Solar energy policy fonafote

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A good starting point is to create an advisory committee or task force that includes a diversity of stakeholders in decision-making. An advisory group and other forms of stakeholder engagement can help local governments gain the perspectives of and obtain buy-in from local solar energy market participants. Including key community members and organizations on solar advisory committees and task forces, can increase the effectiveness, equity, and inclusiveness of the local solar effort.

In addition to a solar advisory committee and/or task force (see previous question), other relevant organizations that could be involved in developing a solar development plan include:

Setting solar installation targets helps clarify the role solar energy will play in achieving a community"s broader environmental, climate change, or sustainability goals. Setting targets helps create momentum for a solar program, with stakeholders working toward common goals. It also guides the strategy for increasing solar installations in a community and enables leaders to track progress against a published goal.

Solar target setting should begin with the development of an installation baseline that provides insight into a community"s experience with solar energy. After an installation baseline has been developed, it can be used to establish realistic local solar targets. To identify realistic targets, a community may consider the following:

There are many ways that local jurisdictions can help create a more equitable local solar market. To work toward equitable local solar adoption, especially in underserved communities, a community may consider setting racial equity goals, creating a specific LMI solar program or LMI carve outs in existing programs, accounting for historical injustices, ensuring diversity and representation on local advisory committees, working with local minority-owned businesses, deploying solar for multifamily buildings, and including underrepresented minorities in decision-making about solar.

After setting solar targets, local decision makers need to identify ways to reach those targets. Local governments may consider solar products such as on-site solar, off-site solar, or purchasing mechanisms such as virtual power purchase agreements (PPAs), community choice aggregation (CCA), renewable energy certificates (RECs), or third-party ownership models.

While solar products and purchasing mechanisms are important tools in making solar more accessible, reducing PV costs is also another important factor. Although solar costs have declined substantially over the past decade, cost can still be a barrier to adoption. PV non-hardware, or "soft," costs now constitute more than half of residential and commercial PV system costs. For more information on cost trends see Solar Technology Cost Analysis | Solar Market Research and Analysis | NREL.

For local government-owned land, community solar may be an ideal option. Community solar is a distributed

solar energy deployment model that allows customers to buy or lease part of a larger, off-site shared PV system. Community solar subscribers then typically receive a monthly bill credit for electricity generated by their share of the solar PV system. Subscriptions are often based on the customer"s monthly load or a fixed kilowatt hour/month.

Community solar projects can be sited in a variety of spaces, such as LMI neighborhoods, public lands, or on a former industrial or commercial site that may be contaminated known as a brownfield. Communities can host a community solar project or incorporate community solar into their carbon-reduction and renewable energy goals.

Municipal utilities may offer community solar to residents and businesses without access to traditional rooftop PV via municipal utility ownership, community-developed limited liability companies (LLCs) or special purpose entities, or developer ownership. For more information about community solar for municipalities, as well as ownership and financing mechanisms, seeSolSmart"s Community Solar Toolkit for Local Governments, the NREL report Lessons Learned: Community Solar for Municipal Utilities, and the NCSP"s Municipal Utility Collaborative.

For example, significant variability exists in PV permitting and inspection processes among U.S. communities, which can increase PV non-hardware, or "soft," costs; delay installations; and cause customer cancellations, thus hindering deployment. Streamlining PV permitting and inspections locally can allow more residents and businesses to receive solar at a faster pace.

Significant variability exists in PV permitting and inspection processes across U.S. communities, which can increase PV soft costs, and delay installations. PV permitting and inspection processes can further cause customer cancellations, thus hindering deployment.