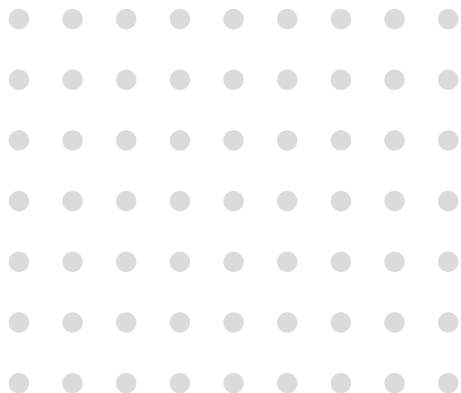


M O D I F I E D
**PROGRAM
GUIDE**
June 2023



SolSmart – Modified Pathway Program Guide

I. Welcome to SolSmart!

Congratulations on taking action to expand opportunities for solar in your community! In the next ten years, the amount of solar energy in the U.S. is expected to grow dramatically- by 2033 there is likely to be five times more solar installed than there is today!¹ By implementing solar-friendly policies, not only can you help accelerate this transition to clean energy, but you can also ensure your community is poised to take advantage of the many benefits. Becoming SolSmart designated means you are helping your residents save money, protecting natural resources, bolstering local resilience and increasing job opportunities in the clean energy sector. Through SolSmart, your county will get access to free technical assistance and learn how to implement strategies that make solar more affordable and accessible to all residents. Your SolSmart designation will send a signal that your community is “open for solar business,” encouraging growth of local solar companies and other sustainability-minded businesses.



This guide is a comprehensive resource to help you implement solar best practices in your community and gain national recognition by earning SolSmart designation! This guide will help you to navigate the “Modified Pathway,” which is applicable to local governments, such as counties, that do not have full authority over permitting, planning, zoning and/or inspection processes. Local governments that do control these processes should refer to the SolSmart Standard Pathway Program Guide. Regional Organizations, including Regional Planning Commissions and Councils of Governments, should refer to the Regional Organization Program Guide.

The SolSmart program will connect you with solar best practices from across the country and provide clear guidance on how to implement these actions. Along the way you will receive points for the actions you take and achieve recognition as a Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum SolSmart-designated community! Throughout this process, our technical assistance providers are available to provide support at no cost. Please [complete this form](#) to get connected with a technical assistance provider and get started on the path to SolSmart designation.

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IV. [Designation Criteria Detail and Verification Guidance](#), pg. 10

A detailed description of each SolSmart criteria with guidance and examples to assist you in implementing solar best practices and achieving points toward designation.

¹ Solar Energy Industries Association, *Solar Market Insight Report 2022 Year in Review*, March 2023, available at <https://www.seia.org/research-resources/solar-market-insight-report-2022-year-review>

II. SolSmart Overview

Across the United States, communities are increasingly using solar energy to power their homes and businesses and enjoying the benefits of clean, reliable, and affordable electricity. Rapidly declining prices for solar technologies have brought vast amounts of solar energy into the mainstream within a few short years. Homeowners, businesses, schools and local governments are using solar energy to drastically reduce their utility costs, while also reducing the environmental impact of their energy use. As natural disasters become more frequent and intense, distributed solar and energy storage is also bolstering energy resilience.

Local and regional governments play an important role in establishing policies, procedures and programs that impact solar deployment in communities. When local governments create barriers to solar in their local plans, permitting and other policies, either intentionally or unintentionally, they can hinder solar development. Alternately, when local governments provide a supportive environment for solar energy and take steps to streamline permitting, inspection and zoning processes, they expedite the installation of solar PV systems and help make it more affordable for residents and businesses.

Action at the local level is also fundamental to ensuring that solar programs are equitable and inclusive and ultimately deliver shared benefits to all Americans. SolSmart is committed to the goals of the federal [Justice40 Initiative](#) to provide equitable opportunities for underserved communities which face barriers including fossil dependence, energy burden, environmental and climate hazards, and socio-economic vulnerabilities. SolSmart criteria reflect the importance of developing equitable and inclusive solar policies and programs.

The SolSmart program has two key components. First, the program provides no-cost technical assistance to help local governments follow national best practices to expand solar energy use in their jurisdictions. Second, it recognizes and celebrates these communities with SolSmart designations of Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum. SolSmart is led by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) and is funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO).

Local Policies are Important to Reducing Cost

While the cost of solar panels and equipment has decreased considerably, there are still significant opportunities to reduce “soft costs.” “Soft costs” refer to business or administrative processes that increase the time and money it takes to install a solar energy system — costs that are then passed on to customers. These include costs associated with sales and marketing, permitting processes, planning, zoning considerations, financing and a wide variety of other factors. Overall, these soft costs represent about 64% of the total cost of a solar energy system.¹

The U.S. Department of Energy’s Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO) funds [SolSmart](#), to communities remove administrative barriers, streamline process and improve local policies in ways that further local goals and reduce solar soft costs.

Designation Levels

The SolSmart program has developed a set of designation criteria based on established best practices that encourage the growth of solar energy at the local level. The criteria for the Modified Pathway are organized into five categories – Prerequisites, Planning, Government Operations, Community Engagement and Market Development. Within each category, SolSmart provides clear guidance and templates to help communities put these practices into action. Some of the criteria are prerequisites, while others are elective. Each criterion has a corresponding point value. Upon meeting the prerequisites and reaching a sufficient number of points in each category, a participant qualifies for SolSmart designation.

There are four levels of SolSmart designation for local governments. Below are the requirements for each level. Communities that earn 60% of the available points in a category are additionally eligible for special recognition.



Bronze	40 Total Points	3 Prerequisite Criteria
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Earn 40 points in the 4 other categories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Solar Statement (PR-1) <input type="checkbox"/> Planning and zoning guidance (PR-2) <input type="checkbox"/> Planning and zoning training (PR-3)
Silver	80 Total Points	2 Prerequisite Criteria
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete bronze designation requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Earn 80 points in the 4 other categories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Permitting training (PR-4) <input type="checkbox"/> Inspection training (PR-5)
Gold	150 Total Points	1 Prerequisite Criteria
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete silver designation requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Earn 150 points in the 4 other categories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Post metrics (PR-6)
Platinum	200 Total Points	2 Prerequisite Criteria
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete gold designation requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Earn 200 points in the 4 categories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Engage member communities (PR-7) <input type="checkbox"/> Model solar zoning ordinance (PR-8)

Criteria Categories

Below is a summary of each category and the types of actions that are recognized as best practices in each.

Planning | 7 Criteria | 60 Points

Incorporating solar energy in local planning documents sets a vision for the integration of solar energy with other community goals including land use, economic development, housing, transportation, and the protection of historic and cultural resources, among others. Plans also provide an opportunity to identify specific targets for solar deployment and the identification of strategies to meet those targets. While community's using the modified pathway do not directly control permitting, inspection or other regulatory processes, they can create goals that relate to these processes and can help to coordinate trainings or provide resources. *Many of the criteria in the planning category can be verified by providing a link to a community's plans.*

Government Operations | 12 Criteria | 160 Points

County government can lead the way by installing solar energy on public facilities and land. Counties can engage with their local utility to discuss goals for solar energy, net metering, interconnection, and community solar. These actions are high impact that can directly lead to an increase in solar energy deployment. *Many of the criteria in the government operations category can be verified by providing documents demonstrating installed solar capacity such as news articles about solar installations, dashboards/metrics showing solar production, and contracts that demonstrate solar project construction.*

Community Engagement | 12 Criteria | 70 Points

County government can be an important and trusted source of information for residents, businesses, and solar installers. Posting information on the county government's website, providing public education, and engagement opportunities can help residents and businesses interested in solar energy make informed decisions. County governments can support more equitable outcomes by partnering with community organizations and developing goals and strategies that meet the needs of disadvantaged communities. *Many of the criteria in the community engagement category can be verified by providing information about a community's solar energy goals, strategies and partnerships on a local county's solar webpage.*

Market Development | 10 Criteria | 155 Points

County government can collaborate and partner with organizations to promote solar development within their jurisdiction. Supporting a community solar program, promoting a solarize group-buy campaign, or partnering with a local financial institution can make solar energy more affordable and accessible for homes and businesses while improving business opportunities for solar installers. *Many of the criteria in the market development category can be verified by providing news articles about the county government's role in supporting solar development or by providing official documents that established policies or programs.*

III. Criteria Overview

The SolSmart Modified Pathway contains 50 criteria, each of which is specific action that local governments can implement to encourage solar energy development in their community. Each criterion has a corresponding point value ranging from 5 to 20. A detailed description with relevant templates, examples and resources to help you achieve each criterion is available in Section IV.

