Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Solar Co-op 2026

2/11/26

Please Note: This is a new submission process using Responsive software. Please go to the link below to create an account on Responsive. All questions must be completed to submit a response. Please SAVE your work throughout the submission process.

Submit a response to our Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Solar Co-op 2026 RFP here: app.rfpio.com/survey/public/66aacd6257bb53564d68a228_695edf7ada799a270fc42eb6/Shakopee-Mdewakanton-Sioux-Community-Solar-Co-op

For general guidance on the platform, please refer to our step-by-step guide. If you have any additional questions, please contact us at MNteam@SolarUnitedNeighbors.org – we would be happy to schedule a meeting during the week of February 16.

Dear Installer,

Thank you for your interest in our Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (the "SMSC") Solar Co-op!

This Co-op is being done in partnership with the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, a federally recognized Indian Tribe. The SMSC Government will be funding ten (10) approved projects, up to $28,000 per project, under this partnership.

1. The SMSC has determined that qualified residents are eligible to participate in this Co-op. The SMSC has entered into authorizing agreements with ten (10) approved qualifying residents for solar projects.

2. The SMSC will provide documentation to the Co-op installer identifying and confirming authorization for ten (10) approved participants to have the SMSC provide payment to the installer for their solar projects.

3. Under this Co-op, the SMSC will pay up to $28,000 per solar project for ten (10) approved solar projects. SMSC will not pay in full or in part for any solar project contracted between the installer and any other party.

4. The SMSC payments are limited to the installation and interconnection of a solar array and will not include payment for batteries or other energy products. If a participating resident's roof cannot accommodate a solar project valued up to $28,000, the SMSC will pay the lesser amount for the maximum solar project that the roof can accommodate.

5. Residents participating in the project may choose a project with a cost greater than $28,000 installed on their home. The SMSC will only pay up to a maximum of $28,000 per project; any additional costs will be covered directly by the participating resident as negotiated with the installer in a separate agreement. The SMSC has no obligation to provide payment beyond $28,000 for any project, nor does SUN.

6. The Installer will submit invoices to Solar United Neighbors (SUN) and will receive authorized payments from the SMSC based on the agreed-upon payment schedule, with a maximum of three payment milestones. SUN will track invoices and verify that the project has been completed and that payments have been made.

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Solar Co-op Timeline

1. RFP Issue Date: February 11, 2026
2. **Proposals Due: February 25 by 5:00 p.m. CT**
3. Selection Committee Review: March 11 (tentative)
4. Notice of Intent to Award: March 18
5. Installer Award Agreement Completed: March 20
6. Deadline (tentative) for all site visits completed: April 17
7. Deadline (tentative) for all proposals to co-op members: May 1
8. Deadline (tentative) for all signed contracts: May 15
9. Deadline for all installations to be completed: September 30, 2026

We are working to help as many homeowners go solar as possible. We also want to help grow a strong, vibrant solar market in the region. We've been organizing solar cooperatives since 2007, facilitating 421 different solar co-ops with thousands of co-op members, resulting in over 74+ MW of contracted residential solar.

To submit a response to this RFP, please go to the link below to create an account with Responsive. If you already have an account with Responsive, use that to access the RFP response portal. Proposals are due by submission through Responsive by 5:00 p.m. CT on February 4 (Late submissions will not be accepted).

NOTE: If you plan to respond to more than one SUN RFP announcement, this software will let you save and re-use your responses for easier preparation and submission next time!

Submit a response to our Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Solar Co-op RFP here: app.rfpio.com/survey/public/66aacd6257bb53564d68a228_695edf7ada799a270fc42eb6/Shakopee-Mdewakanton-Sioux-Community-Solar-Co-op

Below you will find additional information and requirements for preparing a compelling proposal. If you have any questions about the process or expectations, please don't hesitate to email. Please see the document on the last page for guidance on commercial, non-profit, and large systems as part of the co-op.

We look forward to receiving your submissions!

Best,

John Anderson
Minnesota Program Associate
MNteam@SolarUnitedNeighbors.org

Please respond to this RFP by using our web-based Responsive portal. Link included above. The following are bid requirements and useful suggestions.

