

# How Can Utility-Scale Solar Development Benefit Rural Communities?

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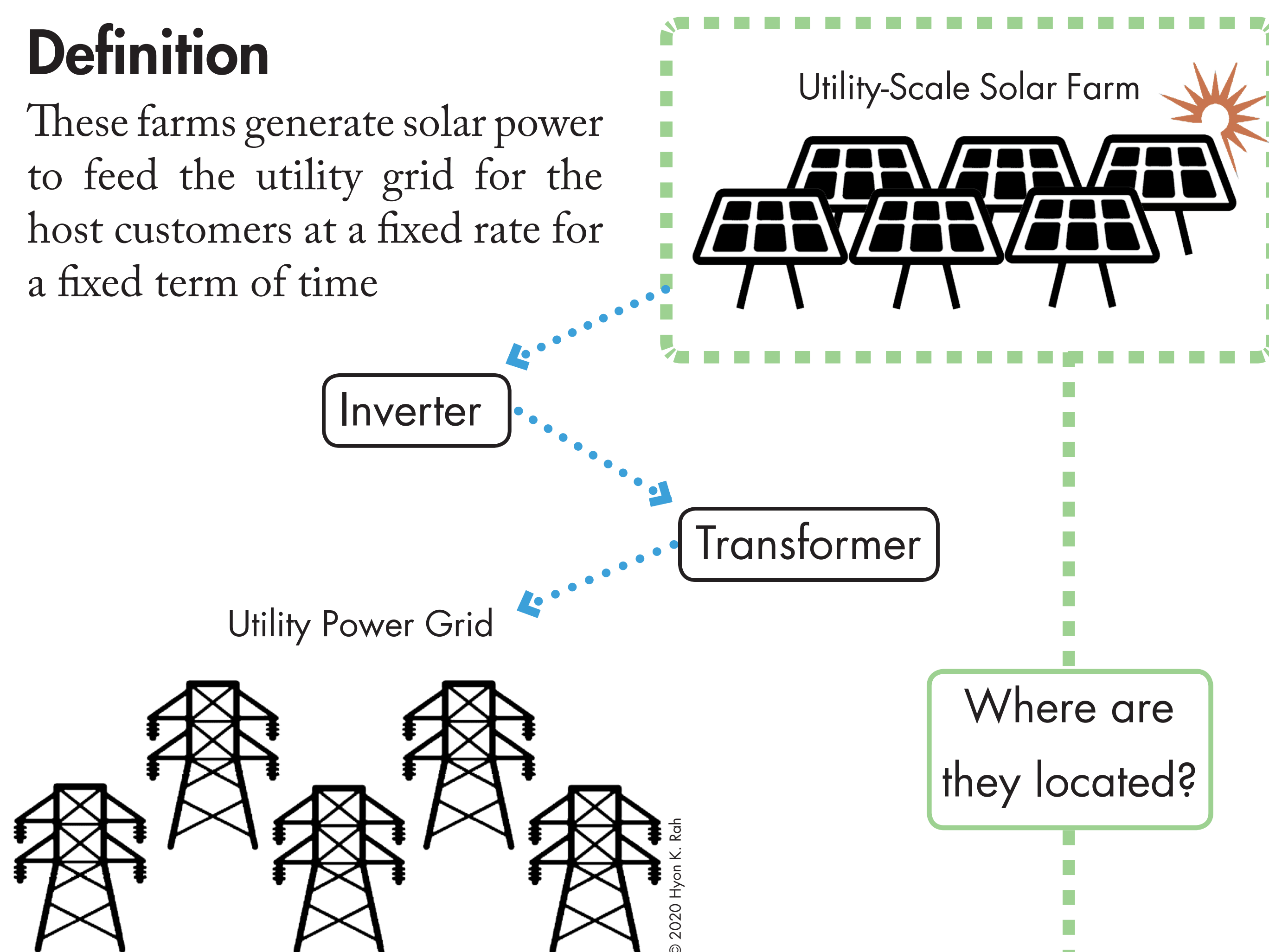
A Woman Owned Small Business (WOSB)

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## Utility-Scale Solar Farms