Criteria Identifier	Criteria Points	Prerequisite Criteria
PR-1	Req'd	Provide a document that demonstrates your county's commitment to pursue SolSmart designation. (Required for Participation)
PR-2	Req'd	Post a solar landing page on the county website with information that may include the county's solar goals, educational materials and tools that promote solar, and resources for solar development (e.g., permitting checklist and information about instant/automatic permitting like SolarAPP+, solar application forms, inspection checklist, zoning regulations, etc.). (Required for Bronze)
PR-3	Req'd	Host countywide training for planning and zoning staff on best practices in planning and zoning for solar PV. Training must have occurred in the past two years. (Required for Bronze)
PR-4	Req'd	Host countywide training on best practices for permitting solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred in past two years. (Required for Silver)
PR-5	Req'd	Host countywide training on best practices for inspecting solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred in the past two years. (Required for Silver)
PR-6	Req'd	Collect and post political subdivision and/or county specific energy targets for solar PV (e.g., # of installations, MW capacity, kWhs generated and/or procured) and progress against stated targets. To receive credit, counties with 10 or fewer members must collect data from at least two communities. Counties with more than 10 members must collect data from at least four communities. (Required for Gold)
PR-7	Req'd	Engage new communities in your county to participate in SolSmart and submit a Solar Statement. Potential designees are municipalities that are part of the county and have the jurisdiction required to achieve SolSmart designation. For counties with 10 or fewer communities, the county should support two new communities with joining SolSmart. For counties with more than 10 communities, the county should support four new communities with joining SolSmart. (Required for Platinum)
PR-8	Req'd	Develop and/or publicize a model solar zoning ordinance template that can be refined and adopted by member communities. (Required for Platinum)

Criteria Identifier	Criteria Points	Planning Criteria
P-1	5	Review existing county planning documents and identify new opportunities (not already included) to integrate solar PV and solar PV integrated with other technologies, such as battery storage or electric vehicle charging, into planning goals.
P-2	5	Draft new or updated language and provide a timeline for the inclusion of specific solar PV goals, metrics, and strategies into existing and/or future county plans.
P-3	10	Include specific solar PV goals, metrics, and strategies in the most current version of relevant county plans (e.g., energy plan, climate plan, comprehensive plan).
P-4	10	Include solar PV progress towards achieving targets in the most current published version of relevant local plans (e.g., energy plan, climate plan, comprehensive plan).

P-5	10	Collaborate with local inspection departments to develop a solar PV inspection checklist for the region and post on the solar landing page developed as part of PR-2.
P-6	10	Develop an inventory of sites suitable for large-scale solar PV within the county.
P-7	10	Provide a training for local officials on ways large-scale solar strategies can be supported in the region, including regulatory authority and relevant state processes. Training must have occurred in the past two years.

Criteria Identifier	Criteria Points	<u>Government Operations Criteria</u>
GO-1	10	Discuss countywide goals for solar PV, net metering, community solar, and/or interconnection processes with the local utility and explore areas for future collaboration.
GO-2	10	Coordinate with regional organizations and/or local governments to engage utilities on advancing solar policies such as utility procurement of solar PV, green tariffs, and/or interconnection process improvements.
GO-3	20	Demonstrate coordination between local government inspectors and utility staff to reduce Permission to Operate timeline for solar PV.
GO-4	10	Convene local inspection departments to discuss innovative inspection practices (i.e., inspection appointments, virtual inspections), and if they are feasible in the county. County to summarize results of meeting.
GO-5	10	Work with at least one community in the county to demo an instant/automatic permitting process (e.g., SolarAPP+).
GO-6	20	Work with at least one community in the county to implement an instant/automatic permitting process (e.g., SolarAPP+).
GO-7	10	Conduct feasibility analysis for solar PV on public facilities and/or publicly controlled land.
GO-8	20	Procure solar energy for direct use by the county or a county-run program or service through an offsite physical PPA, virtual PPA, green tariff, or similar structure.
GO-9	10	Install solar PV for direct use by the county or county-run program or service.
GO-10	20	Install solar PV integrated with other technologies, such as electric vehicle charging, on local government facilities and/or organization-controlled land.
GO-11	10	Install solar PV plus storage on local government facilities and/or local government-controlled land.
GO-12	10	Aggregate and publicize solar PV and storage-related details on utility interconnection processes, utility-specific resources and regulations, and state/regional regulations and incentives for member-communities to leverage. Include and regularly update details on the organization's solar landing page).
GO-13	10	Provide technical or financial support for the installation of solar PV on affordable housing, multifamily housing, community-based organizations, and/or resilience hubs.

Criteria Identifier	Criteria Points	<u>Community Engagement Criteria</u>
CE-1	5	Post online resources about solar installers and/or solar quote platforms for solar PV.
CE-2	5	Post online resources about residential and commercial solar PV financing options and incentives.
CE-3	5	Post online resources about consumer protection and solar PV.
CE-4	5	Post an online summary of state policies related to a property owner's solar access and solar rights, including links to state-level policy.
CE-5	5	Post an online summary of state policies related to Homeowner Associations (HOAs) ability to regulate and/or restrict solar PV, including links to state-level policy.

CE-6	5	Post online resources about LMI financing options and LMI Incentives.
CE-7	5	Post an online solar map for your county.
CE-8	5	Engage the community through recurring public meetings, focus groups, or other similar events around climate, energy, or sustainability plans and/or goals. Meetings should occur at minimum twice per year.
CE-9	5	Support an annual solar informational session and/or solar tour explaining solar PV opportunities and policies. Show that session/tour was made accessible to all members of the community including those in disadvantaged communities.
CE-10	10	At least annually, partner with local colleges, workforce, or economic development organizations/commissions, etc. to host renewable energy career fairs, networking events, or jobs trainings.
CE-11	5	Demonstrate county level support for local solar projects through speeches, press releases, opinion articles, etc.
CE-12	10	Discuss solar PV goals and/or strategies for increasing solar PV development, including large-scale solar plans, solar access, and/or solar adoption in disadvantaged communities, within an appropriate committee, commission, taskforce, and/or working group. (e.g., solar is a recurring agenda item during monthly sustainability commission meetings).

Criteria Identifier	Criteria Points	<u>Market Development Criteria</u>
MD-1	20	Demonstrate activity in state regulatory and/or legislative proceedings regarding solar PV.
MD-2	20	Support a community-wide group purchase program (e.g., Solarize). Program must have occurred within the last 2 years.
MD-3	10	Define and implement a pathway specifically for low-to-moderate income (LMI) residents to participate in a community-wide group purchase program through program design and/or financing support options.
MD-4	20	Support a community solar program.
MD-5	10	Define and implement a pathway specifically for low-to-moderate income (LMI) residents to participate in a community solar program through program design and/or financing support options.
MD-6	20	Provide residents with Community Choice Aggregation/Energy that includes solar PV as a power generation source.
MD-7	10	Provide a PACE financing program that includes solar PV as an eligible technology.
MD-8	20	Provide local incentives or work with a local finance institution to offer loans, rebates, grants, or other incentives for solar PV projects.
MD-9	20	Provide locally-enabled finance or work with a local finance institution to offer locally-enabled finance (e.g. a revolving loan fund) for solar PV. Financial institutions could include entities such as a local or regional bank, CDFI, or credit union).
MD-10	5	Provide or partner to provide local incentives or locally-enabled finance as described in MD-8 and MD-9 for solar PV to low-to-moderate income (LMI) households, disadvantaged communities, Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises (MWBES), and/or non-profit organizations that provide community services.

