

Foster City Community Solar Bulk Purchase Program
Earth Hour Cities Challenge Grant Application
October 2013

Section 1: General Information

City Name: Foster City

Department/Office Requesting Funding: City Manager

Mission/Authority of Office: The City Manager's Office provides direct oversight and project support to the City organization in a number of policy areas including sustainability.

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Section 2: Contact Information

City's Primary Contact

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Title: Management Analyst

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Secondary Contact

First/Last Name: Steve Toler

Title: Assistant City Manager

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Section 3: Detailed Funding Request

Project Purpose

To encourage the installation of rooftop solar on single family residences throughout the Foster City community through streamlining of City permitting processes and reduction in overall acquisition and installation costs produced by economies of scale available in community-scale bulk purchase programs. Further, to provide similar benefits to neighboring cities wishing to participate in the program and serving as a role model for future programs.

Total Amount Requested: \$20,000

Project Budget: \$20,000

Additional Funding Sources for this Project

Foster City is in partnership with The Solar Foundation which will provide Department of Energy funded (no cost to Foster City) technical assistance to streamline the solar permitting process and provide guidance and direction on best practices and the development of contracting and program documents for a Community-scale Bulk Purchase Program. The City is also exploring partnership through the Department of Energy's American Solar Transformation Initiative Rooftop Solar Challenge project for additional technical assistance. Funding approved through the Earth Hour Cities Challenge would be additional funds, not matching funds.

Project Description

This project is an excellent fit with both of the Climate Leader Award themes of "community transitions toward renewable energy" and "deployment of residential rooftop solar panels." It is designed specifically to facilitate and encourage the purchase and installation of rooftop renewable solar energy by the Foster City residential community.

The City has been actively working with The Solar Foundation to develop a partnership that would provide technical assistance to the City in developing programs that would encourage community implementation of solar technology, specifically rooftop solar technology. The Solar Foundation is funded by the Department of Energy to provide technical assistance. In Foster City's case, they are approved to provide the following services:

1. Streamline Foster City's solar permitting process. This will allow Foster City to make the process of applying for and receiving a permit simple and transparent for both applicants and their solar contractors. (The City eliminated building permit fees for solar panel installation in 2007.)
2. Provide technical assistance to develop a Community-Scale Solar Bulk Purchase Program for single family residents, including development of contract documents and program guidelines. This will make solar more accessible and affordable for residents by standardizing contract documents and providing a pre-negotiated price that takes advantage of cost savings afforded by economies of scale.

Foster City has set a goal that 10% of its community's single family residences (457 homes) will have rooftop solar by June 30, 2019. There are currently 95 single family residences with rooftop solar panels.) The Community-scale Bulk Purchase Program would be designed to ignite a concerted effort to encourage solar installation and, if successful, would serve as a model for future programs in Foster City and the region.

It is the regional importance of the project that holds the most promise. Foster City is committed to reaching out to at least three neighboring cities to collaborate in the project. Given the density of the Bay Area region, not only are additional cities likely to participate, it is equally likely that success in this endeavor will inspire action in other

cities in the region. This program would be designed such that it could be replicated in other communities.

The funding requested in this application would pay for a temporary part-time program coordinator to run the Bulk Purchase program, directly interfacing with the public and with the solar contractors during the active Community-Scale Purchase period. It would also pay for outreach materials related to the program. The budget for the project is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Foster City Community Scale Solar Bulk Purchase Program Budget

Line Item	Description	Amount
Program Coordinator	6 months/20 hours per week/\$25 per hour	\$13,000
Outreach Materials	Ads, flyers, direct mail, etc.	\$7,000
Total		\$20,000

As has been stated, Foster City is in an active partnership with The Solar Foundation, which will be helping to develop the Request for Proposal documents, contracts and program guidelines. They have also been brainstorming ways to utilize community groups to assist with implementation and administration of the project, but have not yet identified a non-profit implementation partner. This funding would assure that the program does not become stalled due to a lack of staff time. With appropriate staff, Foster City believes that the project would follow the proposed timeline in Table 2.

Table 2: Foster City Community Scale Solar Bulk Purchase Program Proposed Timeline

Dates	Activities/Milestones
November 2013 – January 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and streamline solar permitting process • Reach out to neighboring cities regarding participation in Community Bulk Purchase
January - March 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop RFP for community solar purchase/installation
April 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue RFP • Begin outreach to develop list of interested residents
May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and review responses to RFP
June 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve contract to successful bidder(s) • Notify interested residents of program opening
July 1, 2014 – October 31, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with residents and contractors to successfully move projects through the process.
November 1 – December 31, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate program success, establish next steps