

The University of Minnesota Crookston Solar Energy Install Investigation

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The University of Minnesota Crookston Campus has been investigating a solar array installation as part of our commitment to campus carbon neutrality by 2050. The campus also has a vested interest in a solar project due to potential reduced costs for energy. For this project, install rebates and tax credits were investigated to mitigate costs. Two funding sources were identified, an install rebate offered by Otter Tail Energy, and a tax credit offered by the Inflation Reduction Act. Otter Tail Energy offers a rebate that can cover up to 50 percent of install costs (\$1,500 per kilowatt install, up to the maximum size of 40 kilowatts). The IRA offers tax credits of 30 to 50 percent of install costs. Using this information, two scenarios were created, one using the identified funding to pay for other needs on campus, and the other using the funding to pay off an initial internal loan for the installation. A conservative estimate of 70% funding was used. In total, it was estimated that UMC could see energy savings of \$65,938.48 and \$96,453.70 in scenarios one and two, over 25 years.

This information has shown it is viable for organizations such as UMC to undertake solar installs, however, the potential cost and method of integrating solar into existing campus infrastructure still needs to be investigated.