### Definition

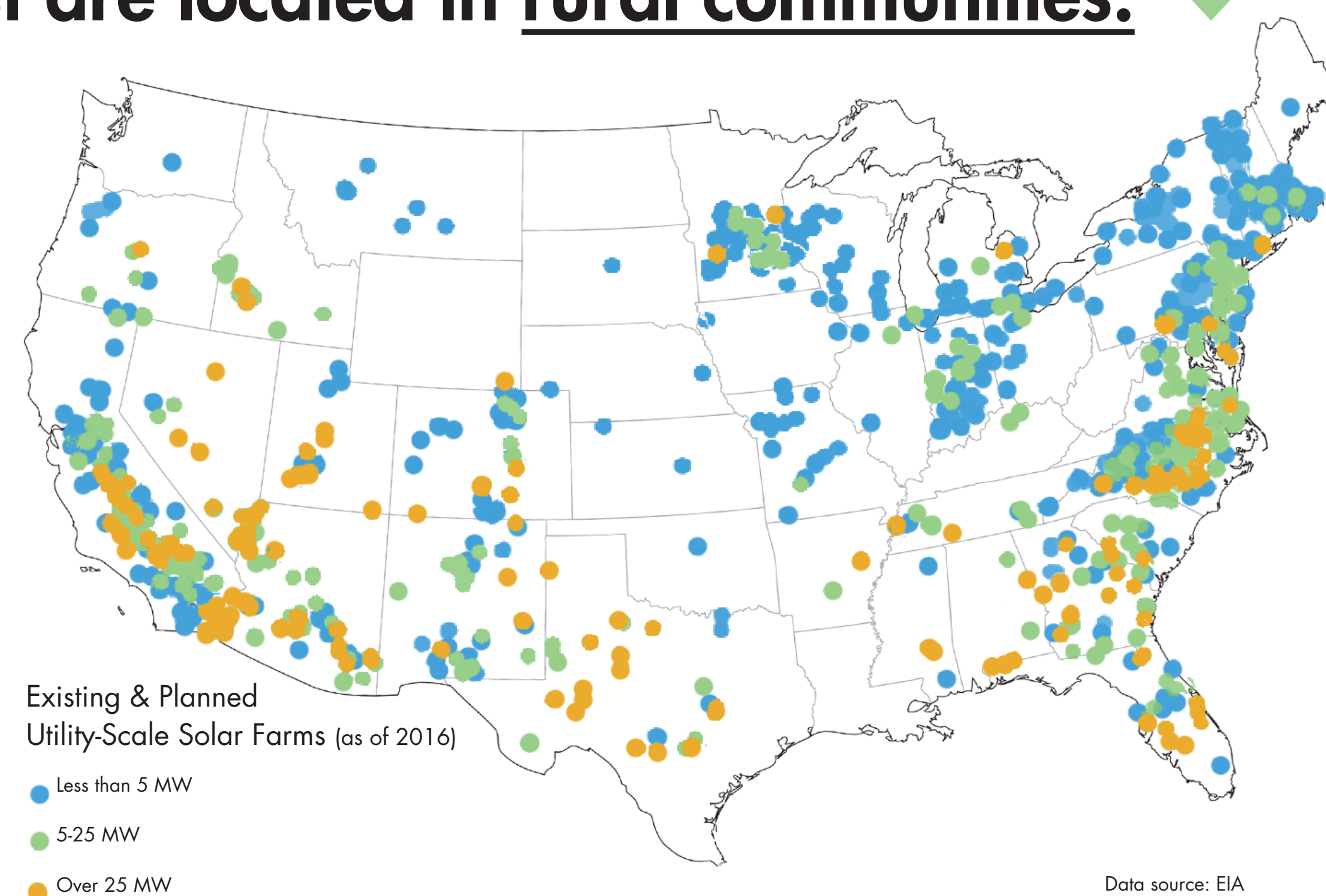
These farms generate solar power to feed the utility grid for the host customers at a fixed rate for a fixed term of time