Scope of work

Services to be provided by Solar United Neighbors

1. Pre-screen co-op members in consultation with the SMSC and by reviewing each roof via publicly available satellite imagery. Assessments performed by Solar United Neighbors are categorized by "Qualified", "Maybe Qualified", and "Disqualified" (based on shading, size, shape, orientation) and are not intended to be overly restrictive. Our goal is to find the balance between wasting a homeowner's or the developer's time and unnecessarily excluding co-op members.

2. Issue promotional materials (press release and social media posts, etc.) as well as work to generate local media attention. We'll clear materials with you to the best of our ability. We will feature your company prominently while keeping bid details confidential.

3. Support Co-op participants and the selected installer throughout the process.

4. Host celebration of successful Co-op projects and public recognition of the work of the installer.

5. Distribute information should any details about the RFP be clarified or changed during the RFP period.

Services to be provided by the Proposer

1. A custom proposal for each Co-op participant based on the group pricing and component offerings outlined in bid. The proposal should include language that explains all of the services provided in the turnkey price for the system (assessment, system design, permitting, installation, interconnection paperwork, etc.). Please provide us the first three (3) proposals you send to Co-op participants.

2. In person (or virtual conference) site assessment, structural assessment, design, equipment procurement, installation, monitoring setup, financing, customer training (i.e. safety rules, monitoring, maintenance, how to deal with problems, etc.), permitting, and application/management of applicable incentives.

3. $600 per signed contract to be paid to Solar United Neighbors as a development fee. This includes solar, solar + EV charger, solar + storage, and battery retrofit contracts. Contracts for EV chargers only (without solar) will be at $75/signed contract. This fee should be incorporated into the $/W price, not listed as an adder. We accept payment by check or ACH (electronic bank transfer).

4. Responsive communication with Co-op participants, SUN and the SMSC.

5. Responsive communication and coordination with Solar United Neighbors about group and individual Co-op project status.

6. Participate in public education/outreach events.

7. Installations performed in conformance with all applicable laws and codes, interconnection requirements for net-metered installations and any incentive-related installation requirements, rules, and timelines. Solar United Neighbors defers to the SEIA Solar Business Code as a determinant of fair, transparent business practices to ensure solar customers are treated in a fair and honest manner. In addition to the SEIA Code, Companies shall abide by the law and all applicable ethical business guidelines set forth by the Council of Better Business Bureaus (BBB), Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), relevant state consumer protection bureaus, and other regulatory bodies with jurisdiction.

8. For installers that provide brokerage services for SRECs, installer may not obligate co-op member to sell SRECs to said installer. As long as co-op members retain ownership of the solar system, a co-op member should be able to select his/her preferred broker, which may include installer. If a co-op member opts for a PPA or leased system, installer may manage SRECs freely.

Bid Requirements

- **Offer a single purchase price ($/watt) for all Co-op participants.**
    - This price will be offered to all residents participating in the solar Co-op.
    - You may not exclude SUN or the SMSC from your proposals involved in this RFP.
    - You do not need to provide individualized proposals for each resident in this initial bid. If selected to develop the group of projects, Proposer will provide individualized proposals for each Co-op participant and furnish copies to SUN and the SMSC.

- **Explicitly state any additional charges not included in the $/watt price in the proposal** (e.g., charges for electrical upgrades, steep roofs, specific roofing types/materials, roof attachment methods/components, multiple array locations, small system size, customized racking, tree trimming, etc.)
    - The assumption is that all costs to most co-op members are factored into the base price, and that an additional charge, if necessary, is reserved for unique circumstances.

- **Consider all selection criteria when preparing your proposal**. Although the Selection Committee will look for aggressive pricing, price is **not** the only factor they will consider. Participants also value experience in the marketplace, quality system components, and strong warranties, among other factors. Solar Co-op bids should not be a "race to the bottom" in terms of system price and quality, nor do we want proposers to feel they must sacrifice quality in order to be selected.

