

Name: Residential SolarApp+ in support of SB-379

Completed: Fiscal Year 2023/2024

Goal Alignment:

DIGITAL - Expand access to city services to anyone, at any time, from anywhere (responsive, touchless, accessible, and mobile).

INNOVATIVE - Transform the City's service delivery through new and creative solutions.

Summary: In 2022, the Governor signed SB 379 which requires local jurisdictions to adopt an online permitting system for residential solar energy systems by 2023/2024 depending on the population size of your local jurisdiction. Additionally, this bill requires local jurisdictions to annually report compliance with this bill to the California Energy Commission (CEC) once the deadlines have taken effect.

The city secured grant funding in support of this engagement to allow automated residential solar permitting where the customer can apply, pay, and receive permitting via an online process. This was achieved with an integration with SolarAPP+, a National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) managed product, with the city's current permitting system, Accela.

Benefits:

- Use of a standardized site backed by the Department of Energy and managed by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory to have the latest federal standards guarantee support and compliance with the Senate bill.
- Leveraged existing Accela Citizen Access portal (ACA) Community Development Department (CDD) Building application for a familiar process while enhancing the support of SB-379-related residential solar permitting.
- Allowance of automated and immediate solar permitting if SolarApp+ and jurisdiction conditions are fulfilled.
- Multiple automatic notifications to both internal and external customers based on the workflow process progression deliver greater transparency and ease of use, also affording time savings expended on managing the SB379 – SolarAPP+ applications and permits.
- Access to reporting features and adherence to annual reporting requirements to the State of California
- To the applicant: Customers can submit their SB379 – SolarAPP+ Applications online and are able to monitor the progress of their project status, with greater transparency and ease than through emails. The SB379 – SolarAPP+ application is then configured to automatically leverage the existing resident solar process which greatly simplifies customer experience, reducing the overall time it takes to obtain both permits.
- To the City: The SB379 – SolarAPP+ applications process automates the many of the residential solar submissions that qualify for SB379 through Accela. This is not only a

City of
SACRAMENTO
Information Technology

benefit to applicants, but it also streamlines the entire application, review, permitting for residential solar permits. The data entry required for CDD Building staff is minimal due to having most of the data entered by the applicant. The multiple email notifications in place also eliminate the need for business users to reach out to customers related to project updates in general. The project overall re-invents and streamlines how multiple work groups within the City of Sacramento will participate in the SB379 – SolarAPP+ applications workflow process.

- Leveraging reporting services in the application process to fulfill annual state reporting requirements as a click of a button.