Criteria Identifier	Criteria Points	Innovative Action Criteria
IA-1	Varies	<p>The actions identified in the categories above represent many of the most common and impactful efforts counties are taking to make going solar easier and more affordable for residents and businesses. However, we know that counties across the country are developing innovative ways to promote and deploy solar energy. If your county has taken action that was not captured in any of the criteria above, please share it with us.</p>

IV. SolSmart Technical Assistance and Designation Process

Any local government, regardless of previous solar experience, is eligible for SolSmart designation. To request a call with a member of the SolSmart program, please [complete the contact form on SolSmart.org](#).

Once the local government decides to pursue SolSmart designation, they need to complete a Solar Statement and submit it to the SolSmart team. The Solar Statement demonstrates the community's commitment to work with the SolSmart program and achieve designation. The county government will be connected with one of our technical assistance providers, who will work with community to review the community's solar goals and processes. This review helps determine how close the community is to designation and any additional technical assistance to achieve designation. The county government with work with their technical assistance provider to develop a plan, identify which criteria they will meet to achieve their desired designation level, and implement best practices in the community. Once they have completed the required actions, the local government can submit for designation using the SolSmart community web portal with the assistance of the technical assistance provider.

To earn national recognition from the SolSmart Program, a community must provide documentation of the actions it has implemented. This may include a combination of signed memos, web links, program materials, policy documents, etc. as appropriate. Section IV of this Program Guide provides a detailed description of each SolSmart criterion with resources to support implementation and guidance on documentation and verification that will be required by SolSmart.

Once the local government is ready for designation review, the submission is reviewed by the Designation Program Administrator within 2 weeks and the local government is notified of their designation by email.

Local governments are encouraged to celebrate and publicize their designations and to post information about SolSmart on their own websites. Many SolSmart designees have held events, shared photos and videos, and taken other actions to publicize their achievements. The designation email contains a Designation Toolkit with template press release, sample social media, and SolSmart Designation logos. SolSmart will also recognize local governments on the SolSmart website, on social media, and in the SolSmart newsletter.

Designation Pathways

There are three pathways to SolSmart designation:

Local governments that control permitting, inspection, planning, and zoning use the **Standard Pathway**.

Local governments that do not control permitting, inspection, planning, and/or zoning use the **Modified/County Pathway (as summarized in this guide)**. This pathway is appropriate for certain counties that do not have control over one or more of those processes.

Regional organizations such as regional councils or councils of government use the **Regional Organization Pathway**.

V. Criteria Detail and Verification Guidance

The SolSmart criteria are based on specific best practices that local governments and community stakeholders can implement to encourage solar energy development in their community. This section provides a detailed description of each criterion, recommended verification for designation review, community examples, templates, and/or resources.

The following provides an overview of the information that is provided for each SolSmart criterion:

Criteria Identifier	Criteria Points	Criteria Language	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criterion Objective and description.			
Recommended Verification:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested options to verify the criterion. 			
Community Examples:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples of how an individual community has completed the criterion. 			
Templates:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links to a template(s) that can help complete a criterion. 			
Resources:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links to useful websites, reports, guidebooks, etc. that have up-to-date information about the topics addressed by the criterion. 			

Solar Statement

PR-1	Req'd	Provide a document that demonstrates your county's commitment to pursue SolSmart designation. (Required for Participation)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Counties interested in pursuing SolSmart designation must indicate their commitment to supporting solar development in their community by completing the PR-1 Solar Statement Pre-requisite. The solar statement should be signed by a representative of the local government. It is preferred that the statement is signed by a Department executive or an elected official, but it does not need to go through an official approval process. The solar statement demonstrates your community's commitment to pursue SolSmart designation. If possible, please place the solar statement on your local government's letterhead. While the PR-1 is a commitment to the program, the best practices included in the template provided are goals to strive for and non-binding to the criteria you can pursue.</p> <p>The solar statement should address the items listed in the bullets below. The statement does not need to be more than one page in length.</p>			
Recommended Verification:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a signed solar statement that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A commitment to participate in the SolSmart designation process A statement of solar goals, areas of focus or community priorities (e.g. streamlining the permitting process or supporting a non-profit led solar initiative) A statement of support for solar development to be inclusive and equitable for all residents Past achievements or programs related to solar PV and/or renewable energy A commitment to tracking metrics related to solar PV and/or provide a benchmark of available solar metrics (e.g. the number of installed systems, capacity, growth in residential installations, etc.) A commitment of staff time and resources to improve the local market for solar PV 			
Community Examples:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hilliard, OH SolSmart Silver Hopkins, MN SolSmart Bronze Madison, NJ SolSmart Bronze 			
Templates:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SolSmart Solar Statement Template SolSmart 			

Prerequisites Criteria

PR-2	Req'd	Post a solar landing page on the county website with information that may include the county's solar goals, educational materials and tools that promote solar, and resources for solar development (e.g. permitting checklist and information about instant/automatic permitting like SolarAPP+, solar application forms, inspection checklist, zoning regulations, etc.). (Required for Bronze)	☐
<p>A solar landing page is a way to provide residents, businesses, and solar installers with important information about your county's solar energy policies, processes, goals, and metrics from one centralized location. It is also a way to educate community members about solar energy topics like financing options and consumer protection best practices. Information and resources posted should be made available in multiple languages, as appropriate for your community, and should be available to community members in print form if requested.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link to the solar landing page. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulaski County, VA SolSmart Gold • Blair County, ID SolSmart Gold • Wood County, WI SolSmart Gold 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SolSmart Solar Landing Page Template SolSmart 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeowner's Guide to Going Solar (View in Spanish) U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) • Residential Consumer Guide to Solar Power Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) 			

PR-3	Req'd	Host countywide training for planning and zoning staff on best practices in planning and zoning for solar PV. Training must have occurred in the past two years. (Required for Bronze)	☐
<p>Regular solar PV training is a best practice to ensure planning and zoning staff are up-to-date on strategies for incorporating solar into plans, ordinances, and development regulations. Training staff in planning and zoning best practices for solar can help them to evaluate the options available for reducing barriers to solar and enable them to customize these best practices to their local context. Training can help staff develop clear, transparent, well-defined, and consistent planning and zoning regulations and processes that provide certainty for property owners and solar developers. Training should highlight and provide links to current model codes (IRC, IBC, and NEC). Counties can host full or half-day workshops for staff within their jurisdiction (either live or online) and provide or create resources designed to help staff keep up with advances in solar planning and zoning best practices.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a signed memo with details about the training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department, affiliation), date and time, location, agenda, and presentation/slides. 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SolSmart Training Verification Memo SolSmart 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Practices in Solar Planning and Zoning SolSmart Webinar • Planning for Solar Energy American Planning Association (APA) • Planning, Zoning & Development SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments • Solar@Scale Webinar Series, Session 5 ICMA and APA 			

PR-4	Req'd	Host countywide training on best practices for permitting solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred in past two years. (Required for Silver)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Regular solar PV training is a best practice to ensure permit technicians and plan reviewers are up-to-date on new procedures, codes, and products within the solar industry. Trainings increase staff knowledge of solar energy systems and ensures they know the best procedures for permit application review and processing to ensure applications and supporting documents are compliant with building and electrical codes. Increased staff knowledge can improve processing efficiency, thereby reducing demands on staff time and resources. Training should include details on automatic permit approval technologies of residential rooftop solar PV systems (e.g., using SolarAPP+). Counties can host full or half-day workshops for staff within their jurisdiction (either live or online) and provide resources designed to help keep staff informed about advances in solar and storage technologies.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a signed memo with details about the inspection training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department, affiliation), date and time, location, agenda, and presentation/slides. 			
<p>Community Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission SolSmart Bronze 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SolSmart Training Verification Memo SolSmart 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permitting Training Module 1 IREC Solar PV Structural Plan Review Permitting Training Module 2 IREC Solar PV Electrical Plan Review Permitting Training Module 3 IREC Solar PV Plan Review Test Solar + Storage, A Guide for Local Governments SolSmart Webinar 			

