

Cranston Marketing and Outreach Plan:

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Solarize Cranston team will implement a comprehensive marketing plan designated to inform homeowners and business owners about the potential benefits of the Solarize Rhode Island program and to educate them about existing rebates and incentives. The Solarize Cranston team will hold a kickoff meeting soon after an announcement of Cranston's selection as a Solarize Rhode Island Community. The team will meet at least twice a month to provide direction as needed to move the marketing plan forward, review materials provided by Solarize Rhode Island, and receive updates on all work-shop planning.

Peter Lapolla and Jason Pezzullo will coordinate with Jeffery Barone and Mark Sheil-drop of the Mayor's office about handling the various communications and updates as they are readied for the public.

The Marketing Plan includes the following:

CITY WEBSITE

- The City will use our in-house IT resources to create a special webpage that can be easily found from at the top of the main page. This new page will serve as a clearing house for news, upcoming events, and links to external sources. Residents will be able to easily find all information relating to this program in one efficient location.

MAILINGS

- The mayor has a personal newsletter that reaches approximately 2,500 - 3,000 residents that he can use to disseminate information about the program. A notice to property owners about all the details of the program may be also be sent out with quarterly tax bills. Given the scope of the program, this will only happen one time, if scheduling permits.

SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

- The City does not have an official social media presence, though Mayor Fung does. Through his Facebook and Twitter posting, information can get out quickly and efficiently about upcoming events, tours, and where to find all of the relevant information and whom to contact directly. In addition, the City will create a SOLARIZE CRANSTON Facebook page as an additional resource of information, pictures, local success stories, etc. Solar profiles will be created of the solar ambassadors to highlight energy use, system size and actual energy production from their residential systems. This information will provide residents interested in the Solarize program with an ability to compare their energy use to the profiled solar installations and an estimate of what system size would be needed for their energy use.

PRINT MEDIA

- Any and all print materials produced and provided for this effort will be made available for distribution at City Hall, Hamilton Building (City Hall Annex), Highway Department, Cranston Central Library and all branches, School Department, and selected businesses determined through our partnership and collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce.

PUBLIC MEETINGS and COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

- The Team will work with Solarize Rhode Island to organize a series of workshops on solar and encourage residents and business to sign-up for site evaluations. The solar ambassadors, City staff and the marketing firm engaged by Solarize RI will collaborate together on developing the presentation material. One of the solar ambassadors has already created and presented a power point presentation outlining the specific details of his solar installation including the costs, energy production, energy savings, payback period and rate of return which could be tailored for these community workshops. The following sites all have large meeting space, over 75 person capacity and adequate set-up for AV equipment and display). The City will provide the AV equipment:

Cranston City Hall, Cranston Central Library, Hall Library, Senior Center, Cranston High School East, Cranston High School West.

Solarize Cranston team members Peter Lapolla and Jason Pezzullo will be the points of contact for scheduling workshops and making special arrangements as needed for workshop presenters. The City of Cranston can reserve any of the above venues at no cost.

BANNERS/BOOSTER BOARD

- Park Avenue is the main east/west corridor through the city and has some of the highest traffic volumes. This roadway represents an excellent opportunity to promote Solarize Cranston. The City may utilize its resources to erect a banner to stretch across the right of way in a prominent location to raise the visibility of this program.

NEWSPAPER/ MEDIA OUTLET OUTREACH

- Mark Sheildrop, the Mayor's communications director will work directly with members of the media such as the Cranston Herald, The Patch, Local TV outlets, Providence Journal to promote news coverage and stories profiling success stories within the community. The Solar Ambassadors will also participate in the community workshops and promote Solar Tours of homes which have recently had panels installed. These tours and the first-hand stories of Cranston residents we believe will get people interested in hearing more about the program.

TABLING

- The Team will take advantage of public events including those such as the various religious feasts that take place during the summer months. For example, an event that gets a good deal of activity each year is the Gaspee Days Parade and festival. Additionally there are also road races where the Team members will be able to man tables during these events to educate the public.

CONCLUSION

- Cranston has the operational capacity and is committed to successfully promote the Solarize program to the residents of Cranston this spring and summer. The Team believes strongly in the environmental and cost savings benefits of Solarize RI and will use its strong and established network of outreach and communications tools to inform, involve and actively engage the residents of Cranston during our window of opportunity.