

STATEMENT OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Broward County, FL

Streamlined, Organizational, Legislative and Administrative Response to Permitting, PV Market Share, and Solar Energy Costs (Broward SOLAR)

A. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Develop innovative policies and procedures that will improve market conditions for rooftop photovoltaic (PV) systems in residential and low commercial structures in Broward County, Florida.

- **Objective 1:** Develop and make available best practices for streamlining and standardizing permitting and interconnection processes.
- **Objective 2:** Conduct outreach to municipal utilities and co-ops regarding net metering standards) and conduct research into restrictive interconnection requirements across the State of Florida.
- **Objective 3:** Investigate potential financing options for the installation of rooftop photovoltaic (PV) systems in residential and small commercial structures, identify the benefits and challenges of each option and provide information to stakeholders.
- **Objective 4:** Identify restrictive zoning ordinances develop best practices regarding more favorable provisions.

B. PROJECT SCOPE

As lead applicant, Broward County will work cooperatively with the Department of Energy and a vast array of collaborative stakeholders, including Florida Power and Light (FPL) (the utility serving all participating jurisdictions), the State Energy Office, the Broward County Board of Rules and Appeals, and fourteen municipalities that currently set their own solar permitting requirements. Procedures in neighboring jurisdictions are frequently inconsistent, and multiple departments may be required to review each application. Frequently, this lack of uniformity leads to confusion, unnecessary delays, and increased transaction costs for solar installers and customers. The Broward SOLAR Project will develop best practices for process improvements that may promote solar market penetration, first locally, then regionally and statewide. Throughout the grant period, the focus will be on a combined strategy of streamlining the permitting process, education, and outreach.

C. TASKS TO BE PERFORMED

Task 1.0: Streamline and standardize the permitting process for rooftop PV installations.

Broward SOLAR will develop and implement a common, expedited solar permitting process for residential and small commercial properties, with a flat fee and single application form, with the goal of issuing permits within 24 hours of application.

- **Sub-Task 1.1: Research successful permitting models**

During the first quarter of the grant period, successful strategies from other parts of the country will be evaluated for their applicability to local and regional needs, both through literature review and by contacting national experts.

- **Sub-Task 1.2: Create a streamlined solar permitting process for all participating permitting departments throughout Broward County.**

Project staff will work in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to simplify and create a cost-efficient, standardized permitting process that allows contractors and property owners in all participating jurisdictions to access and submit their applications online. The process will charge a single fee, provide applicants with standardized forms and diagrams that will eliminate the need for costly case-specific engineering studies and lengthy and expensive plan checks, and offer expedited processing for standard installations. In addition, a clear path will be established between code enforcement officials and FPL to coordinate the interconnection and inspection processes. As a result, rooftop solar projects will move forward more quickly across multiple jurisdictions, creating a more economical, efficient, and customer-friendly process. Development of the streamlined permitting database will be completed by the end of the third quarter.

- **Sub-Task 1.3: Implement and Test**

Implementation and testing of the new permitting database within participating jurisdictions is expected to take approximately one month, and will be finalized by the end of the third quarter.

- **Sub-Task 1.4: Educate**

By the end of the third quarter, a series of workshops will be conducted to familiarize permitting inspectors in each municipality with the simplified procedure, and teach solar installers and customers how to navigate the new system.

Task 2.0: Develop and implement a community-wide education and outreach campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of renewable energy and promote the installation of rooftop PV systems among residents and local businesses.

- **Sub-Task 2.1: Public Relations Campaign**

During the third and fourth quarters, a publicity and outreach plan, including videos, brochures, public service announcements, bus placards, etc., will be implemented to increase demand for private solar systems.

- **Sub-Task 2.2: Solar Rights**

During the third and fourth quarters, a series of workshops will be designed to educate the public and small businesses organizations about their legal right to install rooftop solar systems, and teach local Homeowner Associations about their obligations under Florida's solar rights laws.

- **Sub-Task 2.3: Financial Options**

To help make solar technology more affordable for property owners, financing experts, solar installers, potential customers, legal experts, and regional stakeholders will be invited to attend a one-day workshop to discuss the applicability of successful market-based incentives, as well as various financing options, including direct financing, leasing, and third-party ownership models. This workshop will be scheduled during the fourth quarter.

- **Sub-Task 2.4: Broward SOLAR Panel**

Toward the end of the project year, a training workshop and panel discussion targeting building officials and inspectors, government officials and local legislators, solar installers, and the public will highlight the program's accomplishments, as well as emerging solar technologies, and the benefits of solar energy delivered by customer owned and sited PV systems. This workshop will be scheduled during the fourth quarter.

Task 3.0: Develop and make available best practices regarding the following:

- **Sub-Task 3.1: Net Metering and Interconnection Standards**

Develop and make available best practices regarding net metering and interconnection standards..

- **Sub-Task 3.2: Solar-Friendly Financing**

Develop and make available best practices regarding solar financing models, including residential PACE or other financial incentive programs.

- **Sub-Task 3.3: Zoning Ordinances**

Develop and make available best practices regarding solar-friendly planning and zoning.

Task 4.0: Project Management and Reporting

Reports and other deliverables will be provided in accordance with the Federal Assistance Reporting Checklist following the instructions included therein. This includes all required status reports, financial reports, special reports, and final close-out reports. In addition, all publications, conference papers, summaries of project review meetings, and/or other public releases of program results will be made available to the funder.

Task 5.0 - Market Assessment

Complete a final Market Assessment and input the data into the US DOE/NREL Solar Metrics Rooftop Solar Challenge Database. The Market Assessment will be completed by the last day of the project year and will reflect substantial and demonstrable improvements in market conditions to be achieved through the above tasks.

Independent industry verification of these results will also be provided. This verification will be in the form of a letter signed by representatives from at least 2 companies in the residential PV business and at least 2 companies in the commercial PV business representing a significant portion of PV sales in the participating jurisdictions. Broward Solar will also work closely with DOE/NREL as they independently verify that the results reported by Broward Solar at the end of the project year are accurate.