



What Are Community Solar Gardens (CSGs)?

CSGs are a new way for people to get their electricity from clean, renewable energy without having to install solar panels on their own home, or even having to own a home. CSGs are large arrays located in sunny open areas or on rooftops, where residents purchase rights to a portion of the array's energy production. The electricity is fed to the grid and credited to the subscriber's Xcel Energy account at a rate slightly higher than Xcel charges its customers for their electricity, partially or completely offsetting a given month's electric bill.

What is the City of Edina's CSG?

The City of Edina has selected Cooperative Energy Futures (CEF), a local, member-owned energy cooperative, to develop, own and operate a 575 kW solar array on the roof of the city's public works building at 7450 Metro Boulevard in Edina. It will generate enough power for about 80-100 homes when it comes online in late 2016. Edina residents will have priority to subscribe for the first six months, then it will be open to Edina businesses, and eventually to any interested eligible subscriber. To inquire about being a subscriber, email edina@cooperativeenergyfutures.com.

What are my subscription options?

For this array, the City of Edina has required that all subscriptions will be pay-as-you-go, meaning subscribers will pay monthly for the amount of kWh generated by their portion of the array (the same kWh for which they receive bill credits). The up-front subscription option, available on other CEF arrays, is when you pay for the full subscription in advance but receive bill credits for the full 25 years, saving substantially more over the term. Email csgmanager@cooperativeenergyfutures.com to inquire further about this option.

How would my CSG subscription help save money on my electricity costs?

The subscription rate CEF charges is less than the bill credit, allowing monthly subscribers to save about 7% right away on their energy bills. Electricity rates have increased on average 4.6% per year over the last 15 years, and by law the bill credit will keep pace with any future increases. CEF escalates its subscription rates at 2% per year for the first eight years, then rates flatten allowing savings to grow rapidly, with an average projected savings over the term of 24%. Thus, a CSG subscription is an opportunity to lock in your electric rates for the next 25 years at a level almost certainly lower than what the grid will provide.

Twenty-five years is a long time. What if I move or no longer wish to subscribe?

If you move but remain in the service area, your subscription will transfer with you to your new home and be resized. If you move outside the service area and are able to find someone to take over the remainder of your subscription, the transfer fee is \$75. If you wish to simply exit the program, the cost is three month's subscription fees to allow CEF time to find a new subscriber.

Will there be more CSGs in or for city residents?

We're already working on it! A team of community members has come together to ensure this first array is fully subscribed, then will be turning its attention to working on developing more CSGs, supported by the Just Community Solar (JCS) collaboration. Those interested in learning more about CSGs or helping to develop more in the west metro should email megan@mnipl.org.

What is the "Just Community Solar" (JCS) collaboration?

The JCS is a group of collaborating organizations working to develop CSGs that reflect the following values: 1) access for all (no credit score minimum); 2) reducing racial disparities in employment and promoting local employment in the growing renewable energy industry; 3) protecting our natural systems through rooftop arrays and environmentally sensitive ground mounted array designs, and 4) promoting a new, distributed renewable energy model for all that is both more stable and costs less.