

Solarize Queen Anne Request for Proposals (RFP)

Date of Issue: 10/11/2010

Proposal Due Date: 11/01/2010

Issued by: Sustainable Queen Anne and Northwest SEED

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SUSTAINABLE QUEEN ANNE 
Neighbors in Stewardship and Collaboration

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR INSTALLATION OF RESIDENTIAL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS
SOLARIZE QUEEN ANNE PILOT PROJECT

Northwest Sustainable Energy for Economic Development (Northwest SEED), in collaboration with Sustainable Queen Anne (SQA), is seeking proposals from qualified firms willing to provide for bulk purchase of photovoltaic (PV) systems. The PV systems will be installed on residences and condominium units directly owned by Queen Anne homeowners who are interested in group purchasing.

As described in the scope of work contained in this Request for Proposal (RFP), the Solarize Queen Anne pilot will serve as a combined community marketing and individual installation template that could be copied by other neighborhoods in Seattle and other Washington State communities. Using a similar neighborhood bulk purchase format a recent Portland project (Solarize Portland) achieved 120 installations in its pilot. Since 2009, Portland has completed four iterations, resulting in over 650 residential PV installations. Following this trend, the goal of Solarize Queen Anne is to accelerate residential solar energy installations in Seattle through bulk purchasing and a competitive bidding process. The intent of this RFP is to select one or more firms to provide these services.

BACKGROUND

Founded in 2001, Northwest SEED (www.nwseed.org) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to establish a clean, diverse, and affordable Northwest energy system based on the efficient use of renewable resources with maximum local control and community ownership of energy assets. Sustainable Queen Anne (www.sustainablequeenanne.org) is a local community organization and member of Sustainable Communities All Over Puget Sound (SCALLOPS) that envisions Queen Anne as a flourishing urban village of close-knit neighbors and businesses living and working in ways that enhance the natural resources and social well-being of the community, city, and region.

Northwest SEED launched the Solarize Seattle initiative to replicate the successes of similar efforts in Portland, Oregon. Northwest SEED is partnering with Sustainable Queen Anne to launch the pilot project called Solarize Queen Anne. Through this pilot, Northwest SEED and Sustainable Queen Anne intend to accelerate solar education and installation in the Queen Anne neighborhood.

The Solarize Queen Anne pilot is the first showcase of a solar bulk purchasing effort in Washington State. The intent of this program is to help homeowners save money, improve home comfort, generate clean electricity, reduce carbon emissions, create local jobs, and promote equity by creating local economic opportunities. Northwest SEED and SQA will solicit participation from homeowners and coordinate outreach, education, marketing, and sales lead generation.

This RFP encourages innovative, collaborative approaches to deploying solar PV to residents of Queen Anne. Contractors are welcome to collaborate with other firms/contractors in order to deliver a

competitive proposal. In this case, Proposers shall submit one application based on this partnership with agreed upon pricing tiers and service delivery models.

SQA will select one or more firms to design, procure, and install PV systems for participating homeowners. The selected firm(s) will provide bulk-based pricing structure for all participants depending on total project capacity.

PROJECT TIMELINE

Dates are approximate and subject to change.

RFP Announced	10/11/2010
RFP Questions Due in Writing	10/22/2010
Response to Questions Posted By	10/27/2010
Proposals Due	11/01/2010
Interviews	11/08/2010-11/12/2010
Firm Selected	11/15/2010
Participant Registration Opened	11/15/2010
Participant Registration Closed	02/15/ <u>2011</u>
Final Participating Homeowner List Available to Contractor	Three weeks after all site assessments completed
Installations Completed*	07/01/ <u>2011</u>

*Estimated completion date

Proposal Due Date & Submittal

Proposals must be received no later than November 1, 2010 at 4:00 p.m. PST. Proposals may be submitted by mail or electronically. Mailed submissions must include three copies of the proposal and shall be delivered to:

Northwest SEED
RE: Solarize Queen Anne RFP
1402 3rd Ave, Suite 901
Seattle, WA 98101

Electronic submissions must be sent to Ms. Alex Sawyer at alex@nwseed.org. All emailed proposals will generate an emailed response within two business days confirming receipt of the proposal. If you do not receive a confirmation email, please call 206-328-2441.

