equipment to have telecommunications and other functionality that allows for integration with modern utility systems.



Future Actions (2027-2030 and Beyond)

Starting in 2027, we will study the holistic value that solar and battery storage provide to the electrical grid and will develop and test new programs with customers. We will place more resilience hubs in our communities and install new software systems to manage solar, battery storage, and other DERs to



improve grid efficiency. By combining solar, battery storage, electric vehicle, and energy efficiency capabilities, we can:

- Reduce costly infrastructure upgrades to accommodate increasing customer demand.
- Provide new cost-saving programs for our customers.
- Make community spaces such as community centers, schools, and libraries resilient against power outages.

These actions will ensure we have what's necessary to manage a future grid cost-effectively, safely, and reliably with tens of thousands of solar and battery projects interconnected in the future.

- **Evaluate the Value of DERs**

We will carefully assess the value that solar and battery projects bring to the grid so that future compensation mechanisms are fair to both participants and non-participants. We plan to begin the study in 2027.

- **Optimize New Customer Solar and Battery Storage Programs**

We will use results from the value of DER study to inform our new program designs and rate structures. This includes optimizing existing programs such as net metering, developing new programs such as solar credit allocation, and various financial incentives.

- **Install More Community Resilience Hubs**

We will partner with local cities and unincorporated King County in our service area, Community Liaisons from the City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, and the City's Office of Sustainability and Environment. Together, we will identify and

build community resilience hubs. These hubs will be gathering spaces that may have backup power from solar and batteries.

- **Implement New IT Systems**

We will develop and implement new technology platforms and systems to monitor and manage solar and battery projects. Adding new software to monitor and optimize systems will improve power reliability and help customers and the utility save money.

- **Identify Opportunities for "Non-Wires Solutions"**

We will identify locations where customer solar and battery storage projects, coupled with energy efficiency and other investments, can create "non-wires solutions" that do not require upgrades to utility wires, transformers, or other equipment. These efforts can save customers money and increase reliability.



Join us in creating a shared energy future!

We invite you to explore the tools and resources below, including our new interconnection handbook and our current solar programs.

Opportunities to engage:

- [Distributed Energy Resources Web Page](#)
- [DER Interconnection Handbook](#)
- [Solar Programs for Businesses](#)
- [Solar Programs for Homes](#)
- [Demand Response](#)
- [Electric Vehicles](#)
- Email citylight@seattle.gov to sign up for City Light's Sun Room newsletter
- [Solar FAQ](#)



We want to hear from you:

For questions or to request addition information please contact SCL_SolarRequest@seattle.gov.





Seattle City Light

seattle.gov/city-light

