

Solar America Initiative

Fact Sheet

March 2008

The Solar America Cities Awards

About the Awards

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has named 25 U.S. cities as Solar America Cities. DOE recognizes Solar America Cities as partners highly committed to solar technology adoption at the local level. The awards are intended to accelerate solar adoption in cities—our nation's electricity load centers—by supporting cities' innovative efforts with financial and technical assistance. The cities selected are prepared to take a comprehensive, city-wide approach to solar technology that facilitates its mainstream adoption.

The Solar America Cities receive a combined \$4.9 million in federal financial assistance. DOE provides additional value in the form of on-site technical and policy expert assistance to help cities with their most pressing needs. Technical assistance is provided by DOE, its national laboratories, and other experts in areas such as city planning, technology selection, project financing, building codes, architecture, and community outreach.

Solar technologies promoted by Solar America Cities include photovoltaics and concentrating solar power (both produce solar electricity) as well as solar water and air heating.

Which Cities Won Awards?

Ann Arbor, MI	Minneapolis – St. Paul, MN	Salt Lake City, UT
Austin, TX	New Orleans, LA	San Antonio, TX
Berkeley, CA	New York City, NY	San Diego, CA
Boston, MA	Orlando, FL	San Francisco, CA
Denver, CO	Philadelphia, PA	San Jose, CA
Houston, TX	Pittsburgh, PA	Santa Rosa, CA
Knoxville, TN	Portland, OR	Seattle, WA
Madison, WI	Sacramento, CA	Tucson, AZ
Milwaukee, WI		

Why were These Cities Selected?

Each city submitted a proposal outlining its plans to build a sustainable solar infrastructure, streamline city-level regulations, and promote the adoption of mainstream solar technology among residents and businesses. Cities were selected competitively. Evaluation criteria focused on demonstrating a comprehensive city government approach to solar planning, including methods to further market expansion and to remove local market barriers. Selected cities demonstrated a high level of commitment to promote solar power throughout the city, involving local government officials, utilities, and private partners.

What are the Desired Outcomes?

