



## **South Bay Region Achieves National Recognition for Solar and EV Achievements**

*South Bay Cities Council of Governments, 8 South Bay Cities Recognized for Making Solar Energy More Accessible to Residents and Businesses*

**Redondo Beach, CA, October 24, 2019** – The South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) and eight South Bay Cities received national recognition for their cutting-edge work advancing solar energy and electric vehicles (EVs), while using education and outreach to make solar more accessible to the public.

These communities achieved designation from the national [SolSmart](#) program, which has helped over 300 communities and regional organizations make it faster, easier, and more affordable to go solar. SolSmart is 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.

The SBCCOG became the first regional organization in California to earn the SolSmart Gold designation. Individual cities achieving SolSmart Gold include **Carson, El Segundo, Gardena, Manhattan Beach, Rancho Palos Verdes, and Torrance**. Two cities earned SolSmart Silver designation: **Hawthorne** and **Palos Verdes Estates**. **Redondo Beach** was already a SolSmart Bronze designee before the SBCCOG program started.

The communities will be recognized for their achievements at the SBCCOG meeting of the Board tonight at 6:00 p.m. at the Redondo Beach Public Library. The meeting is open to the public and located at 303 N. Pacific Coast Highway, Redondo Beach, CA 90277.

“These South Bay communities stand out as clean energy leaders within California and across the nation,” said **Andrea Luecke, President and Executive Director at The Solar Foundation**. “By accelerating the use of solar energy and compatible technologies like battery storage and electrification, local governments can meet their sustainability goals while residents save on energy bills and make their homes more resilient. We congratulate the eight communities and the SBCCOG for putting in the hard work to achieve SolSmart designation.”

Even with 1 million solar installations across California, the road to achieving the state’s ambitious solar deployment goals remains a long one. For residential solar adoption, one major challenge is for cities to develop a unified messaging strategy which provides information to residents and empowers them to go solar.

The SBCCOG and its member cities addressed this challenge by launching solar landing pages on their websites, while expanding access to information for residents through online publication of checklists, permit forms, interactive maps, financing and consumer protection resources, and solar contractor databases.

“Participation in the SolSmart Program is a great example of what we can accomplish when we work together. The South Bay Cities Council of Governments is gratified that we could assist our cities with implementation of their respective renewable energy goals through this program.” said **SBCCOG Chair Christian Horvath**.

SolSmart provides no-cost technical assistance to help communities reduce barriers to solar energy at the local level, while making solar and solar-compatible technologies more accessible to residents and businesses. Nationwide, more than 300 municipalities and counties and three regional organizations have achieved designation as SolSmart Gold, Silver, or Bronze.

“The SolSmart designation process prompted the SBCCOG to reconceive how educational and technical assistance tools would be delivered to our residents,” said **Jacki Bacharach, Executive Director of the SBCCOG**. “Designation resulted in a relaunch of the [Renewable South Bay](#) website and a renewed focus on the collaborative aspect of our environmental mission. The SBCCOG approach has become a model to the 47 other councils of governments throughout California that want to advance local solar initiatives.”

In the South Bay region, SolSmart helped communities improve inter-departmental collaboration, centralize public information, and deliver a clear message to residents. EcoMotion, a Los Angeles-based organization, served as the local SolSmart Advisor, working intensively with communities to help them achieve designation.

Recent clean energy accomplishments for these South Bay communities include:

- **SBCCOG** created and promoted the use of a region-wide online permitting checklist to reduce the time and cost of solar installations.
- **Carson** and **Manhattan Beach** hosted public residential solar workshops which educated homeowners about the opportunities, benefits, and challenges of putting solar on their homes.
- **Carson** unveiled the first permanent electric trash truck in California; authorized the purchase of new light-duty, zero-emission electric vehicles; and agreed to install electric charging stations throughout the city.
- **Rancho Palos Verdes** completed a feasibility analysis for a 40 kW solar carport with integrated EV chargers.
- **Torrance** launched a new solar landing page, and **El Segundo** launched an online pathway for solar permit submissions.

“Our future is being determined now by what we do and fail to do, and as Carson moves towards a cleaner and healthier environment we help ensure a brighter and sustainable future,” said **Carson Mayor Albert Robles**. “While we are most excited for this acknowledgement, we are even more excited to offer an easier, faster and more accessible option for all our residents and businesses to go solar.”

Five of the cities also earned SolSmart special recognition awards for their standout accomplishments in specific areas. **Rancho Palos Verdes, Manhattan Beach, Carson** and **El Segundo** earned recognitions for their work on solar installation inspections, while **Torrance** earned recognition for its work on solar permitting.

Any municipality, county, or regional organization in the United States can sign up to receive no-cost technical assistance to work toward a SolSmart designation. Interested communities can sign up at [SolSmart.org](https://www.solsmart.org).

### **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 Solar Energy Technologies Office, 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. More than 300 local governments in 40 states and the District of Columbia have achieved SolSmart designation, representing 82 million Americans. SolSmart is led by The Solar Foundation and the International City/County Management Association. Learn more at [SolSmart.org](https://www.solsmart.org).

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