



The Web Site of The Sacramento Bee

This story is taken from [Sacbee / News](#).

---

## City gets \$200,000 grant to put solar panels on buildings

By Ngoc Nguyen - [ngnguyen@sacbee.com](mailto:ngnguyen@sacbee.com)

*Published 12:00 am PDT Wednesday, April 9, 2008*

The City of Trees could have a new moniker: the city of green rooftops.

Sacramento has received a \$200,000 grant from the Department of Energy to put photovoltaic panels on some city buildings, and eventually pave the way for more panels atop businesses and homes.

Similar grants went to 11 other cities.

Jim Reinhardt of Sacramento's Economic Development Department said the city's goal is to produce 40 megawatts of power from renewable energy sources by 2017.

Sacramento is "taking the lead" by installing more highly visible solar roofs on municipally owned buildings, he said.

The city's plan is to have 5 megawatts' worth of solar panels on city buildings within two years.

Currently, two buildings are outfitted with panels: the California Environmental Protection Agency building and a structure at the Sacramento Zoo.

Sacramento also will use the money to help jump-start the region's burgeoning solar industry with an incentives zone for sustainable businesses and a solar technician program at the Los Rios Community College District.

The city was able to match the federal grant through community partners, including the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, which has committed \$148,000 in staff time for technical assistance.

"They looked at some of the unique things about the city of Sacramento, and tried to figure out how they are barriers to solar adoption," said Rachel Huang, project manager for SMUD's solar program.

One surprise: The towering and shade-bearing trees that line the city's downtown streets are not always compatible with solar panels.

Huang said the plan addresses how to write city ordinances in a way that allows for both function and aesthetics.

Other long-term strategies include "smart" building design that allows structures to be outfitted with solar panels in the future, when the costs of the technology go down.

SMUD wants to lease city-owned rooftops to host solar-power sharing systems.

The main barrier to consumers adopting solar technology may not be trees, but a different type of green.

Consumers still balk at solar's high up-front costs, but city officials said they believe showcasing solar roofs

will serve as a model for green innovation that could yield lower costs in the future.

Go to: [Sacbee](#) / [Back to story](#)

---

This article is protected by copyright and should not be printed or distributed for anything except personal use.  
The Sacramento Bee, 2100 Q St., P.O. Box 15779, Sacramento, CA 95852  
Phone: (916) 321-1000

[Copyright](#) © [The Sacramento Bee](#)