



200 Communities and Counting Are Making it Faster, Easier, and More Affordable to Go Solar!

What can local governments do to bring solar energy to their communities? A lot. With smart programs and processes that cut red tape and lower costs, local governments nationwide are making it easier for their residents and businesses to install solar energy.



SolSmart is a national program that recognizes cities, counties, and small towns for making it faster, easier, and more affordable to go solar. Our team of experts provides no-cost technical assistance to help local governments become “open for solar business.” In recognition of their achievements, our communities receive designations of SolSmart Gold, Silver, or Bronze.

[SolSmart](#) is led by The Solar Foundation and the International City/County Management Association, and supported by partners with expertise in solar energy and local governments. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office.



Today, over **200 communities in 35 states** and the District of Columbia have achieved SolSmart designation, representing over **59 million Americans**. SolSmart communities are encouraging solar energy growth in the following ways:

Permitting. A lengthy permitting process can add \$700 to the cost of a single project. SolSmart communities are streamlining their permitting to reduce time and costs for consumers. West Palm Beach, Florida started a “walk-through” permit process that takes as little as 15 minutes.

Planning, Zoning, & Development. All SolSmart participants are reviewing zoning ordinances to identify obstacles to going solar. Brownsville, Texas adopted a zoning ordinance to help facilitate the growth of new solar projects.

Inspection. SolSmart communities are streamlining inspection processes to reduce the time and cost of installing solar. Pima County, Arizona launched a “remote inspections” process that provides same-day approval on solar projects.

Construction Codes. Local governments are creating clear guidelines for solar-ready construction, and incentivizing solar-compliant development. Hartford, Connecticut created solar-ready construction guidelines for developers.

Solar Rights. Communities are making sure all residents have access to solar energy. Saint Paul, Minnesota developed a process to enable solar rights through a solar access ordinance.

Utility Engagement. Local governments are working with utilities on win-win solutions to help customers go solar. Sacramento, California coordinated utility and city inspections for solar, reducing the total number of inspections needed.

Community Engagement. Local governments are convening public forums and developing new incentives to get their communities excited about going solar. Goshen and South Bend, Indiana launched Solarize campaigns that allow residents to come together to install solar on their homes at a discounted cost.

Market Development and Finance. SolSmart communities are offering innovative financing solutions for solar systems. Lafayette, Colorado provides PACE financing to residents, and informs its residents about other forms of solar financing.



SolSmart Advisors

Select communities and regions also have the opportunity to receive intensive assistance by hosting a SolSmart Advisor. These Advisors are experts who live and work in their communities for six months. So far, SolSmart has deployed **25 Advisors** who have worked with over **130 communities** nationwide.

In Their Own Words

“Encouraging solar energy growth in Indianapolis is an important strategy for reducing our contribution to climate change and lowering the utility burden on our residents. Increased deployment of solar energy is a benefit to not only our air and water, and the health of our community; it creates good paying, local jobs and stimulates economic development. I am proud to be the mayor of a SolSmart Silver-designated city.”

— *Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett*

“Solar power is a great example of how Charleston County strives to be on the cutting edge of providing the best to our citizens. This award is an excellent opportunity to shine a light on our efforts to provide our citizens, businesses, and industry the best support and tools they need to invest in solar power.”

— *Charleston County Council Chairman Elliott Summey*

“The SolSmart program created a national benchmark for communities to reach and provided the guidance and resources to support adoption of best practices in solar policy. The actions that we took to be the first in the State of Virginia to achieve the SolSmart designation will help the city meet important climate protection and job creation goals.”

— *Maurice Jones, City Manager of the City of Charlottesville and President-Elect of the Virginia Local Government Management Association*

“States and municipalities across the country are increasing investments in solar to meet clean energy goals, and SolSmart is helping local governments lead the way.”

— *Abigail Ross Hopper, President and CEO, Solar Energy Industries Association*

To find out how your community can participate, visit [SolSmart.org](https://www.solsmart.org).