PR-5	Req'd	Host countywide training on best practices for inspecting solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred in the past two years. (Required for Silver)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Regular solar PV training, at least every few years, is a best practice to ensure field inspectors are up-to-date on new procedures, codes, and products within the solar industry. Trainings increase staff knowledge of solar energy systems and ensures they know the best procedures for field inspections to ensure compliance with applicable state and local building and electrical codes. Increased staff knowledge can improve inspection efficiency, thereby reducing demands on staff time and resources. Training should include details on virtual, photo, or another innovative inspection practice with solar and/or solar plus storage. Counties can host full or half-day workshops for staff within their jurisdiction (either live or online) and provide resources designed to help keep staff informed about advances in solar and storage technologies.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a memo with details about the inspection training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department, affiliation), date and time, location, agenda, and presentation/slides. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Texas Council of Governments SolSmart Bronze Metropolitan Council SolSmart Gold 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SolSmart Training Verification Memo SolSmart 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solar PV Field Inspection Basics - Series Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) Solar + Storage, A Guide for Local Governments SolSmart Webinar 			

PR-6	Req'd	Collect and post political subdivision and/or county specific energy targets for solar PV (e.g., # of installations, MW capacity, kWhs generated and/or procured) and progress against stated targets. To receive credit, counties with 10 or fewer members must collect data from at least two communities. Counties with more than 10 members must collect data from at least four communities. (Required for Gold)	☐
<p>County governments can provide additional capacity and support to member governments related to data collection and tracking. Key solar metrics such as the number of installations and total installed capacity can help communicate progress towards local and state renewable energy goals. Other related metrics could include the percentage of municipal energy provided by solar energy, installed capacity per capita and progress towards greenhouse gas emissions targets.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a link to a webpage displaying solar PV metrics, the date of when metric tracking began, and the date the information was last updated 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Boulder, CO SolSmart Gold ● Westminster, CO SolSmart Gold 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SolSmart Solar Landing Page Template SolSmart 			

PR-7	Req'd	Engage new communities in your county to participate in SolSmart and submit a Solar Statement. Potential designees are municipalities that are part of the county and have the jurisdiction required to achieve SolSmart designation. For counties with 10 or fewer communities, the county should support two new communities with joining SolSmart. For counties with more than 10 communities, the county should support four new communities with joining SolSmart. (Required for Platinum)	☐
<p>Counties can help to support member communities by introducing them to SolSmart and helping them seek designation themselves. Counties can help facilitate designation by creating models and templates that member communities can use as they adopt best practices and meet SolSmart criteria. Coordinated action can create even greater opportunities to support a strong solar market and drive down costs across a county.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Signed Solar Statements (Standard Pathway PR-1) from member communities. 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SolSmart Solar Statement Template SolSmart 			

PR-8	Req'd	Develop and/or publicize a model solar zoning ordinance template that can be refined and adopted by member communities. (Required for Platinum)	☐
<p>A county interested in enabling solar energy development should publish a locally relevant model zoning ordinance, by including basic solar information in the zoning ordinance such as a purpose, definitions, clarification on accessory use and primary use solar, and use standards. Zoning codes that contain no or little information about solar energy can complicate the process for homes and business that want to install a solar energy system. Including basic information about solar energy improves transparency of processes and clarity of development requirements and can enhance the growth of the local solar market in an organized and efficient manner.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Link to model solar zoning ordinance on solar landing page. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission SolSmart Bronze ● North Central Texas Council of Governments SolSmart Bronze 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Best Practice Guidance for Solar and Zoning – Accessory Use SolSmart ● Model Zoning for the Regulation of Solar Energy Systems Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources ● Renewable Energy Ordinance Framework: Solar PV Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) ● Solar Model Ordinance Grow Solar Toolkit 			

- [Template Solar Energy Development Ordinance for North Carolina](#) | North Carolina Clean Energy Technology Center (NCCETC)
- [Best Practices in Zoning for Solar](#) | National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)
- [Planning, Zoning & Development](#) | SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments

Planning

P-1	5	Review existing county planning documents and identify new opportunities (not already included) to integrate solar PV and solar PV integrated with other technologies, such as battery storage or electric vehicle charging, into planning goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Counties should consider opportunities to integrate solar PV and other technologies into other applicable planning processes. Organizations should review transportation, climate, land use, economic development, and other plans to consider how solar can be included to support all of the organization's planning efforts.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed memo summarizing opportunities and next steps 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best Practices in Solar Planning and Zoning SolSmart Webinar Planning for Solar Energy American Planning Association (APA) Planning, Zoning & Development SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments 			
P-2	5	Draft new or updated language and provide a timeline for the inclusion of specific solar PV goals, metrics, and strategies into existing and/or future county plans.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Planning documents provide the foundation for a community's vision for how and where it would like future development to occur. Development is governed largely by the components of the comprehensive plan and guided by the policies and strategies outlined in other functional plans such as a Climate Action Plan or Sustainability Plan. These planning documents should align to have solar energy goals, metrics, and strategies that promote solar development in an organized and efficient manner.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide draft language of the proposed plan changes that relate to solar energy and a timeline for inclusion in future plans. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chatham County, NC SolSmart Gold 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating Solar Energy into Local Plans American Planning Association (APA) Planning for Solar Energy American Planning Association (APA) Planning, Zoning & Development SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments 			
P-3	10	Include specific solar PV goals, metrics, and strategies in the most current version of relevant county plans (e.g., energy plan, climate plan, comprehensive plan).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Counties should utilize the work of P-2 and ensure that the goals, metrics and strategies they have drafted are fully integrated into the appropriate plans.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a link to the relevant plans that incorporate solar PV goals, metrics, and/or strategies. Please indicate the relevant section(s). 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Washington County, MN Not designated 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating Solar Energy into Local Plans American Planning Association (APA) Local Government Strategies for 100% Clean Energy SolSmart Webinar Planning for Solar Energy American Planning Association (APA) Planning, Zoning & Development SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments SLOPE State and Local Planning for Energy NREL 			

P-4	10	Include solar PV progress towards achieving targets in the most current published version of relevant local plans (e.g., energy plan, climate plan, comprehensive plan).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publicly reporting progress toward solar goals helps to create transparency and accountability. These metrics allow local governments to see the impacts of their policies and identify the need to adjust their strategies. To be meaningful, metrics must be updated annually at a minimum, but communities should strive for quarterly updates.			
Recommended Verification:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a link to this information posted on the organization’s website or solar landing page. Please specify the reporting period for which the reported metrics apply and date they were last updated 			
Community Examples:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ramsey County, MN SolSmart Bronze Arlington County, VA SolSmart Bronze 			
Resources:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating Solar Energy into Local Plans American Planning Association (APA) Local Government Strategies for 100% Clean Energy SolSmart Webinar Planning for Solar Energy American Planning Association (APA) Planning, Zoning & Development SolSmart’s Toolkit for Local Governments 			

P-5	10	Collaborate with local inspection departments to develop a solar PV inspection checklist for the region and post on the solar landing page developed as part of PR-2.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counties can support member-communities and their inspection departments, facilitating development of a uniform county-wide inspection checklist tailored to the preferences of member-communities and adapted to suit the local landscape. Including inspection staff in the development process and making this resource available via the County’s solar landing page can ensure all communities have access to a template inspection checklist regardless of their SolSmart status.			
Recommended Verification:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a link to the inspection checklist and documentation that the resource has been shared with communities in the region, such as a newsletter, email, meeting minutes, etc. 			
Community Examples:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission SolSmart Bronze Michiana Area Council of Governments SolSmart Bronze North Central Texas Council of Governments SolSmart Bronze 			
Templates:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SolSmart Energy Storage Field Inspection Checklist Template SolSmart 			
Resources:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solar PV Systems: Job Aids for a Consistent Plan Review Process Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) California Solar Permitting Guidebook (4th Edition) (pg. 22-24) Simplifying the Solar Permitting Process: Residential Solar Permitting Best Practices Explained Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) Solar PV Construction: Codes, Permitting, and Inspection SolSmart’s Toolkit for Local Governments 			

