



**Contra  
Costa  
County**

To: Board of Supervisors  
From: John Kopchik, Director, Conservation & Development Department  
Date: July 11, 2017

Subject: Letter of Intent to Participate in SolSmart Program

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**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

AUTHORIZE the Chair of the Board of Supervisors to submit a letter of interest to participate in the SolSmart Program of the National Association of Counties and the U.S. Department of Energy.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no cost to participate in the SolSmart Program. If the County is designated a SolSmart community and is interested, it will be eligible to receive free technical assistance in developing and building out solar permitting processes; solar planning, zoning, and development regulations; community engagement strategies; and solar market development and finance.

**BACKGROUND:**

The National Association of Counties (NACO) is a co-sponsor of the SolSmart program, a new national program designed to recognize communities that have taken key steps to address local barriers to solar energy. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative through the Solar Powering America by Recognizing Communities funding opportunity. SolSmart seeks to address the business process or administrative costs

☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY ADMINISTRATOR

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD COMMITTEE

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Action of Board On: **07/11/2017** ☒ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

**VOTE OF SUPERVISORS**

AYE: John Gioia, District I Supervisor  
Candace Andersen, District II Supervisor  
Diane Burgis, District III Supervisor  
Karen Mitchoff, District IV Supervisor  
Federal D. Glover, District V Supervisor

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: July 11, 2017

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: Stephanie Mello, Deputy

Contact: Jody London,  
925-674-7871

cc:

that can increase the time and money it takes to install a solar energy system, costs which are then passed on to solar customers. These costs can represent as much as 64 percent of total installed residential solar system prices, and are associated with planning and zoning; permitting, interconnection, and inspection; financing; customer acquisition; and installation labor. Addressing these costs can help attract new business, providing jobs and other economic development benefits.

### BACKGROUND: (CONT'D)

Increasing the amount of renewable energy deployed in Contra Costa County is one of the goals of the County's Climate Action Plan. The Climate Action Plan has specific targets for the number of solar arrays that will be installed on homes and businesses. Participating in the SolSmart program will provide the County with additional resources to develop policies and processes for facilitating more solar energy in Contra Costa County, and to be recognized nationally for our work. By applying for SolSmart designation, the County commits to working with the SolSmart technical assistance team and considering its recommendations.

Communities that achieve the SolSmart designation will be recognized at a special ceremony at the NACO annual conference, July 21-24, 2017. The SolSmart application had to be submitted prior to Board approval due to the deadline, and will be withdrawn if the Board is not in favor of participating in the SolSmart program.

### CONSEQUENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

If the County does not participate in the SolSmart program the County will not have the opportunity for no-cost technical assistance and recognition for its solar energy policies and programs.

### ATTACHMENTS

SolSmart Letter of Intent