Faxed proposals and late proposals will not be accepted. Proposals may be withdrawn at any time before the due date and time noted above via an emailed request.

In order to maintain the fairness and integrity of the selection process, proposals must conform to the requirements of this RFP. All communications shall be through the RFP Point of Contact listed on the RFP Cover Sheet. Communications with members of the evaluation committee for the purpose of unfairly influencing the outcome of this RFP may be cause for the Proposer's proposal to be rejected and disqualified from further consideration.

Any material submitted by a proposer will become the property of Northwest SEED and Sustainable Queen Anne (SQA).

Northwest SEED and SQA may modify the RFP at any time prior to the RFP due date by issuance of a written addendum to all proposers who are participating in the process. Northwest SEED and SQA may also cancel, delay, or suspend this solicitation if in the best interest of the neighborhoods represented as determined by Northwest SEED and SQA. Northwest SEED and SQA may reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, if in the best interest of the neighborhoods represented as determined by Northwest SEED and SQA.

Northwest SEED will provide technical assistance to SQA during the selection process and is a non-voting member of the selection committee. During the evaluation process, Northwest SEED and SQA have the right to require any clarification they need in order to understand the bidder's approach. Northwest SEED and SQA will interview the highest ranked proposers. SQA anticipates making a decision by November 15, 2010.

QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE RFP

Questions, including requests for explanations of the meaning or interpretations of the provisions of the RFP, shall be submitted in writing (via email) to the RFP Point of Contact Ms. Alex Sawyer at alex@nwseed.org by 10/22/2010 5:00pm PST. **No telephone questions will be accepted or considered.** Questions and answers will be posted in FAQ format on www.nwseed.org by 10/27/2010.

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Please create project proposals in 8 ½" x 11" document size using a minimum 12 point font size. Proposals shall not exceed 25 pages, including any appendices.

I. Cover Letter (0 points)

The cover letter shall discuss the highlights, key features and distinguishing points of the Proposal. The cover letter must be prepared and signed by a manager having the authority to make offers and enter into agreements on behalf of the firm.

II. Proposing firm profile (10 points)

This section shall include a brief description of the following:

- Proposer's firm size and Proposer's local organizational structure. Include a discussion of the firm's financial stability, capacity and resources. Address the ratio of part time to full time employees and the firm's health and safety record and practices.
- Describe the demonstrated experience of the firm in developing, designing and installing residential solar electric systems, particularly on a community-wide scale, along with a discussion of how experience on previous projects relates to the Solarize Queen Anne pilot project.
- Provide at least 3 recent similar residential installations by size and location, with a contact name and telephone number where appropriate.
- Provide a statement describing the firm's capability to complete the project by 07/01/2010.
- Include all applicable license and certifications of firm and all subcontractors, such as general contractor license, electrical license and NABCEP PV Installer certification.

Firms must be insured and bonded general contractors registered with the Washington State and Seattle Business License divisions and in good standing in order to be considered for this project.

III. Qualifications of the project team (10 points)

Identify the key project team members by name and position, and provide qualifications and experience. Provide names, addresses, contact information, and contractor license numbers for all specified subcontractors the firm intends to employ for the project.

IV. Use of local and sustainability oriented providers (15 points)

Provide documentation of Washington State and Seattle-based employees, consultants, or subcontractors. Provide information about your firm's sustainable business practices. If you plan to hire contractors or other staff to support your bid, please indicate your plan to utilize local labor (within Seattle).

V. Employment practices (10 points)

Provide information about employment practices, including wages, benefits, apprenticeships and mentoring programs. Contractors who pay a family wage and provide equal employment opportunities will be favored.

VI. Scope of services and schedule (20 points)

Provide a detailed scope of services addressing the requirements listed in the scope of work, attached as Exhibit A. Address all necessary work tasks in narrative form and prepare a project schedule showing the timeline for completion of the work. At minimum, the scope of services and schedule should include the following:

- Begin schedule with the receipt of the list of participating homeowners.
- Discuss method(s) for conducting site assessments to interested homeowners.