P-6	10	Develop an inventory of sites suitable for large-scale solar PV within the county.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counties can proactively identify sites in the county that are favorable for solar PV projects. Identifying sites that have high solar potential and the best characteristics for large-scale solar development can reduce potential conflicts between solar and other land uses, enable member-communities to incorporate large-scale solar development into their future plans, and speed up the project development timeline. These inventories do not need to include every potential site, but may focus on a particular type or scale or project, a portion of the region, etc. as is most meaningful and valuable to the county.			
Recommended Verification:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a link to the large-scale solar PV analysis inventory conducted for the county. 			
Community Examples:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Texas Council of Governments SolSmart Bronze 			

Resources:

- [Solar Development on Public Facilities and Under-Utilized Land](#) | SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments
- [Decision Support Tools for Local Solar Planning and Development](#) | SolSmart Webinar
- [Solar Project Development Pathway- Site and Opportunity Assessment](#) | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- [System Advisor Model \(SAM\)](#) | National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL)

P-7	10	Provide a training for local officials on ways large-scale solar strategies can be supported in the region, including regulatory authority and relevant state processes. Training must have occurred in the past two years.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Large-scale solar projects are unique in many ways and require specific strategies to facilitate implementation. Local officials can benefit from training that helps explain the design and development process for large-scale solar projects, clarifies regulatory roles and responsibilities, and provides strategies that build support for large-scale solar projects by maximizing local benefits.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a memo with details about in-person training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department, affiliation), date and time, location, agenda, and presentation/slides. • Provide a link to online training posted to a public streaming platform or the organization's solar landing page. 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SolSmart Training Verification Memo SolSmart 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar@Scale Guidebook ICMA and APA • Solar@Scale Webinar Series ICMA and APA 			

Government Operations

GO-1	10	<p>Discuss countywide goals for solar PV, net metering, community solar, and/or interconnection processes with the local utility and explore areas for future collaboration. Compile summary and next steps in a memo.</p>	□
<p>Local governments can leverage their relationship with electric utilities to encourage increased support for, and development of, solar energy. Local governments and utilities can partner to provide community solar programs, solar incentives, and help improve the solar interconnection process. Utilities can also help local governments meet municipal or community-wide renewable energy goals by procuring large amount of solar energy. Please note that conversations cannot include docketed proceedings that the utility is currently engaged in with the state regulatory commission.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed memo summarizing include number and dates of meetings, parties present, general agendas, and outcomes from the meetings. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missoula, MT SolSmart Silver 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Guidance American Cities Climate Challenge Renewables Accelerator Making Solar & Electrification Policies Mutually Beneficial SolSmart Webinar Procurement Guidance American Cities Climate Challenge Renewables Accelerator Solar & Electrification, A Beneficial Partnership SolSmart Issue Brief Utilizing City-Utility Partnership Agreements to Achieve Climate and Energy Goals World Resources Institute (WRI) 			
GO-2	10	<p>Coordinate with regional organizations and/or local governments to engage utilities on advancing solar policies such as utility procurement of solar PV, green tariffs, and/or interconnection process improvements.</p>	□
<p>Local governments can find strength in numerous as they advance ambitious energy transformation goals. Collaborating with other local governments and/or regional organizations allows resources, expertise, and staff to be pooled together which can enhance efforts to work with utilities. Networks of communities and utilities can provide opportunities to share best practices and common strategies through peer-to-peer learning. They can also help build coalitions and advocate for state policy.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides details about your community’s participation in coordinated efforts between local governments and/or regional organizations to engage utilities with the goal of advancing solar initiatives. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salt Lake City, UT SolSmart Bronze 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Guidance American Cities Climate Challenge Renewables Accelerator Engagement Tracker American Cities Climate Challenge Renewables Accelerator PJM Cities & Communities Coalition World Resources Institute (WRI) Procurement Guidance American Cities Climate Challenge Renewables Accelerator Utilizing City-Utility Partnership Agreements to Achieve Climate and Energy Goals World Resources Institute (WRI) 			
GO-3	20	<p>Demonstrate coordination between local government inspectors and utility staff to reduce Permission to Operate timeline for solar PV.</p>	□
<p>A solar system that has not been granted permission to operate (PTO), is not allowed to produce electricity which can have economic impacts for the system owner. To reduce economic loss, local governments can coordinate with the electric utility to ensure solar PV systems can begin operation as soon as it has been confirmed that the systems are properly constructed and connected to the grid. Consolidating and/or coordinating local government inspections and utility interconnection inspections can save time and money for solar installers and property owners.</p>			

Recommended Verification:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide details about the coordination process and explaining how this process reduces the time between inspection and Permission to Operate 	
Community Examples:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leon County, FL SolSmart Gold 	
Resources:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utility Engagement SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments 	

GO-4	10	Convene local inspection departments to discuss innovative inspection practices (i.e., inspection appointments, virtual inspections), and if they are feasible in the county. County to summarize results of meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Ensuring an effective and expedient inspection process can reduce project costs. Host a meeting of member communities to discuss implementing virtual, photo, or another innovative inspection practice with solar and/or solar plus storage. Discuss what types of projects (e.g., residential, installations under a certain size, etc.) would qualify for virtual or photo inspections and available resources.</p>			
Recommended Verification:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a signed memo with details about the innovative inspection meeting including names of organizer/presenters, attendees (name, title, department, community), date and time, location, agenda, and presentation/slides. 			
Community Examples:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tampa, FL SolSmart Bronze Pima County, AZ SolSmart Gold County of Los Angeles Not designated 			
Resources:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction Photo Resource NY- Sun Inspection Guide for PV Systems For One- and Two- Family Dwellings County of Lost Angeles 			

GO-5	20	Work with at least one community in the county to demo an instant/automatic permitting process (e.g., SolarAPP+).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Most residential solar systems are simple and standardized, but the high volume of applications can be time consuming for local permitting departments. Online automated platforms (e.g., SolarAPP+) offer a convenient and efficient way to manage solar permitting. These platforms can help local governments to stay up to date with relevant codes, catch errors, improve communication with applicants, accelerate approval for standardized PV systems, and improve record keeping. The county can help identify communities that might be interested in adopting instant/automatic permitting and help them learn more.</p>			
Recommended Verification:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed memo that includes date, attendees, presenter, summary of discussion topics and next steps 			
Community Examples:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pima County, AZ SolSmart Gold Sacramento County, CA SolSmart Gold Sonoma County, CA SolSmart Gold 			
Templates:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SolSmart Training Verification Memo SolSmart 			
Resources:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instant Permitting Example State of California, California Energy Commission Register for SolarAPP+ National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) SolarAPP+ Communities National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) SolarAPP+ Performance Case Studies National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) 			

GO-6	20	Work with at least one community in the county to implement an instant/automatic permitting process (e.g., SolarAPP+).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Communities that move forward with the implementation of an instant-automatic permitting processes may benefit from the support of their county government. Counties help garner stakeholder support for adopting instant permitting, facilitate onboarding calls between communities and the software team, help answer questions and overcome any challenges that arise.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed memo describing how the county provided support during the implementation of instant/automatic permitting 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pima County, AZ SolSmart Gold Sacramento County, CA SolSmart Gold Sonoma County, CA SolSmart Gold 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SolSmart Training Verification Memo SolSmart 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SolarAPP+ Benefits National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) Register for SolarAPP+ National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) SolarAPP+ Communities National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) SolarAPP+ Performance Case Studies National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) 			

GO-7	10	Conduct feasibility analysis for solar PV on public facilities and/or publicly controlled land. Compile summary and next steps in a memo.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Local governments can lead by example and install solar PV on their facilities and/or land to achieve clean energy goals and generate electricity cost savings. The first step is conducting a feasibility analysis to discover which rooftops or grounds have the highest solar potential and best characteristic for a solar installation. An RFP can then be issued for the most favorable sites. An county that receives GO-9, GO-10 or GO-11 may also qualify for GO-7 if they completed a feasibility analysis as part of the project development process.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a link to the feasibility analysis or details about the feasibility analysis that was conducted – who conducted, what were the sites, when was it conducted, what were the recommendations and next steps. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asheville, NC SolSmart Gold Mountain Iron, MN SolSmart Bronze 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Support Tools for Local Solar Planning & Development SolSmart Webinar Solar Project Development Pathway - Site and Opportunity Assessment Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Solar Development on Public Facilities and Under-utilized Land SolSmart’s Toolkit for Local Governments System Advisor Model (SAM) National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) Geospatial Energy Mapper (GEM) Argonne National Lab 			