- **Bid with PV modules that**:
    - Are listed and reviewed on the California Energy Commission list, 'Incentive Eligible Photovoltaic Modules in Compliance with SB1 Guidelines' or installer must provide similar performance information for selection committee from an alternate source, or by referencing a CEC-listed panel from the same product family.
    - Have at least a 25-year power warranty with a specified performance degradation curve showing acceptable levels of performance or replacement and show achievement of a minimum of 80% of the nameplate rated power at STC by year 25;
    - Have a product warranty of at least 10 years.

- **Bid with inverters that:**
    - Are included in the California Energy Commission list 'List of Eligible Inverters per SB1 Guidelines' or installer to provide similar performance information for selection

committee from an alternate source or by referencing a CEC-listed inverter from the same product family.
    - Have a warranty that allows for replacement due to premature failure over the specified warranty time frame and be a minimum of 15 years for micro inverters and 10 years for string inverters.

- **Utilize mounting equipment that is**:
    - Grounded in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.
    - Used in accordance with its manufacturer's listed purpose and specifications.
    - Used in accordance with manufacturer specifications for waterproofing penetrations
    - Meets any specific local zoning requirements beyond #2 and #3

- **Level 2 EV chargers must:** Be UL or ETL certified.

- **Meet the following licensing requirements:**
    - Proposer submitting the bid is licensed to operate within Minnesota
    - Proposer submitting the bid is a licensed solar installer / electrical contractor within Minnesota
    - Proposer submitting the bid must be a staff member of the solar company who would receive the work
    - NOTE: Bids from third party sales representatives will not be accepted

- **Meet the following insurance requirements** (for proposer and any sub-contractors): [1]
    - General liability - $1,000,000 per occurrence, $2,000,000 in aggregate
    - Worker's compensation - $1,000,000 each accident, each employee, policy limit
    - Automobile liability - bodily injury, death, and property damage combined single limits of at least $1,000,000 per occurrence covering vehicles owned, hired, or non-owned
    - NOTE: Official proof of exemption by applicable jurisdiction for any above insurance requirements for a company is also acceptable.

Have you worked on a Solar United Neighbors co-op before?

In order to be eligible to submit a proposal for this co-op, you must:

1. Have no overdue invoices for past solar co-op work.
2. Have updated all customer tracking data for active or completed co-ops (including kW installed and interconnection completed dates).
3. Have completed initial contacts, site visits, and individualized proposals for the majority of any existing co-op you are currently working on.

Have you worked on a project with the SMSC before?

In order to work on a solar project to be paid in whole or in part by the SMSC, you may:

1. Be required to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement.
2. Be required to share data with the SMSC.

[1] These requirements are in line with the Solar Energy Industry Association's described best practices https://www.seia.org/research-resources/installation-best-practices-residential-portfolios

3. Be required to sign an addendum or enter into a separate agreement with the SMSC or any of the participating residents in the co-op solar program.

Solar United Neighbors reserves the right to deny any proposer's bid due to overdue payments, lack of proper licensure for applicable jurisdictions, or outstanding co-op member grievance yet to be resolved.

Useful Info

How a solar co-op works

A solar co-op is when a group of homeowners goes through the solarization process together.

Months 1-2	Month 3	Months 4-8
1 LEARN Attend a free solar co-op info session. 2 SIGN UP ONLINE Become a co-op member! It's free to sign up. 3 SPREAD THE WORD Invite neighbors & friends to join!	4 SELECT INSTALLER Once the co-op has 30 members, they choose the solar installer. Solar United Neighbors issues a competitive RFP for solar installers on behalf of the solar co-op. We review bids & check references. Then volunteer co-op members review bids & select one installer.	★ **SIGN UP DEADLINE: 9/19** Last chance to join. 5 PROPOSAL Co-op pricing, customized for you. 6 SIGN CONTRACT with the installer 7 INSTALLATION 8 PARTY! Celebrate & meet your solar neighbors.