- Provide details outlining the number of residential systems per week that your firm or subcontractors are capable of installing and what factors are accounted for in these estimates.
- Describe the data management system the firm will use to track enrollments in order to ensure a high level customer service delivery model.
- Provide information about the minimum and maximum system size (in kW) to be installed for customers as part of the program, and the manufacturer and/or model(s) of PV modules, inverters, and racking equipment. Include details about manufacturer's equipment warranties, applicable labor and roof penetration warranties, as well as the system monitoring capability provided by the firm or by equipment manufacturers.
- Describe any educational opportunities available, such as a community kiosk with real-time power production information for public education, or access to online real time data available that could be added to Solarize Queen Anne project website.
- Describe how the proposing firm will establish and maintain quality control through the project work, as well as process for permitting and inspections.

VII.Pricing and financing schedule (35 points)

Provide a proposed pricing schedule based on the total capacity (in kilowatts) of participation in the project at various levels that tie to your bulk pricing price breaks – Ex: 25 installations, 50 installations, 100+ installations. Pricing schedules should conform to the format outlined in Exhibit C. It is anticipated that as the capacity of participation increases, the price per-watt will decrease. However, flat rate pricing will be considered as well. Pricing based solely on individual system size will not be considered.

Please include Washington-based and US domestic manufacturers. If your firm proposes different prices based on various equipment manufacturers, provide details. In accordance with Exhibit C, itemize structural, access, roof, electrical, or other conditions that would increase system costs for participants, and provide estimates for these additional costs per installation on either a per watt or per system basis. Identify who would be engaged or recommended to provide these required pre-solar improvement services.

Pricing must include all materials, equipment, labor, transportation, permits, warranties and services required to assess the potential homes, and design and install the systems in accordance with all applicable laws and codes, interconnection and installation requirements. Additional services and features not stipulated by these requirements, such as extended warranties, maintenance contracts or ancillary monitoring equipment, may be listed and priced separately.

Pricing should be presented as price per-watt of installed capacity, before any eligible incentives or state and federal tax credits. Final pricing for the program will be determined once the contractor selection is made. In the event that more than one contractor is selected to provide services, a single price will be negotiated between the selected firms to provide uniformity in program marketing.

The proposal should include any financing options that the firm can make available to homeowner participants.

VIII. Appendix: Supporting Information

The Appendix may include any supporting information, such as resumes, references or other data that will support your firm as the best proposer for the project.

PROPOSAL SCORING & EVALUATION

The evaluation committee shall assign points to each proposal as defined above. Scores may range from a minimum of zero to a maximum of 100 points. A Proposal's score will be used to rank proposals. Northwest SEED and Sustainable Queen Anne will invite the top ranked proposers to make a brief oral presentation and be interviewed by the evaluation team. Criteria for oral interviews will be provided upon invitation. Northwest SEED is providing technical assistance to SQA and is a non-voting member of the evaluation team. Proposal ranking and interviews will be the central valuation in determining successful applicants and final award. All proposers will be notified of the outcome of the selection.

CONDITIONS AND RESERVATIONS

Northwest SEED and SQA are not obligated as a result of the submission of a Proposal to enter into a Contract with any applicant, and have no financial obligation to any Applicant arising from the RFP. **ALL Contracts will be executed between the homeowner and the selected contractor.**

Furthermore, Northwest SEED and SQA reserve all rights regarding this RFP, including, without limitation, the right to:

- Amend, delay or cancel the RFP without liability if the team finds it is in the best interest of the project to do so. In the event it becomes necessary to amend any part of this RFP, notice will be provided in the same manner as notice of the original solicitation;
- Reject any or all Proposals received upon finding that it is in the best interest of the project to do so;
- Waive any minor informality or non-conformance with the provisions or procedures of the RFP, and seek clarification of any Proposal, if required;
- Reject any Proposal that fails substantially to comply with all prescribed RFP procedures and requirements;
- Negotiate the Scope of Work to serve the best interest of the project.

EXHIBIT A SCOPE OF WORK

INTRODUCTION

The selected firm will provide consulting and other services for the design and installation of residential solar electric systems for a group of Seattle homeowners in accordance with the general scope of services outlined below. Proposers may use this outline as a guide for organizing a scope of work for their proposal, but are encouraged to expand upon, refine or suggest alternative approaches based on previous experiences with similar projects.

