

CELEBRATING 300 SOLSMART DESIGNEES NATIONWIDE!

Over 300 American communities have been recognized for their solar energy achievements.



108 launched group purchase campaigns

165

installed solar on municipal or county buildings



44 launched community solar programs

32

have solar installations on brownfields or landfills



95 use online permitting to speed up project approvals


From Anchorage, Alaska, to Sarasota, Florida, more than 300 local governments have now met national benchmarks for encouraging the growth of solar energy and removing barriers to solar market development.

The SolSmart Designees include cities, counties, small towns, and regional organizations, representing 82 million people. One in four Americans now live in a SolSmart-designated community. All designees have met national criteria to show they have streamlined local procedures to make it easier for homes and businesses to install solar energy systems. SolSmart provides intensive technical assistance at no cost to help communities meet these goals.

The actions that SolSmart communities have taken help reduce soft costs, which are the non-hardware costs that today represent about 65% of the cost of solar installations. SolSmart helps local governments streamline permit approvals, review planning and zoning guidelines, facilitate group purchase campaigns, and improve solar financing options. These actions help lower the overall costs of solar installations and allow the solar industry to expand more rapidly nationwide.

SolSmart is a national designation and technical assistance program that helps local governments make it faster, easier, and more affordable to go solar.

Led by The Solar Foundation and the International City/County Management Association, and funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office, SolSmart launched in 2016 with the goal of reaching 300 designees by October 2020. The program has achieved its goal a year early, now with more than 300 designees in 40 states and the District of Columbia.



Across the country, SolSmart communities have taken bold actions to become more resilient, sustainable, and attractive to solar businesses. For local governments, this leads to reduced carbon emissions, lower energy costs, job creation, and economic growth.


Here are just a few examples of what these local governments have achieved:

- **Anchorage, Alaska** completed its first municipal installation and the city's largest solar installation in the summer of 2019 at the Egan Center. The city is already planning another municipal installation on the Anchorage Regional Landfill.
- **West Palm Beach, Florida** set up a one-day permitting turnaround for solar projects, saving time and expenses for the local government and residents.
- **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Plymouth, Indiana; Asheville, North Carolina;** and other communities launched group purchase campaigns for residents to save on energy costs.
- **Missoula County, Montana** provides an online process for solar inspection scheduling and permitting submission and approval.
- **Edina, Minnesota** developed a city-owned community solar project atop the Public Works building.
- **Cedar Hill, Texas** trained planning, permitting, and inspection staff on national best practices for solar and solar + storage systems.
- The borough of **Doylestown, Pennsylvania** provides financial incentives, such as reduced permitting fees, for including solar in new building or infrastructure developments.
- The **Metropolitan Council** in the Minneapolis-St. Paul region, the **Northern Virginia Regional Commission** in the Northern Virginia region, and the **South Bay Cities Council of Governments** in the South Bay region of Los Angeles County became the first three regional organizations to receive SolSmart designation for achievements in expanding solar across multiple communities.
- The city of **San Jose, California** ranks third in the nation for solar installed per capita, and has set a bold goal to become the world's first gigawatt solar city by 2040.



SolSmart Advisors

SolSmart communities competed to receive on-the-ground technical assistance from SolSmart Advisors, who are trained professional staff that live and work in communities for approximately six months. SolSmart Advisors work efficiently across local and state boundaries to help communities share ideas and achieve solar energy goals. So far, SolSmart has deployed 32 Advisors who have worked with over 200 communities nationwide.



Any municipality or county in the United States is eligible to join the SolSmart program and receive no-cost technical assistance to achieve designation. To learn more, visit [SolSmart.org](https://www.solsmart.org).