### Meaning,

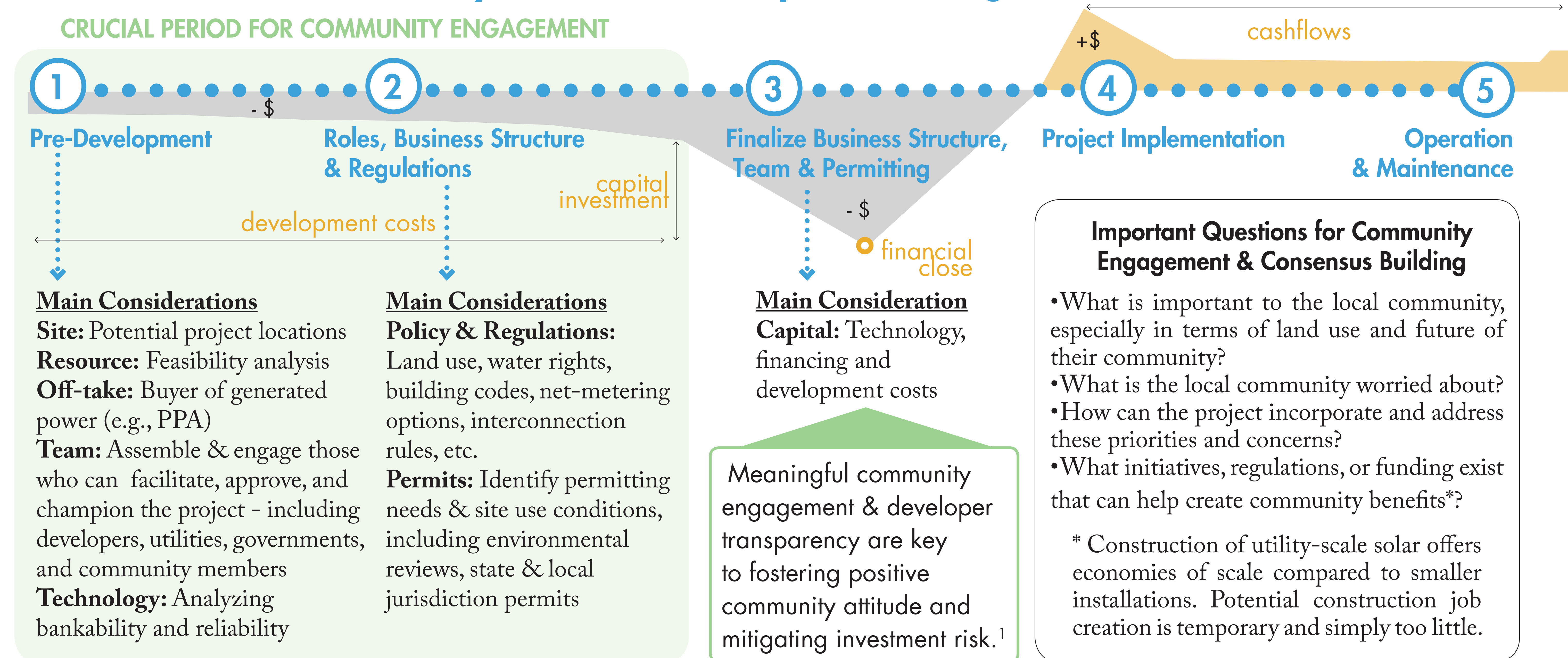
Solar power generated does not directly supply the local community

Most are located in rural communities.



Projects that lack obvious community benefits can face **delayed progress** or **outright opposition**. Integrating **tangible local benefits** into the **project planning process** can **mitigate these risks**.

## Utility-Scale Solar Project Planning Process



## Utility-Scale Solar for Rural Community Benefit - Examples



### Supporting Public Education (AZ)

Land lease payments for sites fully owned by the Arizona State Land Department go directly to AZ's K-12 public school and teacher funding. This makes public schools direct beneficiaries of utility-scale solar projects located in these areas.



### Creating Pollinator Habitat

Pollinators, critical for plant reproduction and our food system, need flowering plants for survival. Adding ground cover and pollinator habitats supports pollinators, stabilizes the soil, and reduces air temperature, contributing to solar performance.<sup>2</sup>



### Co-Locating Agriculture

Co-locating agriculture and solar allows for dual use of farmlands and dual income for farmers. At La Ola Solar Farm, HI, resident sheep help manage weeds and keep plants trimmed and away from solar panels.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [https://eta-publications.lbl.gov/sites/default/files/firestone\\_et\\_al\\_2017\\_reconsidering\\_barriers\\_to\\_wind\\_power\\_projects.pdf](https://eta-publications.lbl.gov/sites/default/files/firestone_et_al_2017_reconsidering_barriers_to_wind_power_projects.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://dnr.maryland.gov/pprp/Documents/Pollinator\\_Habitat\\_Designation.pdf](https://dnr.maryland.gov/pprp/Documents/Pollinator_Habitat_Designation.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.energy.gov/eere/solar/farmers-guide-going-solar>