More detailed information about each phase is available here:
http://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/for-installers/

How a co-op selects an installer

After all interested installers have submitted a proposal in response to this Request for Proposals, Solar United Neighbors will convene a selection committee of co-op members. This Selection Committee, consisting of homeowners participating in the solar co-op, will review the proposals. Each Selection Committee member signs a confidentiality agreement to keep your bid details private. The Committee will select one Proposer to develop all of the projects for the group.

The process used to select the winning bid will be as follows:

1. Once Selection Committee members sign the confidentiality agreement, bids will be distributed to Selection Committee members along with a summary spreadsheet created by our staff.
2. Selection Committee members may review bids independently before meeting as a group.
3. Committee members will convene in one evening to review all bids and make a decision. During that meeting they will:
    a. Discuss each bid
    b. Select finalists
    c. Contact the designated bid representative for each finalist if a bid component needs clarification. (Committee may decide not to contact finalists if no clarification is needed.)
    d. Select a winning company to service the co-op.

If you are selected as a finalist and the committee calls you that evening, you will have an opportunity to speak about your bid and to answer questions. Please abide by the following:

1. No discussions of other installers' bids, reputation, etc. This is about your proposal only.
2. Please do not negotiate to change any aspect of the bid from what is in your proposal. Clarifications of what's included are acceptable.
3. Keep responses as brief as possible.

Lessons learned from previous solar co-ops

Historically, we have seen participant close rates of between 20% and 30%. Our goal with each solar co-op is to have a 30% (or higher) close rate for participants. We've put a lot of time into recruiting and educating the participants and we want to make sure that as many qualified participants as possible move forward with projects.

Our aim is not to interfere with your internal process or micromanage how you do business. We have, however, seen very different close rates within solar co-ops. Some of this has to do with the installer's process and approach. Below we've put together some lessons learned that we've found are helpful in getting a high close rate.

Installers with higher close rates:

- Called participants to schedule an initial site visit and followed up via email instead of only emailing.
- Reach out to selection committee members early–they are often the first signed contracts.
- Use the co-op as a "special offer" to lost leads in the co-op area, directing them to our sign-up page so they have support and education that can help to convert to a signed contract.
- Scheduled site visits as soon as possible and provided quick turn-around times for sending proposals to participants (proposals received 1 week or less after site visit).
- Provided participants with a proposal and a final contract for signature at the same time (so the customer has all information to finalize their decision).
- Had short, concise, and clear email communications with participants. When there's lots of text in a proposal or email, participants stop reading.
- Let the group know when they would be unavailable or were experiencing delays. Participants understand delays; they just want to be kept in the loop about when to expect information from installers. We can communicate this to the group as a whole and help manage expectations too. Just let us know how things are going.
- Maintained organized, updated customer tracking records. We use these records to monitor group progress and respond to participant questions and concerns.

- Communicated with us about difficulties reaching participants. We'll remain involved throughout the process and are happy to reach out to participants to reassure them, encourage scheduling site visits, signing contracts, etc. Just let us know what you need.

Q&A Process

Solar United Neighbors will act as the point of contact for all solar co-op and RFP related questions on behalf of the co-op members covered under this RFP.

John Anderson and Trinity Dearborn will manage all communications. Please submit any questions and/or comments via email to MNteam@SolarUnitedNeighbors.org. Proposers that contact co-op members directly for any reason will be disqualified.

What we will disclose to group members about your bid if you are selected

We will disclose this information to the entire group (not the public) about your winning bid:

- Equipment included in the bid
- Warranties on all equipment and installation
- Base pricing and key adders
- System cost examples based on your bid pricing, average sizes and equipment options (noting that bid pricing and component offering is for limited co-op time frame and may not be applicable to non-co-op members)
- Installer contact information and next steps for each homeowner
    - NOTE: If you are selected, we will work with you to clarify this.

Commercial, non-profit and large systems

Solar Co-ops are mostly made up of residential customers but may include some small businesses, non-profit organizations, churches and other larger than residential systems.

If a lower price per watt is available for the participating resident than the Co-op pricing, feel free to include this price in the individual customer's proposal. The solar Co-op is not meant to get in the way of making a sale.