GENERAL SCOPE OF WORK

The purpose of this project is to enable the installation of photovoltaic systems on private homes and condos in the Queen Anne neighborhood (see Exhibit B for a reference map) of Seattle at a per-watt price lower than the typical residential installation by providing a platform that allows owners to combine orders in a timely way to provide cost efficiencies for interested manufacturers and installers. Homeowner participants in the project will be solicited by Northwest SEED and Sustainable Queen Anne through a community pilot project called Solarize Queen Anne.

This is a Seattle pilot project and the number of participating homes and total capacity of the project is unknown. The pilot project pertains to the Queen Anne neighborhood, representing an estimated 21,000 owner -occupied, single-family homes and condos.

Between the months of December 2010 and March 2011, Northwest SEED, Sustainable Queen Anne, and other project partners will promote and deliver daytime and evening educational workshops at easily accessible public locations around Queen Anne. The selected firm(s) is expected to have staff available to answer questions and provide an interface to the community at these workshops. Other neighborhood outreach opportunities may be created that selected firm(s) can participate in if they wish.

Upon completion of registration, a participant pool of homeowners who wish to proceed with the process will be provided to the selected firm(s). If more than one firm is selected, Northwest SEED and SQA will refer homeowners to the firms in an equitable manner determined at the firm selection before the pilot is launched. The selected firm(s) will provide site assessments and system design proposals for each homeowner in the pool to establish each site's suitability for solar, identify the appropriate system size for the home and homeowner, finalize the total installation cost, and contract directly with homeowners. Site assessments will include an analysis of the impact of shading, tilt and orientation on annual electricity production, and note any electrical, mechanical or structural considerations that may incur costs above and beyond the per-watt pricing schedule for the project.

Individual system designs should be aesthetically pleasing, taking into consideration the preferences of a given homeowner while minimizing project costs and maximizing solar energy production. System proposals should also take into consideration each homeowner's self-identified financial limitation.

The installations will be carried out by the selected firm(s) in conformance with all applicable laws and codes, interconnection requirements for net-metered installations in Seattle City Light service territory.

For each participating home, the selected firm(s) will be responsible for securing all required permits, completing and submitting all Washington State and Seattle incentive applications, and scheduling and passing all jurisdictional and City Light inspections. The selected firm(s) will provide guidance and assistance to each homeowner with completing a net-metering agreement with Seattle City Light. The firm(s) will provide each homeowner with the information, documentation and certified signatures required to complete the appropriate Washington Renewable Energy Production Incentive applications. The firm(s) will also provide each homeowner appropriate documentation and guidance for applying for the federal residential solar energy tax credit. As appropriate, the firm(s) will provide introductions and support materials needed to banks, credit unions, and other interested financing entities.

SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED BY NORTHWEST SEED AND SUSTAINABLE QUEEN ANNE

Northwest SEED will manage the RFP process and will provide technical assistance with project implementation. SQA will conduct interviews and select firm(s).

Northwest SEED and SQA will publicize the project at local events and community locations via newsletters, bulletins, flyers, email lists, event tables, local blogs and newspapers, and other community communication outlets.

Northwest SEED, SQA and partners will organize and help conduct educational workshops ranging from solar project basics to topical sessions on net-metering, technical nuts & bolts, incentives & tax credits, financing options, and energy use analysis.