GO-8	20	Procure solar energy for direct use by the county or a county-run program or service through an offsite physical PPA, virtual PPA, green tariff, or similar structure.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>To meet climate and energy goals, local governments can procure a large amount of solar energy through an appropriate structure, depending on the types of contracts allowed by state and utility regulations.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a document such as a news article, contract, press release, or similar official document containing the details how the local government is procuring solar energy. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fairfax County, VA SolSmart Gold Howard County, MD Not designated 			

Resources:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Cities Benefit from Power Purchase Agreements Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES) • How Local Governments Can Buy Renewable Energy & Support Market Development SolSmart Webinar • Local Government Strategies for 100% Clean Energy SolSmart Webinar • Procurement Guidance American Cities Climate Challenge Renewables Accelerator • Municipal Solar Procurement SolSmart Webinar • Solar Power Purchase Agreements: A Toolkit for Local Governments Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) 	

GO-9	10	Install solar PV for direct use by the county or county-run program or service.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Counties can lead by example and install solar on their facilities and/or land to achieve clean energy goals. Solar installations can generate revenue for local governments, deliver electricity cost savings, and serve as an educational tool for community members. Counties are encouraged to install solar at highly visible locations to maximize the educational value.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide news articles, a press release announcing the commissioned system, or webpage that summarizes the details of the installation(s) including total number of systems, size, location, visibility and photos. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Johnson County, IA SolSmart Gold • New York City, NY SolSmart Gold 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement Guidance American Cities Climate Challenge Renewables Accelerator • Solar Decision Support and Resources for Local Governments National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) • Solar Development on Public Facilities and Under-utilized Land SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments • Solar Power Purchase Agreements: A Toolkit for Local Governments Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) 			

GO-10	20	Install solar PV integrated with other technologies, such as electric vehicle charging, on local government facilities and/or organization-controlled land.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Solar can provide unique benefits when paired with other distributed energy technologies. Co-locating solar with other technologies can improve resilience, provide demand-charge reductions, and charging electric vehicles with a renewable source of energy.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a news article, a press release announcing the commissioned system, or webpage that summarizes the details of the solar installation(s) plus storage including total number of systems, size, location, and photos. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duluth, MN SolSmart Gold • Montgomery County, MD SolSmart Gold • Boulder, CO SolSmart Gold 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Practices for Solar & Electric Bus Charging at Transit Agencies SolSmart Webinar • REopt: Renewable Energy Integration & Optimization National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) • Solar and Electric Vehicles: A Guide for Local Governments SolSmart • Solar & Electric Vehicle Best Practices for Local Governments SolSmart Webinar • Solar and Energy Storage for Resiliency (Solar Resilient) San Francisco Department of the Environment • Solar and Resiliency: Integrative Financing Strategies for SolSmart Communities SolSmart Issue Brief 			

GO-11	10	Install solar PV plus storage on local government facilities and/or local government-controlled land.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Solar can provide resilience benefits and serve as emergency backup power to local government facilities in case of a power outage. Local governments have leveraged solar PV and storage to provide lighting for evacuation routes, power to shelters, and extend the fuel supply of diesel generation. Solar plus storage can also be used to provide demand-charge reductions by reducing peak load.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a news article, a press release announcing the commissioned system, or webpage that summarizes the details of the solar installation(s) plus storage including total number of systems, size, location, and photos. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fayetteville, AR SolSmart Gold • Portland, OR Not Designated 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REopt: Renewable Energy Integration & Optimization National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) • Resiliency: Solar + Storage SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments • Solar + Storage: A Guide for Local Governments SolSmart Issue Brief • Solar and Energy Storage for Resiliency (Solar Resilient) San Francisco Department of the Environment • Solar and Resiliency: Integrative Financing Strategies for SolSmart Communities SolSmart Issue Brief • Solar + Storage / Resiliency Sustainable CUNY Smart Distributed Generation Hub 			
GO-12	10	Aggregate and publicize solar PV and storage-related details on utility interconnection processes, utility-specific resources and regulations, and state/regional regulations and incentives for member-communities to leverage. Include and regularly update details on the organization's solar landing page).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Counties can play a valuable role in researching and compiling information about policies, regulations, and incentives from utility and state entities related to solar PV and storage. Counties can help make this information readily available to member communities and ensure the information is kept current.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link to relevant information on the solar landing page. 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SolSmart Solar Landing Page Template SolSmart 			
GO-13	10	Provide technical or financial support for the installation of solar PV on affordable housing, multifamily housing, community-based organizations, and/or resilience hubs.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Counties can partner with community-serving organizations, housing developers and managers of resilience hubs to support the implementation of solar. Counties may be able to offer technical support if they have relevant expertise for example in project development, energy or project finance. In other instances, counties may be able to offer direct financial support to these projects.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide links and/or a signed memo outlining the support provided. 			
<p>Community Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hillsborough County Not designated 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Guide for City-Community Collaboration Greenlink Analytics • Clean Energy for Low Income Communities Accelerator Toolkit U.S. Department of Energy Better Buildings • The Inflation Reduction Act: What does it mean for Affordable Housing (webinar) Enterprise Community Partners 			

Community Engagement

CE-1	5	Post online resources about solar installers and/or solar quote platforms for solar PV.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>More solar companies operating in your community means residents and businesses are faced with more choices as they consider who to select for their solar project. Providing relevant local information on active solar installers can help community members make the best choice given their circumstances. Information and resources posted should be made available in multiple languages as appropriate for your community. In addition, information and resources should be available to community members in print form if requested.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link to the relevant information on the solar landing page. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denver, CO SolSmart Gold • Schaumburg, IL SolSmart Silver 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SolSmart Solar Landing Page Template SolSmart 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Certified Professionals Directory North American Board Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) • EnergySage EnergySage • Pickmysolar Pick My Solar • Solar Buyer's Markets: Unlocking Lower Photovoltaic and Battery Prices on Online Quote Platforms National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) 			
CE-2	5	Post online resources about residential and commercial solar PV financing options and incentives.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Many different financing options are available for residential and commercial solar PV. Counties can play an important role in providing access to information about available options. Information and resources posted should be made available in multiple languages as appropriate for your community. In addition, information and resources should be available to community members in print form if requested.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link to the relevant information on the solar landing page. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metropolitan (Met) Council, MN SolSmart Gold • Wood County, WI SolSmart Gold 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SolSmart Solar Landing Page Template SolSmart 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Homeowner's Guide to Solar Financing: Leases, Loans and PPAs Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA) • Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency (DSIRE) North Carolina Clean Energy Technology Center (NCCETC) • Financing your solar panel system EnergySage • Homeowner's Guide to the Federal Tax Credit for Solar Photovoltaics (View in Spanish) U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) 			
CE-3	5	Post online resources about consumer protection and solar PV.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Solar energy can be a new and complex topic for community members. Local governments can provide online guides and resources to help community members have a clear understanding of solar PV, allowing them to make informed decisions. Information and resources posted should be made available in multiple languages as appropriate for your community. In addition, information and resources should be available to community members in print form if requested.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link to the relevant information on the solar landing page. 			

