

Ann Arbor Solar America Cities Partnership

If Ann Arbor, a city known more for clouds than sunshine, can become a "Solar City" and demonstrate that solar energy can provide a positive contribution to the community in jobs and clean, renewable energy, then any city in the US can follow our lead.

Accomplishments to Date

Thanks to this Solar America City Partnership, our residents can now **look up information about their property's solar access and estimated solar energy production on the city's website**. The database was built with help from University of Michigan students.

Also helping to get the word out to residents about solar energy is a new **10 kW photovoltaic (PV) system at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market**, which serves as a flagship installation for the community, visible to thousands of market-goers every Saturday. The system was funded by local matching funds from the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority.



Farmers Market PV installation was completed in September 2008.

And making sure we continue to lead by example, Ann Arbor utilized technical assistance from Sandia National Labs and CH2M-Hill, to **assess the feasibility of installing solar energy—both PV and thermal—at five city facilities**. During the assessments, a local nonprofit energy auditor was trained in the assessment process to build local capacity and complete future assessments at a reduced cost. The city facility assessments will be used to make a decision regarding the location of the city's next major solar demonstration project.

Additionally, our project partner Great Lakes Renewable Energy Association **held solar energy informational workshops**, continued the *Go Solar Ann Arbor aggregate purchasing program*, and **trained Ann Arbor teachers on solar energy curricula**. These education and outreach efforts are vital to increasing the awareness and acceptance of solar energy use in Ann Arbor.

Finally, another project partner, Clean Energy Coalition, has been **conducting market research, including focus groups, interviews of key market actors, and a review of the relevant literature** to provide background for the city of Ann Arbor Solar Plan, which is currently under development.

Future Plans

All of our work to date points to the **need to continue offering assistance—both financial and technical—to residents and businesses to encourage the use of solar energy**. There is still work to be done in education and outreach, and there is still a financing gap that must be covered before solar can go mainstream. We are beginning to develop financing strategies that can assist our residents, but we will have great difficulty in following a program through to completion without assistance above and beyond the existing Solar America Cities program.