



City of Seattle
Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Seattle Named a ‘Solar America City’ *One of 12 cities to receive the DOE Award for 2008*

SEATTLE – Mayor Greg Nickels announced today the city of Seattle was named a “Solar America City” by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). As a result, Seattle will leverage a \$200,000 DOE grant with \$200,000 in local funds on a variety of efforts to promote the development of a sustainable solar energy infrastructure.

“Climate change is a very real threat to the future of our city and our planet,” Nickels said. “We must expand our options for clean, renewable power. Developing solar energy as a reliable power source will do just that.”

With this grant, Seattle will:

- establish strategies to increase the deployment of solar energy technology;
- incorporate both building and community-scale solar standards into planning processes; and
- develop and implement solar education and outreach programs.

Seattle’s partners are Northwest Sustainable Energy for Economic Development (SEED), which works to establish a clean, diverse, and affordable Northwest energy system based on efficient use of renewable resources, with maximum local control and ownership of energy assets; and the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

“Northwest SEED is excited to work with the city to overcome the barriers to widespread deployment of solar energy,” said Northwest SEED Executive Director Jennifer Grove. “We look forward to demonstrating a community-based approach to meet Seattle’s clean energy needs.”

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Seattle is a leader among U.S. cities in the pursuit of clean energy solutions and the fight against climate change:

- In February of 2005, Nickels launched the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. Under this agreement, Seattle now leads more than 800 other U.S. cities, representing nearly 79 million Americans, who have committed to enacting policies and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- As a city, Seattle is meeting its commitment through focusing on the development of green jobs, green building, alternative transportation and fueling infrastructure, and clean energy initiatives.
- Seattle's electric utility, Seattle City Light, is an important part of the city's climate protection commitment. Through aggressive conservation programs, innovative energy efficiency solutions, and carbon offsets, Seattle City Light is the first large electric utility in the country to achieve "zero net emissions" of climate pollution.

While Seattle has put into place advanced programs for conservation, efficiency and green buildings, it recognizes that renewable generation will also play a key role in the city's future. According to solar experts, Seattle gets more sun than the prime solar power sites in Germany, one of the world's most prolific solar power generators. However, the widespread deployment of solar energy technologies in Seattle currently faces many unique and substantial barriers. These include the need for awareness about solar energy potential in Seattle's notoriously cloudy climate, evaluation tools and processes for inclusion of solar energy in broader city planning efforts for green building and energy conservation, and creative financing opportunities to bring state, federal, and utility incentive programs to bear on solar installations of larger scale and community impact.

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, citywide approach to solar technology that facilitates its mainstream adoption.

In addition to the funding, DOE also provide hands-on assistance from technical experts to help cities integrate solar technologies into their energy planning, zoning, and facilities; streamline local regulations and practices that affect solar adoption; provide solar financing options; and promote solar technology among residents and local businesses through outreach, curriculum development, and incentive programs. DOE selected 13 Solar America Cities in 2007, so the latest selection brings the total number of Solar America Cities to 25. For more information about the program, visit this Web site: <http://www.solaramericacities.org/>

Visit the mayor's Web site at www.seattle.gov/mayor. Get the mayor's inside view on efforts to promote transportation, public safety, economic opportunity and healthy communities by signing up for The Nickels Newsletter at www.seattle.gov/mayor/newsletter_signup.htm