

Berkeley FIRST

In 2008, the City of Berkeley launched the Berkeley Financing Initiative for Renewable and Solar Technology (FIRST), a program to promote solar photovoltaic (PV) installations using a pioneering financing mechanism. The now concluded pilot program served as a model for Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs across the country.

PACE Financing: PACE offers accessible financing to make important building improvements that can lower energy bills. The advantages of the PACE financing:

- There is relatively little up-front cost to the property owner
- The cost for the solar system is paid for through a special tax on the property, and is spread over 20 years
- The financing costs were comparable to a traditional equity line or mortgage
- Since the solar system stays with the property, so does the tax obligation-if the property is transferred or sold, the new owners will pay the remaining tax obligation

PACE Financing Programs: The Berkeley FIRST pilot program has concluded but there are other PACE financing options that are now available. To learn more see: [PACE financing](#).

Berkeley FIRST Documents

- [Berkeley FIRST How To Guide](#)
- [Update to Berkeley FIRST How To Guide](#)
- [Berkeley FIRST Pilot Initial Evaluation](#)
- [Berkeley FIRST Final Evaluation](#)

Legislation to establish Berkeley FIRST:

- September 23, 2008 [Approval of Bond Purchase and Administration Agreements](#)
- September 16, 2008 [Public Hearing to Establish Financing District](#)
- July 22, 2008 [Intent to Establish Financing District and Amend Local Goals and Policies](#)
- April 22, 2008 [Amendment to Berkeley Municipal Code to Establish Special Tax Financing Law](#)
- April 22, 2008 [Intent to Establish Revenue and Contracts for Solar Financing District](#)
- November 6, 2007 [Approval of Concept for Financing District](#)