Community Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandria, VA SolSmart Gold • James City County, VA SolSmart Bronze
Templates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SolSmart Solar Landing Page Template SolSmart
Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Solar Checklist Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) • EnergySage EnergySage • Residential Issues and Existing Regulatory Framework SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments • Solar Customer Resource Portal Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) • Solar Owner's Manual (View in Spanish) Solar United Neighbors (SUN)

CE-4	5	Post an online summary of state policies related to a property owner's solar access and solar rights, including links to state-level policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Community members are often unaware that state policy could impact their property's solar rights. Solar rights and solar access are terms which describe the ability of property owners to utilize sunlight on their property. Each state has its own unique policy and enforcement regime. Information and resources posted should be made available in multiple languages as appropriate for your community. In addition, information and resources should be available to community members in print form if requested.</p>			
Recommended Verification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link to the summary on the solar landing page. 			
Community Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michiana Area Council of Governments SolSmart Bronze • Torrance, CA SolSmart Gold • Wilmette, IL SolSmart Silver 			
Templates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SolSmart Solar Landing Page Template SolSmart 			
Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeowners Associations and Solar Access Solar United Neighbors • Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency (DSIRE) North Carolina Clean Energy Technology Center (NCCETC) 			

CE-5	5	Post an online summary of state policies related to Home Owner Associations (HOAs) ability to regulate and/or restrict solar PV, including links to state-level policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Homeowner Associations often aim to impose restrictive measures on solar PV systems. Community members should be aware of state policy that defines what HOAs are allowed and not allowed to do in terms of regulating solar PV systems. Information and resources posted should be made available in multiple languages as appropriate for your community. In addition, information and resources should be available to community members in print form if requested.</p>			
Recommended Verification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link to a webpage with the summary on state policies relating to Homeowner Associations and solar PV. 			
Community Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hallandale Beach, FL SolSmart Silver • Torrance, CA SolSmart Gold 			
Templates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SolSmart Solar Landing Page Template SolSmart 			
Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeowners Associations and Solar Access Solar United Neighbors 			

CE-6	5	Post online resources about for low-to-moderate income (LMI) financing options and LMI incentives.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Some low-to-moderate income (LMI) financing options may be available for residential and commercial solar PV in your county or state. Counties can play an important role in providing access to information about available options. Information and resources posted should be made available in multiple languages as appropriate for your community. In addition, information and resources should be available to community members in print form if requested.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link to a webpage that contains information about low-to-moderate income (LMI) financing options and LMI incentives. 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SolSmart Solar Landing Page Template SolSmart 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects & Programs in Low-to-Moderate Income Communities SolSmart Webinar • Resources to Support Initiatives for Low-to-Moderate Income Communities SolSmart Webinar • Unlocking Solar for Low- and Moderate-Income Residents: A Matrix of Financing Options by Resident, Provider, and Housing Type National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) 			
CE-7	5	Post an online solar map for your county.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Solar maps can be a helpful and visual way to communicate solar potential to community members. Solar maps can be customized depending on the goals and needs of the community. For example, solar maps can provide community members with an estimate of the solar potential of their rooftop, they can be used the location of solar installations within a community (which may help residents understand the extent of solar projects happening in different parts of the community), or they may be used to communicate the potential for different solar installations (i.e., residential, commercial, large-scale, community solar, etc).</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link to the solar map for your community. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Los Angeles County, CA Not Designated • Westminster, CO SolSmart Gold • Centre Region Council of Governments SolSmart Gold • Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments SolSmart Gold 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SolSmart Solar Landing Page Template SolSmart 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go Solar Ready Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments • NY Solar Map Sustainable CUNY Smart Distributed Generation Hub • Project Sunroof Google 			
CE-9	5	Support an annual solar informational session and/or solar tour explaining solar PV opportunities and policies. Show that session/tour was made accessible to all members of the community including those in disadvantaged communities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>An engaged and informed community can encourage solar market growth and increase the likelihood that local homes and businesses will pursue solar installations. Solar informational sessions and solar tours are ways to educate community members about the solar energy and the processes involved with an installation. Counties should ensure that sessions are inclusive and accessible to a diverse audience.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link(s) to details about the solar informational session or tour such as an agenda, date, time, and location. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Merion, PA SolSmart Bronze • Sarasota County, FL SolSmart Silver 			

Resources:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar Tour Resources National Solar Tour 			
CE-10	5	At least annually, partner with local colleges, workforce or economic development organizations/commissions, etc. to host renewable energy career fairs, networking events, or jobs trainings.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>As local solar markets grow, counties can promote solar job opportunities with community colleges and workforce development organizations to ensure a well-trained, local workforce. The organization should provide technical and monetary assistance, provide connections and information. The event that results as an outcome from this partnership should be publicly co-hosted and marketed by the county.</p>			
Recommended Verification:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link(s) to details about the fair, networking event or job training and an agenda, date, time, and location. 			
Resources:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar Career Map Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) • Solar Ready Vets Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) • Solar Workforce Development Pilot St. Louis, MO • Workforce Development Grid Alternatives 			
CE-11	5	Demonstrate county level support for local solar projects through speeches, press releases, opinion articles, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Local governments can encourage solar market growth by highlighting solar energy goals, initiatives, and success stories through various communications strategies. Share the links and/or videos of communications efforts on the organization's solar landing page.</p>			
Recommended Verification:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link to a document demonstrating encouragement of solar PV projects. 			
Community Examples:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fayetteville, AR SolSmart Gold • Louisville, KY SolSmart Gold 			
Resources:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder Engagement SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments 			
CE-12	10	Discuss solar PV goals and/or strategies for increasing solar PV development, including large-scale solar plans, solar access, and/or solar adoption in disadvantaged communities, within an appropriate committee, commission, taskforce, and/or working group. (e.g. solar is a recurring agenda item during monthly sustainability commission meetings).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>An Environmental Advisory Council, Sustainability Committees, or Climate Action Taskforce is a great way to keep residents and key stakeholders actively engaged in community energy policy and development. These groups can assist in the development of solar energy goals and strategies, lead community-based solar initiatives, and provide communication and outreach support to inform community members about solar initiatives and plans.</p>			
Recommended Verification:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide meeting minutes (including a list of follow-up action items) or materials prepared for the meeting (e.g., handouts and slides) from within the past year and provide documentation of the regularly scheduled frequency of these meetings. 			
Community Examples:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branford, CT SolSmart Bronze • Fairfield, CT SolSmart Gold 			
Resources:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder Engagement SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments • Solar and Resiliency: Integrative Financing Strategies for SolSmart Communities SolSmart Issue Brief • Solar Power in Your Community Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy 			

Market Development

MD-1	20	Demonstrate activity in state regulatory and/or legislative proceedings regarding solar PV.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Counties can provide an important voice into the development of state-level solar energy policy, strategies, and incentives. Government staff can track policy developments actively and develop appropriate strategies to interact with state regulators and legislators. Interactions with ISO/RTO are included in this criterion.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a link to public comments on solar energy or related energy proceedings, op-eds in local newspapers, or agenda, minutes, and/or recordings of meetings attended by representatives of the local government. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ann Arbor, MI SolSmart Silver ● Santa Fe, NM (Resolution 2018-71) SolSmart Bronze 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engagement Guidance American Cities Climate Challenge Renewables Accelerator ● Engagement Tracker American Cities Climate Challenge Renewables Accelerator ● The Federal and State Context: Policies Affecting Solar Energy Development SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments 			
MD-2	20	Support a community-wide group purchase program (e.g., Solarize). Program must have occurred within the last 2 years.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Counties can support or host community group purchase programs for solar energy. Bulk purchasing can reduce the costs of solar installations for community members. These limited time-offers have had consistent success in providing discounts of up to 20% of installed costs for residential systems.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a link to a website where the Solarize campaign has been publicly announced. ● Provide details about the status of an ongoing solarize campaign or final metrics of a completed solarize campaign. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● La Crosse County, WI SolSmart Bronze ● Montgomery County, MD SolSmart Gold 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Procurement Guidance- Solarize American Cities Climate Challenge ● How to Development a Solarize Campaign SolSmart Webinar ● Market Development and Finance SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments ● Solarize Your Community New York State Energy and Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) ● Solarize Mass Massachusetts Clean Energy Center 			
MD-3	10	Define and implement a pathway specifically for low-to-moderate income (LMI) residents to participate in a community-wide group purchase program through program design and/or financing support options.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>It can be particularly difficult for low-to-moderate income (LMI) households to participate in solar purchasing programs. These programs may require a minimum credit score, an upfront deposit, or have contract terms that present barriers for some residents. Counties can help to identify these barriers and help overcome them, for example by providing incentives for income-qualified participants.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide details that explains the forms of financing support or program design elements that support LMI residents in solar PV group purchase program. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Durham, NC SolSmart Gold ● Philadelphia, PA SolSmart Gold 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Procurement Guidance- Solarize American Cities Climate Challenge ● Narrowing the Equity Gap through Solarize Rocky Mountain Institute 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to Development a Solarize Campaign SolSmart Webinar • Inclusive Solarize Campaign Guide City Renewables Accelerator • Market Development and Finance SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments

MD-4	20	Support a community solar program.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Community solar offers residents and businesses an opportunity to own or lease a portion of a solar project in exchange for economic benefits proportional to their share. These economic benefits are commonly delivered in the form of electricity bill credits. For renters, and homes or business that are not suitable sites for solar, community solar programs allow consumers to access solar without installing panels on their homes or business. Community solar can be provided by utilities, a third party, or a non-profit. Supporting actions include making community solar information available on the county website/solar landing page, map of community solar projects, how to subscribe and what a subscription entails. To be eligible for MD-4, the county must be an official partner and/or provide tangible support (staff time, resources, etc.) to the community solar program.

