Community and Shared Solar Models
Colorado Pathways

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The CEO’s vision is to help Coloradans live more prosperous and healthy lives by promoting innovative energy production and efficient energy consumption practices that are beneficial to the economic and environmental health of the state.

The CEO’s mission is to improve the effective use of all of Colorado’s energy resources and the efficient consumption of energy in all economic sectors, through providing technical guidance, financial support, policy advocacy and public communications.
Utility Pathways - Colorado Way

Utility Business Model

Hard Path  →  Community Solar  ←  Soft Path
Community Solar Enabling Legislation
HB 10-1342 (Community Solar Gardens Act)

House Bill 10-1342 was signed by Governor Ritter in 2010 as a way to encourage additional investment in solar energy generation by authorizing the creation of community solar gardens. This groundbreaking bill has paved the way for Colorado to become a national leader in community solar. The basics of the bill are as follows:

Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) from the community solar gardens count towards the IOU’s Renewable Portfolio Standard

Solar gardens are required to be 2 megawatts or less

There must be at least 10 subscribers. Each subscription must be at least 1 kilowatt (low-income households are exempt from this requirement)

Subscriptions cannot supply more “than 120% of the average annual consumption of electricity by each subscriber at the premises to which the subscription is attributed, with a deduction for the amount of any existing solar facilities at such premises”

The subscriber’s physical location must be within the same county or the county adjacent to that of the community solar array

Utility companies must include a provision for low-income customers
Clean Up Legislation

House Bill 15-1284 (Program Efficiency for Community Solar Generation Facilities)

Prior to clean up, the subscriber was required to be “within either the same municipality or the same county as the community solar garden; except that, if the subscriber lives in a county with a population of less than twenty thousand, according to the most recent available census figures, such physical locations may be in another county, also with a population of less than twenty thousand, within the service territory of the same qualifying retail utility and also adjacent to, that of the community solar garden.”

House Bill 15-1284 simplified the requirement by saying the subscriber’s physical location could be located in the same or adjacent county as the community solar garden.
CO Community Solar Landscape

Colorado currently has over 40 community solar projects in operation, totaling over 30 MW of installed capacity.

Projects are distributed across electric cooperatives, municipal and investor owned utilities.

Low-income user subscriptions are fully subscribed to approximately 1 MW of developer based generation.

Trajectory of investor owned community solar offerings expected to grow exponentially.
Xcel Energy Global Settlement

Last week, Xcel Energy and 26 solar and consumer interest groups struck a far reaching compromise on a rate case, a controversial large-scale utility solar program and the regular review of the state’s renewable energy plan.

Replaced a proposed fixed “Grid Use Charge,” with a “Time-of-Use” rate trial and a “Time Differential Rate” demand charge pilot.

Adds a 50MW utility owned market subscription solar product.

Resolves Xcel’s RE Plan through 2019

Includes capacity increases in renewable energy programs

Treats all net metered solar owners equitably.