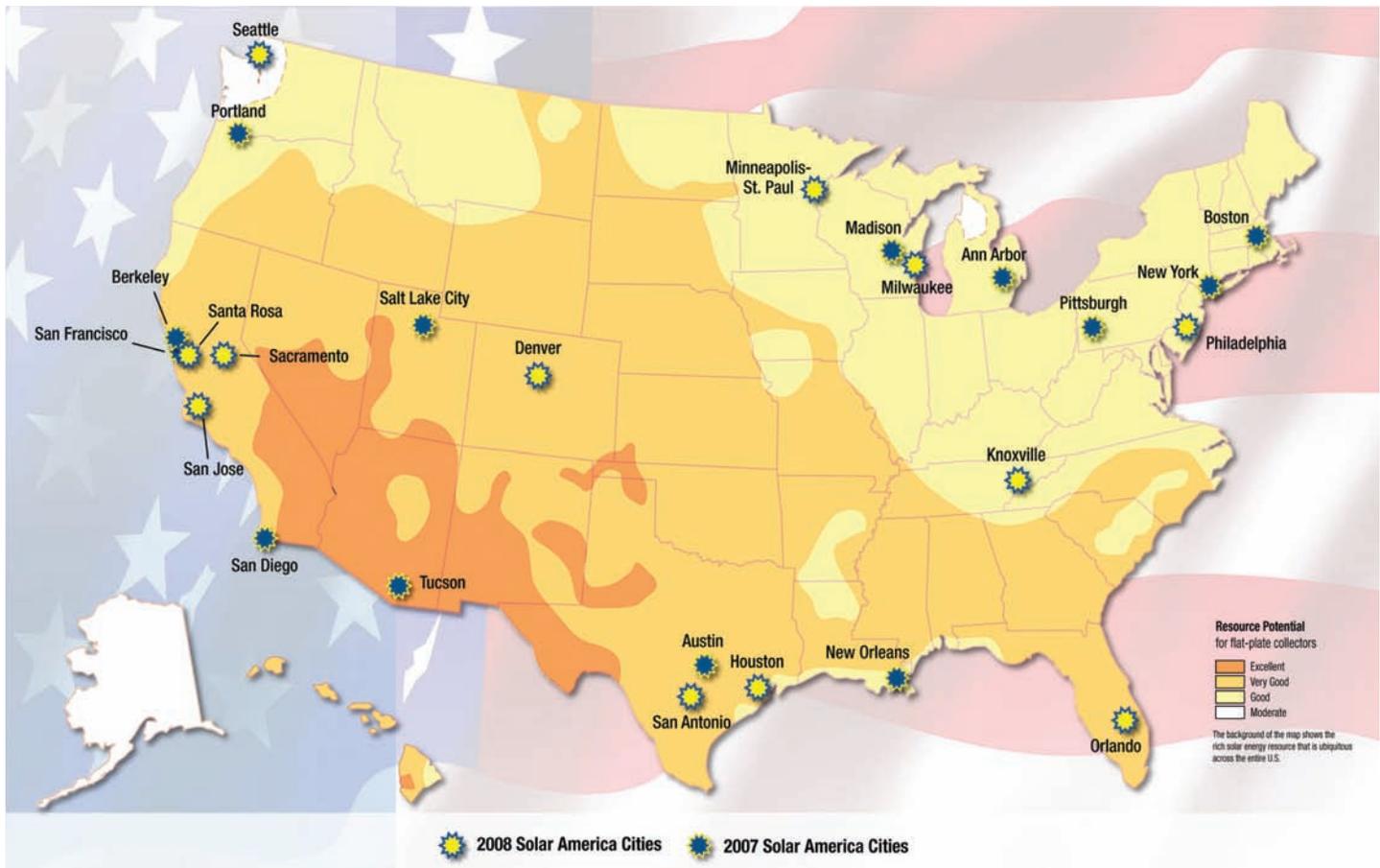
- Development of a comprehensive city-government approach to solar implementation involving key stakeholders, utilities, and private partners
- A widespread increase in solar power use
- Large-scale solar installations
- A reduction in market barriers through activities such as streamlining solar-friendly permitting and zoning
- Creation of city-level solar incentives (e.g., solar rebates, financial assistance, tax credits, property tax abatements, and/or tax incentives to solar manufacturers that locate in the city)
- An increase in public awareness through promotions and citywide education
- Inclusion of renewable energy curriculum material in public schools
- Integration of solar energy into city planning and emergency preparedness plans (e.g., schools as shelters or natural disaster relief)
- Solar America Cities will serve as models for other cities.



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About the Solar America Initiative

The Solar America Cities awards are part of the Market Transformation efforts of the Solar America Initiative (SAI). President Bush launched SAI in 2006 to accelerate the development of advanced photovoltaic solar technologies with the goal of making them cost-competitive with conventional forms of electricity from the utility grid by 2015.

The Market Transformation focus of SAI addresses marketplace barriers and offers solar technologies the opportunity for market expansion. The other areas of SAI deal with research and development of solar technology including innovative devices and processes, prototype PV components, and collaborative research and development activities among industry, university, and DOE's national laboratories.

Resources

Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE): www.eere.energy.gov/
Solar America Initiative: www.solar.energy.gov/solar_america
EERE Solar Program: www.solar.energy.gov
Database of State & Local Incentives for Renewable Energy: www.DSIREUSA.org
EERE State Activities & Partnerships: www.eere.energy.gov/states
National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) Solar Energy Basics: www.nrel.gov/learning/re_solar.html
American Solar Energy Society (ASES): www.ases.org
Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC): www.irecusa.org
U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC): www.usgbc.org
Solar ABCs: www.solarabcs.org

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For more information about Solar America Cities, visit www.solaramericacities.energy.gov