



(Em)powering Our Neighborhoods: Bringing Clean Energy Home

April 21, 2021

The big picture

Facing the climate crisis, facing social inequity: our moment calls for bold action on many fronts. Here in New York City, gas and oil-powered electric “peaker” power plants dot our most vulnerable neighborhoods, contributing mightily to the health burdens these areas bear—including some of the highest rates of asthma in the country. Meanwhile, construction continues on a new fracked-gas pipeline running through some of these same neighborhoods.

The fight for a healthy, climate-friendly city depends on reducing and eliminating fossil fuel dependency while accelerating the buildup of clean, renewable energy. Some New Yorkers can install their own rooftop solar, but that’s not an option for most of us. Community-based renewable electricity is an essential climate solution.

Community-based renewable energy projects in NYC

[Sunset Park Solar](#) will be NYC’s first community solar project owned and operated by a cooperative for the benefit of local residents and businesses. The solar energy system will be owned and managed by Co-op Power’s New York City Community Energy Cooperative in partnership with UPROSE.

[South Bronx Community Resiliency Agenda](#) will include the Hunts Point Solar project, designed to serve the Hunts Point community in the South Bronx. It will install solar panels on an existing warehouse to offer renewable energy subscriptions to the community.

New York State’s community solar initiative

[NY-Sun \(Solar Initiative\)](#), is part of New York State Energy Research and Development (NYSERDA). This initiative helps individuals and communities throughout New York State sign up for solar energy subscriptions. [Find qualified community solar projects](#) with NYSEDA’s interactive map.

The fight against local fossil fuel-powered peaker plants

Peaker plants are electric generation stations that only work during periods of peak demand, usually during extreme weather. They only run 15% of the time, at most, but they emit twice as much carbon dioxide per unit of electricity generated, and they spew as much as twenty times as much of the pollutants that cause respiratory disease. Most of them are in low-income areas

and communities of color. The [PEAK Coalition](#) campaigns to end this long-standing pollution burden, eliminating these plants through a combination of renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy storage solutions. Learn more [here](#).

Tell Governor Cuomo and the PSC not to repower the fracked gas plant in Gowanus: [Stop the Gowanus Fracked Gas Plant!](#)

For more on the peaker fight:

- [New York City's most polluting fossil fuel plants can retire by 2030 thanks to renewables, storage](#)
- [Environmental justice groups offer vision to shut New York City peakers](#)
- [Prioritize equity and sustainability to transform Rikers](#)
- [New York Power Authority, environmental groups explore ways to replace gas peakers with cleaner technology](#)

The fight to stop the North Brooklyn gas pipeline

National Grid is building an expanded fracked gas pipeline through Bedford Stuyvesant, Brownsville, Bushwick, and Greenpoint. The No North Brooklyn Pipeline Coalition—made up of [Sane Energy Project](#), [Frack Outta Brooklyn](#) and the [Brownsville Residents Green Coalition](#)—are organizing against construction of this pipeline. They say the pipeline will not serve the affected communities, will pose safety risks to the area while promoting dependence on gas, and will emit methane, a greenhouse gas that is 86-100 times worse for atmospheric warming than carbon dioxide.

Tell the New York State Public Service Commission to deny the NBK pipeline and LNG buildout: [Send a comment opposing NBK pipeline](#)

For more information, check out these articles:

- [A Pipeline Is Coming to Brooklyn. Residents Are Invoking BLM to Fight It](#)
- [“This Is Our Standing Rock”: How the North Brooklyn Pipeline is Disenfranchising Black and Brown Lives](#)
- [Why the Environmental Justice Movement Should Think Locally](#)

The movement for energy democracy and publicly-owned power

[Climate Justice Alliance](#) is an alliance of 74 urban and rural frontline communities, organizations and supporting networks in the climate justice movement. The Alliance's policy plan on energy democracy calls for recognizing energy as a public good through community governance of energy development, equitable electrification and energy efficiency retrofits, and prioritizing BIPOC, frontline, and poor people in energy supply and distribution decisions. Learn more at [Climate Justice Alliance: Energy Democracy](#).

[NY Energy Democracy Alliance](#) is a statewide alliance of grassroots groups and policy experts working together to advance a just and participatory transition to a resilient, localized, and democratically controlled clean energy economy in New York State. EDA envisions a renewable energy system that is led by and prioritizes solutions for low- and moderate-income communities and communities of color who are most negatively impacted by our current energy and economic system.

[Public Power NYC](#) is a DSA campaign to replace our privately owned local utilities with a publicly owned, democratically run utility with a mandate to achieve safe, reliable, affordable and 100% renewable energy service.

Learn about and support NYC-based environmental justice organizations

[The New York City Environmental Justice Alliance \(NYC-EJA\)](#), founded in 1991, is a non-profit, citywide membership network linking grassroots organizations from low-income neighborhoods and communities of color in their struggle for environmental justice.

[NY Renews](#) is a coalition of 200+ environmental, labor, and social justice organizations (including 350Brooklyn and UPROSE) that works on state policies that promote climate justice and good jobs. NY Renews was the driving force behind the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act that the New York legislature passed in 2019.

[The Point CDC](#) is a non-profit dedicated to youth development, as well as cultural and economic revitalization in the Hunts' Point area of the South Bronx.

[RenewYorkCity](#) is a mission-based operation that organizes local communities to efficiently transition to a clean energy economy by leveraging Community Choice Aggregation (CCA). CCA allows communities to choose renewable energy sources.

[UPROSE](#), based in Sunset Park, is Brooklyn's oldest Latino community-based organization, and a leading advocate of climate justice. UPROSE spearheaded the campaign to build a wind turbine assembly hub now planned for Sunset Park.

Reading recommendations from our panelists

- [Revolutionary Power: An Activist's Guide to the Energy Transition](#), Shalanda Baker
- [The Grid: The Fraying Wires Between Americans and Our Energy Future](#), Gretchen Anna Bakke
- [Public Power in a Green City](#), Ashley Dawson
- [People's Power: Reclaiming the Energy Commons](#), Ashley Dawson
- [Short Circuiting Policy: Interest Groups and the Battle over Clean Energy and Climate Policy in the American States](#), Leah Cardamore Stokes