

SUDBURY SOLAR CANOPY PROJECTS

Articles 33, 34 & 35 • Annual Town Meeting — Mon, May 4, 2026, 7:00 p.m. • L-S High School Auditorium • Two-thirds vote required

What the articles do: Authorize the Town to **enter into a lease and proceed with studies** for solar canopies over the parking lots at three Town-owned sites — under 25-year Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) with Solect Energy through the PowerOptions consortium.

Site (Article)	Size (DC)	Equivalent to...
Curtis Middle School Parking Lot (Art. 33)	300kW (DC) / 200kW (AC)	37% of Curtis electricity consumption
Haskell Parking Lot (Art. 34)	1,273 kW (DC) / 900 (AC)	≈ annual usage of new Community Center
Police Station Parking Lot (Art. 35)	136kW (DC) / 120kW (AC)	54% of Police Station electricity consumption

WHAT A YES VOTE ACTUALLY MEANS

A YES vote authorizes the Town to:

- Enter into a lease with Solect Energy.
- Proceed with geotechnical, engineering, water-management, and utility studies — funded by Solect, no Town capital outlay.
- Lock in the federal 30% tax credit.

A YES vote does **NOT** lock the Town into building the canopies.

Multiple off-ramps remain:

- Planning Board permitting and design review.
- Select Board, Town Manager and stakeholder input as studies return.
- Contract includes a **Max PPA Rate** — if unforeseen costs (ledge, drainage) push pricing above this cap, Sudbury may walk away.

\$2M

Projected electricity savings — Haskell alone

Conservative estimate assumes only **2.5%** annual rate increases.

Reality check: MA residential rates have **risen more than 40% since 2020**, with last year's increase alone at 7.7%



Actual savings may likely be substantially higher

FINANCIAL BENEFITS

- **No upfront capital from the Town.** Solect finances, builds, owns, operates, and maintains the systems. The Town pays only a discounted per-kWh PPA rate — no override, no borrowing, no tax increase.
- **Federal 30% tax credit (~\$1M+ in value across the three projects).** Acting now is the only way to capture this — the credit is being phased out and is unlikely to return.
- **Predictable, locked-in PPA rate, long-term budget stability.** A stable line item to budget around — protection against the volatile MA energy market (where +12% single-period rate hikes have occurred).
- **Lower parking lot asphalt maintenance and snow plowing costs.** Shaded asphalt experiences less rutting, softening, and UV damage. Canopies cover plowing area, reducing salt and labor.

HEALTH & RESILIENCE BENEFITS

- **Sun-parked cars become ovens; shaded ones stay near ambient.** Sun-exposed interiors run 30–60°F hotter than the outside air. Even at 72°F outside, a sun-parked car reaches 117°F within an hour.
- **Shaded pavement runs 10–15°F cooler than sun-exposed asphalt,** lowering burn risk for children, reducing heat exposure for families at Haskell, Curtis, and the Police Station, and lessening urban heat-island effects.
- **Hot days are multiplying fast in Sudbury.** Sudbury has historically averaged 8 days/year above 90°F (1971–2000). By midcentury, climate projections show Sudbury could add up to 35 more 90°F days per year. Shaded public space is becoming a public-health necessity.

STRATEGIC & CLIMATE BENEFITS

- Aligns with Sudbury's **Climate Emergency Declaration (2022)**, **Climate Mobilization Action Plan (2023)**, and the Town's path to **net-zero energy consumption**.
- Strengthens Sudbury's standing as a **MA Green Community** and positions the Town to qualify as a **MA Climate Leaders Community** — both unlock significant state funding opportunities.
- Insulates Sudbury from drivers of rising MA energy costs: regional demand growth, inflation, geopolitical instability, required utility grid upgrades, and the Northeast's reliance on natural gas (~65% of MA electricity).

Bottom line: A YES vote locks in \$1M+ in federal credits and unlocks \$2M+ in projected savings — no capital outlay, with clear off-ramps.