Recommended Verification:

- Provide a link to information about the community solar program, including any outreach materials and details about program design.

Community Examples:

- [Austin, TX](#) | SolSmart Gold
- [Fort Collins, CO](#) | SolSmart Gold

Resources:

- [Community Solar](#) | SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments
- [National Community Solar Partnership Technical Expertise and Capacity Building](#) | U.S. Department of Energy National Community Solar Partnership
- [Expanding Solar Participation through Community Solar](#) | SolSmart Issue Brief
- [Expanding Solar Participation through Community Solar](#) | SolSmart Webinar
- [Procurement Guidance](#) | American Cities Climate Challenge Renewables Accelerator
- [Community Solar](#) | National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)
- [Community Solar Resources](#) | U.S. Department of Energy

MD-5	10	Define and implement a pathway specifically for low-to-moderate income (LMI) residents to participate in a community solar program through program design and/or financing support options.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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It can be particularly difficult for low-to-moderate income (LMI) households to participate in solar purchasing programs. These programs may require a minimum credit score, an upfront deposit, or have contract terms that present barriers for some residents. Counties can help to identify these barriers and create strategies to overcome them, by providing incentives for income-qualified participants.

Recommended Verification:

- Link to information on solar landing page or provide signed memo summarizing the forms of financing support or program design elements that support LMI residents in solar PV group purchase program.

Community Examples:

- [Denver, CO](#) | SolSmart Gold
- [Washington, DC](#) | SolSmart Gold

Resources:

- [Community Solar](#) | SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments
- [Design and Implementation of Community Solar Programs for Low- and Moderate-Income Customers](#) | National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)
- [Procurement Guidance](#) | American Cities Climate Challenge Renewables Accelerator
- [Community Solar +](#) | Rocky Mountain Institute
- [National Community Solar Partnership Technical Expertise and Capacity Building](#) | U.S. Department of Energy National Community Solar Partnership
- [Equitable Access to Community Solar: Program Design and Subscription Considerations](#) | National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)

MD-6	20	Provide residents with Community Choice Aggregation/Energy that includes solar PV as a power generation source.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Counties can increase access to solar energy for their operations and their residents through community choice aggregation. Community Choice Aggregation allows local governments to aggregate energy demand within their jurisdiction and procure power from an energy supplier while the local utility provides transmission and distribution services. Many local governments utilize community choice to procure more renewable energy, including solar, than would be available from their local electric utility. States must have enabling legislation for local governments to provide community choice aggregation.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a link to details about a Community Choice program (with solar PV as a power generation source) that is available for residents. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● San Jose, CA SolSmart Gold ● Somerville, MA SolSmart Gold 			
<p>Templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Choice Aggregation Toolkit New York State Energy and Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) ● Starting a New CCA California Community Choice Association (CalCCA) 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Choice Aggregation Toolkit New York State Energy and Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) ● Starting a New CCA California Community Choice Association (CalCCA) ● Community Choice Aggregation SolSmart Issue Brief ● Community Choice Aggregation: Challenges, Opportunities, and Impacts on Renewable Energy Markets National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) ● Using Community Choice Aggregation to Achieve Clean Energy Goals SolSmart Webinar 			
MD-7	10	Provide a PACE financing program that includes solar PV as an eligible technology.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing is an on-bill financing mechanism which enables repayment of long-term, low-interest loans on property tax bills. PACE can be used to finance renewable energy and energy efficiency projects on residential and/or commercial properties, depending on the PACE financing program design. In order for residents and business to access PACE financing, it must be enabled at the state and local level.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a link to the local ordinance creating a PACE program. ● Provide a link to the PACE program webpage. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deerfield Beach, FL SolSmart Silver ● Grand Rapids, MI SolSmart Silver 			
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Market Development and Finance SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments ● Resources PACENation 			
MD-8	20	Provide local incentives or work with a local finance institution to offer loans, rebates, grants, or other incentives for solar PV projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>In addition to state and federal incentives, counties can also encourage solar development within their jurisdictions by providing tax exemptions, rebates, or other financial incentives. Loans, rebates, or grants can improve the financial prospects of a solar project, allowing more community members to install solar.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a link to an ordinance creating local incentives. ● Provide a link to an application or form that are required for a solar PV system to be eligible for incentives or financing. 			

Community Examples:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loudoun County, VA SolSmart Silver • St. Louis Park, MN SolSmart Silver 	
Resources:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Development and Finance SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments 	

MD- 9	20	Provide locally-enabled finance or work with a local finance institution to offer locally-enabled finance (e.g. a revolving loan fund) for solar PV. Financial institutions could include entities such as a local or regional bank, CDFI, or credit union).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counties can work with local financial institutions to offer and/or promote financing options for solar projects.			
Recommended Verification:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide link to financing options for solar energy. • Provide a memo detailing how the local government partnered with the financial institution to offer a financial incentive for solar energy. • Provide a link to an application or form that are required for a solar PV system to be eligible for financing. 			
Community Examples:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lafayette, CO SolSmart Gold • Milwaukee, WI SolSmart Gold 			
Resources:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Development and Finance SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments 			

MD- 10	20	Provide or partner to provide local incentives or locally-enabled finance as described in MD-8 and MD-10 for solar PV to low-to-moderate income (LMI) households, disadvantaged communities, Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises (MWBES), and/or non-profit organizations that provide community services.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counties can support solar installations by LMI households, DBEs, and non-profit organizations by providing incentives such as low-interest loans, grants, on-bill financing and a variety of tax incentives and rebates. Counties can expand solar programs to disadvantaged residents by implementing any number of these programs.			
Recommended Verification:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link to an ordinance creating local incentives or financing options. • Provide a link to an application or form that are required for a solar PV system to be eligible for incentives or financing. 			
Community Examples:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boulder, CO SolSmart Gold • Portland, OR Not Designated 			
Resources:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Development and Finance SolSmart's Toolkit for Local Governments • Projects & Programs in Low-to-Moderate Income Communities SolSmart Webinar • Resources to Support Initiatives for Low-to-Moderate Income Communities SolSmart Webinar • Unlocking Solar for Low- and Moderate-Income Residents: A Matrix of Financing Options by Resident, Provider, and Housing Type National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) 			

Innovative Action

IA-1	Varies	<p>The actions identified in the categories above represent many of the most common and impactful efforts organizations are taking to make going solar easier and more affordable for residents and businesses. However, we know that counties across the country are developing innovative ways to promote and deploy solar energy. If your county has taken action that was not captured in any of the criteria above, please share it with us.</p>	□
<p>Innovative actions will be reviewed by a team of solar experts and each action may be worth up to 20 points.</p>			
<p>Recommended Verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a memo describing the innovative action and include any supporting documentation or links that provide additional details. 			
<p>Community Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grayslake, IL SolSmart Bronze <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Grayslake Sustainable Business Initiative recognizes local businesses that are choosing to be more sustainable. Solar energy is emphasized by awarding a business automatic gold designation if they have installed a solar energy system. ● Montgomery County, MD SolSmart Gold <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Montgomery County's 4th Solar Co-op offered EV charging as an option through the solar co-op. This helps promote EV charging and can reduce costs through group purchasing. 			

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