HOW TO ACHIEVE ENERGY SOVEREIGNTY IN HIGHLAND PARK

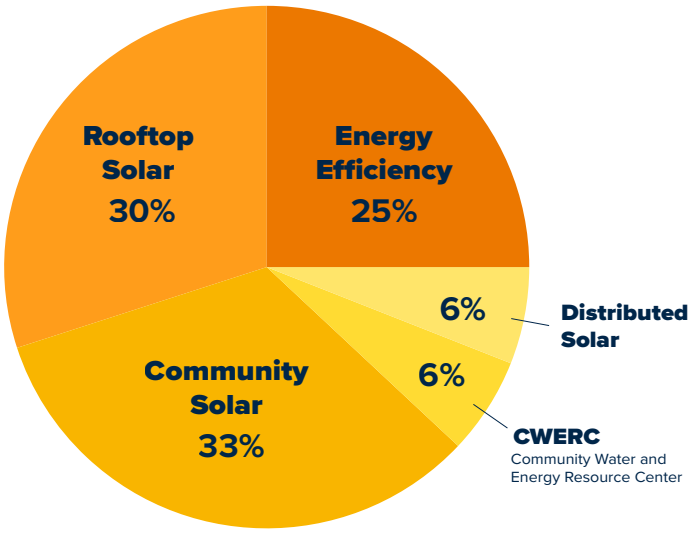
Highland Park could be 100% powered by local, resilient, affordable, and community-owned clean energy resources—with the right tools and investments.

INVESTING IN OURSELVES

The clean energy transformation will bring significant benefits. In a recent analysis, the Institute for Local Self-Reliance found that building 4,900 MW of new solar installations over the next five years in Michigan would save consumers $2.56 billion on their electricity bills (Kienbaum and Farrell 2021).

The Union of Concerned Scientists and Soulardarity analysis, *Let Communities Choose*, includes building close to 44 MW of solar in Highland Park; in proportion that would save close to $23 million.

Additional savings would likely come from energy efficiency and the CWERC. That money could circulate in Highland Park many times over.



HOW WE GET THERE

Energy Efficiency

Add insulation and repair homes and businesses to reduce energy usage by fixing leaks and making other upgrades.

Rooftop Solar

Install solar panels on homes, businesses, schools, and other buildings.

Community Solar

Site larger solar installations in the community, enabling residents—including renters—to subscribe and benefit without having to install solar panels on their roofs.

Distributed Solar

Be creative with small-scale applications including solar carports, canopies, and trees.

Community Water and Energy Resource Center (CWERC)

Treat wastewater to produce reusable water and capture methane for heat and power.

HOW TO LET COMMUNITIES CHOOSE

Solar creates savings at the home, business, and utility scales. We just need the right tools. The state and the city need to act to make this vision real. Michigan legislators, the state Public Service Commission, city officials, and utilities must pursue policies that empower communities to choose and achieve a clean energy vision. Read the full recommendations and report from the Union of Concerned Scientists and Soulardarity at **www.ucsusa.org/let-communities-choose-clean-energy.**

State of Michigan/Utilities

- Eliminate the cap and size restrictions on distributed solar.
- Increase energy efficiency requirements for utilities.
- Require virtual net metering to enable community solar.
- Improve compensation for customer-owned solar.
- Expand access to lower-cost financing for low-income households.
- Create benchmarks for solar rollout in under-resourced communities.
- Support the conversion of federal tax credits to cash grants for those without tax liability.
- Support the ability of communities to pursue alternatives to traditional utility service.

City of Highland Park

- Enact a comprehensive solar ordinance.
- Set local clean energy benchmarks.
- Build city-owned community solar and let residents subscribe.
- Develop local solar and energy efficiency businesses.
- Establish a local revolving loan fund.
- Set standards for developers to provide sustainable community benefits.
- Create a sustainability commission.
- Research alternatives to traditional utility service.

References

Farrell, John. 2019. Is Bigger Best in Renewable Energy? Institute for Local Self-Reliance. 2019 re-release. https://ilsr.org/is-bigger-best-in-renewable-energy-rerelease

Kienbaum, Katie, and John Farrell. 2021. The National Impact of 30 Million Solar Homes: A Vision for an Equitable Economic Recovery Built on Climate Protection and Energy Democracy. Institute for Local Self-Reliance. https://ilsr.org/impact-of-30-million-solar-homes-report/

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