

## SOLAR ENERGY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (SEED) FUND



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- February 2013 County adopted resolution approving its Climate Action Strategy
- County has met 2020 goal with closure of Cemex plant in Davenport.
- Emissions reduction target is 80% below 1990 levels by 2050

**Santa Cruz Climate Action  
Strategy**

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- Climate Action Strategy included installation of solar panels at Ben Lomond Transfer Station
- In 2015 the Board of Supervisors approved plan to install solar at 5 County facilities within 2 years.

### **Santa Cruz Climate Action Strategy**

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- Solar Energy and Economic Development (SEED) fund designed and implemented by Strategic Energy Innovations and Optony
- SEED is a revolving fund created from a grant from California Solar Initiative in March 2012.
- This is a collaborative procurement process for solar PV for public agencies and special districts using the revolving fund to defray upfront costs for the participants

### **What is the SEED Fund?**

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- Designed to address the barrier of upfront costs
  - 3-step opt-in program to empower public agencies to evaluate solar PV projects and participate in a collaborative procurement
  - Does not require upfront allocation of funds for project planning, site assessments or procurement activities
- Provides unbiased technical and financial analysis for evaluation of solar PV procurement options

## Overview of SEED Fund

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- Available for municipal agencies considering solar for public facilities
- Provides collaboration support for 1-2% of total contracted solar project costs
- Independent solar consultants perform feasibility assessments, financial analysis, procurement management, proposal evaluation, and contracting support to guide participating agencies through the whole process

## Overview of SEED Fund

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- Overcome initial cost hurdle for support services
- Revolving fund is replenished upon contract approvals (often paid by solar vendors) for future clean energy collaborations
- Accelerates implementation and encourages participation

### **Benefits of Revolving Fund Model**

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- Standardized, market-leading resources available to all participants
- Evaluation and procurement templates for fast impact and rapid progress
- Reduces the learning curve for participants through training materials and education
- Aggregation yields greater market interest and better pricing
- Demonstrate leadership locally, regionally and nationally
- Achieve aggregated energy goals while generating operational savings

### **Benefits of Collaborative Procurement**

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- Create significant new economic activity and jobs
- Demonstrate environmental leaderships & education for the future
- On-going environmental benefits
- Achieve energy goals while generating operational savings

## Regional Impact

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- Silicon Valley Renewable Energy Procurement (SV-REP): Led by County of Santa Clara; 14 MW in RFP; 9 public agencies in Silicon Valley
- Regional Renewable Energy Procurement (R-REP): Led by County of Alameda; 40+ MW in RFP; 19 public agencies in East and South SF Bay Area
- Similar collaborative solar procurements complete or underway with 20+ public agencies in Central New York
- Model has been recognized by U.S. EPA and copied by federal government for collaborative solar procurement across multiple agencies (e.g. GSA, EPA, Interior) for federal facilities in California and Nevada

## Previous Collaborative Procurements

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- 14 local government agencies in Marin, Napa and Sonoma Counties received full site feasibility assessments, with 32 total sites included in the RFP
- City of San Rafael acted as Lead Agency: issued RFP, served on evaluation committee, led contract negotiations
- Over 4 MW contracted for installation

### **SEED Fund Round 1 – North Bay**

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- 8 local government agencies in Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties received full site feasibility assessments, with 32 total sites included in the RFP
- County of Santa Cruz is the Lead Agency: issued RFP, will serve on evaluation committee and lead contract negotiations
- Over 37 MW in potential solar PV capacity
- 37 vendor companies attended mandatory pre-bid meeting

### **SEED Fund Round 2 – Monterey Bay**

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If all projects in SEED Fund RFP are built as proposed:

- Santa Cruz County: 9 potential sites; 9.3 MW; 2,487 metric tons CO2 offset annually
- Monterey County: 19 potential sites; 27.1 MW; 9,025 metric tons CO2 offset annually
- San Benito County: 188 kW; 50 metric tons CO2 offset annually
  - Typical homes need about 4-5 kW to offset all energy usage

## GHG Savings (Round 2)

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- Participation Recruitment
  - Provide workshops on solar PV technical information and financing
  - Perform high-level site "pre-screens" to assess solar potential and possible financial benefits
  - Minimize agency staff time requirements
  - Provide off-ramps to enable low-pressure decision-making
- Multi-Jurisdictional Processes
  - Recruit Lead Agency to be Point of Contact during procurement phase – greater time and political commitment
  - Prepare template contract documents with mutually agreed upon and required standard terms
  - Aggressive timelines with understanding that slippage is inevitable
  - Maintain flexibility in financing options and decisions to move forward
- Quantity of Sites and Data
  - Evaluate all sites to eliminate sites which will not be good candidates and focus on sites which are viable
  - Uniform analysis of sites for presentation to proposers

## Challenges and Solutions

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- California Solar Initiative, through California Energy Commission (CEC)
- CEC grant recipients: Optony Inc. and Strategic Energy Innovations (SEI)
- Participating agencies
- Local environmental action groups: Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), Climate Action Compact, Communities of Sustainable Monterey County, and more

## Supporters

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