



Office of the City Manager

August 23, 2016

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: *Dee* Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Subject: City of Berkeley Participation in U.S. DOE's SunShot Prize Contest

The City of Berkeley is currently participating in the U.S. Department of Energy's [SunShot Prize: The Race to 7-Day Solar](#) contest. The goal of the SunShot Prize contest is to motivate local governments, communities, solar companies, and electric utilities to collaborate on improving the experience of "going solar" for Americans. This competition offers cash prizes (up to \$100,000) during the 18-month performance period, between September 22, 2015 and March 17, 2017, and grand prizes of \$3 million and \$1 million to the teams that bring process certainty and best reduce the permit to plug-in time for small solar PV systems.

Only five teams were selected by the U.S. DOE to participate in this contest, including the Northern and Central California SunShot Alliance (NCCSA) team, on which Berkeley is participating. The NCCSA consists of PG&E (as the Team Lead and the electric utility), SolarCity (solar installer), Accela (software vendor), Qado Energy (software vendor), VuSpex (software vendor), and the following local jurisdictions: Alameda County, Antioch, Atascadero, Berkeley, Chico, Clovis, Fremont, Fresno, Livermore, Madera County, Oakley, Richmond, San Francisco, and Stockton.

To participate as a local jurisdiction, the City of Berkeley is expected to efficiently process solar PV permits and inspect finished installations in a timely manner. This process is already on-going and is currently being improved with expanded use of Accela, the permitting software that the City began using for building permits in December 2015.

The NCCSA team has been awarded mid-contest cash prizes based on the team's performance to date. Berkeley's share of the initial prizes is expected to be about \$5,000. Staff intends to use this small prize to support the [Brighter Futures Berkeley](#) program, a recently-launched Office of Energy & Sustainable Development program designed to provide free job training in solar installation and to bring solar to low-income households in Berkeley.

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SunShot Prize Contest

If you have any questions about this contest, please contact Sarah Moore, Associate Planner, at 510-981-7494.

cc: Zach Cowan, Interim Deputy City Manager / City Attorney  
Mark Numainville, City Clerk  
Ann-Marie Hogan, City Auditor  
Carol Johnson, Acting Director of Planning and Development  
Alex Roshal, Chief Building Official  
David Lopez, Assistant Building Official  
Matthai Chakko, Assistant to the City Manager  
Timothy Burroughs, Assistant to the City Manager  
Sarah Moore, Associate Planner, Office of Energy & Sustainable Development