EXHIBIT B

Map of Queen Anne Neighborhood

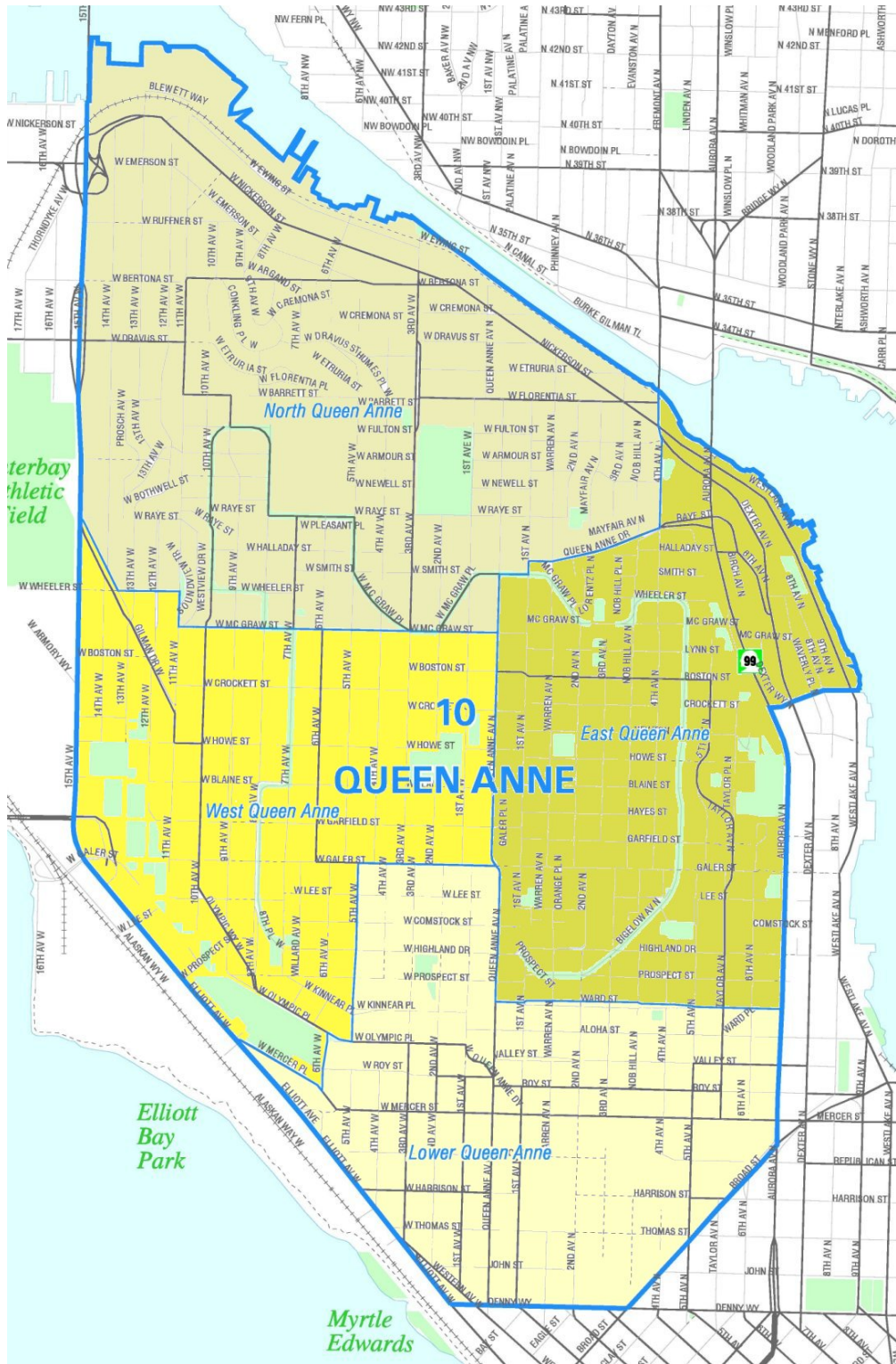


EXHIBIT C SOLARIZE QUEEN ANNE PRICING FORM

The use of the Pricing Form is optional, however it is strongly encouraged. All bids must include the elements below.

Proposer Firm Name	
Contact Name	
Contact email	
Date	

PV System Equipment Information

Total Participant Capacity (kW)					
<50kW	50kW-75kW	75kW-100kW	100kW-150kW	150kW-200kW	>200kW

Modules	Inverter

Price (\$/watt)					
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Modules	Inverter

Price (\$/watt)					
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Modules	Inverter

Price (\$/watt)					
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Additional Cost Factors (if any)

Roofing	
Structural	
Electrical	
Access	
Monitoring	
Extended Warranty	
Maintenance Contract	

Estimated Cost Increase/Criteria
