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NEWS RELEASE

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Cupertino Recognized for Being a National Leader in Advancing Solar Energy

CUPERTINO, CA – The City of Cupertino is proud to announce that it has been recognized as a national leader in advancing solar energy by receiving a gold designation from SolSmart, a program funded by the U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative.

As a SolSmart gold designee, the City of Cupertino is receiving national recognition for adopting programs and practices that make it faster, easier, and cheaper for residents and businesses to go solar.

“The SolSmart designation signals that the City of Cupertino is open for solar business,” Mayor Savita Vaidyanathan said. “Not only will Cupertino’s actions help attract solar industry investment and generate economic development and local jobs, it will also ensure a more sustainable future and a healthier place to live, work, and play for our future generations.”

To achieve designation, cities and counties take steps to reduce solar “soft costs,” which are non-hardware costs that can increase the time and money it takes to install a solar energy system. Cupertino has streamlined its permitting process for small solar power systems; matched its permit fees to reflect national best practices (\$400 or less for residential permits); coordinated with regional organizations and local governments to engage utilities, communicating community goals for solar, net metering and interconnection processes; and installed solar power systems at the City’s Service Center and Environmental Education Center.

“Making it easy to add local solar complements the work of Silicon Valley Clean Energy to bring 100% carbon-free electricity for less to residents and businesses,” said Rod Sinks, Cupertino Councilmember and SVCE Founding Chair. “Some rooftops have good exposure and others do not; either way, everyone in Cupertino now has a carbon-free choice to power their homes and EVs. Citywide, this eliminates a remarkable 25% of our total carbon footprint.”

The SolSmart designation team, led by the [International City/County Management Association \(ICMA\)](#), evaluates communities and awards them points based on the actions they take to reduce soft costs and other barriers to solar. Communities that take sufficient action are designed either gold, silver, or bronze.

As part of the SolSmart program, all participating communities are eligible to request no-cost technical assistance from a team of national solar experts to help them achieve designation. The SolSmart technical assistance team is led by [The Solar Foundation](#).

Launched in April 2016, SolSmart aims to designate 300 communities during the three-year, federally funded program.

About SolSmart

SolSmart is a national designation and technical assistance program that recognizes leading solar communities and empowers additional communities to expand their local solar markets. Funded by the U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative, SolSmart strives to cut red tape, drive greater solar deployment, and make it possible for even more American homes and businesses to access solar energy to meet their electricity needs. Learn more at [SolSmart.org](#).

About the SunShot Initiative

The [U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative](#) is a collaborative national effort that aggressively drives innovation to make solar energy fully cost-competitive with traditional energy sources before the end of the decade. Through SunShot, the Energy Department supports efforts by private companies, universities, and national laboratories to drive down the cost of solar electricity to \$0.05 per kilowatt-hour for residential solar and \$0.04 per kilowatt-hour for commercial by 2030. Learn more at [energy.gov/sunshot](#).

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