



DATE: July 8, 2019

TO: Council Sustainability Committee

FROM: Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: Participation in the 2019 SunShares Program

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee reviews and comments on this report and directs staff to participate in the Bay Area SunShares program.

SUMMARY

SunShares is a collaborative solar and electric vehicle (EV) education and discount program which the City has participated in since 2016. The program is now expanding to also promote building electrification efforts. Staff is seeking the Committee's input regarding participation in this year's expanded program.

BACKGROUND

SunShares is a collaborative solar and electric vehicle (EV) education and discount program. The program aggregates the purchasing power of homeowners and potential customers for EVs to attract more competitive proposals, accelerate accomplishment of community goals, and reduce transaction costs. In 2015, the cities of Fremont, Piedmont, Walnut Creek, and Lafayette participated in the SunShares program, which was then administered by the Vote Solar Initiative and did not yet include an EV component. More than 600 residents signed up to learn more about residential solar, and over 850 kW of new residential solar contracts were signed during a three-month campaign. Hayward participated for the first time in 2016, when the SunShares program expanded to more cities and also started to include EVs. Also, in 2016, program administration was transitioned to the Business Council on Climate Change (BC3), which is a fiscally sponsored project of the 501(c)3 organization, Community Initiatives.

In 2018, outreach partners included major employers and more than fifty cities including the cities of Oakland, Fremont, Union City, San Leandro, Berkeley, Walnut Creek, Richmond, and Redwood City. In 2018, the six-month campaign resulted in more than 1,300 residents signed up to learn more about solar and more than 924 kW of new residential solar was installed. Hayward did not have any contracts signed in 2018, but, given other priorities, staff also did

not actively participate in outreach activities. More information about SunShares is available on their website¹.

The following General Plan policies related to solar and EVs support Hayward's participation in the SunShares program.

Policy NR-4.6 Renewable Energy – The City shall encourage and support the generation, transmission, use, and storage of locally-distributed renewable energy in order to promote energy independence, efficiency, and sustainability. The City shall consider various incentives to encourage the installation of renewable energy projects (i.e. reduced permit fees and permit streamlining).

Policy NR-2.11 Zero-Emission and Low-Emission Vehicle Advocacy – The City shall collaborate with regional, State, and Federal entities to promote the use of alternative fuels and increased vehicle fuel efficiency standards, and to advocate for higher fuel-economy standards, or contribute to regional and state marketing and outreach efforts.

DISCUSSION

Staff recommends that the City participate in the SunShares program again this year as it would help Hayward property owners investigate and purchase EVs and solar systems, to offset grid energy use and to reduce vehicle emissions. The program will launch on August 1, 2019 and run through November 2019. For 2019, the solar companies selected through a competitive process are PetersenDean, SkyTech Solar, and Solar Technologies. Pricing for this year's program has not yet been released, but it is expected to be similar to 2018 when the participating solar providers offered a discount of 15% off typical market pricing.

For 2019 BC3 is working to have several Bay Area Nissan dealerships, including Hayward Nissan, offer special discounts on the Leaf. At the request of BC3's partner cities, a new component being added in 2019 will be a focus on building electrification. BC3 will work closely with the participating solar providers to offer homeowners resources on the benefits of and the infrastructure needs for switching home heating, water heating, and cooking appliances from gas to electric.

In 2019, staff intends to promote the program widely. To participate in 2019, BC3 is requesting a letter of support wherein the City would commit to:

- Collaborate with BC3 and its program partners and to use our communication channels to reach Hayward community members.
- Provide BC3 with contact information of, and make introductions to, relevant City staff and community stakeholders who can reach City residents as a part of the programs' outreach strategy.
- Draft an outreach plan and conduct outreach to residents and employees to promote program availability using communication channels which may include email blasts,

¹ <http://www.bayareasunshares.org/>

utility bill inserts, neighborhood associations, social media outlets, newsletters, and posters. The City will report back to BC3 on the number of outreach contacts made.

BC3 will provide the City and community partners with formatted electronic files, webinars, and resources to conduct workshops.

Liability for the City – The procurement process documents issued by BC3 on behalf of the outreach partners and all contracts between SunShares and the selected solar firms specify that the outreach partners have no fiscal or legal liability. All contracts for solar installations are between the selected firms and individual homeowners. Staff will work with the City Attorney's office to include disclaimer language on outreach materials.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Community members who choose to participate in the SunShares program should see a lower price compared to the open market.

FISCAL IMPACT

Participation in SunShares would result in minimal financial impacts to the City. Outreach and advertising will be done by existing staff and will be by positions primarily funded by enterprise funds. The costs of solar or EVs will be borne by program participants.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

This agenda item does not directly relate to one of the Council's three Strategic Initiatives.

SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES

Energy: Electricity/natural gas/other fossil fuels.

SunShares facilitates solar photovoltaic installations and the purchase of electric vehicles – both of which reduce the community's reliance on fossil fuels.

Air: Air emissions of pollutants.

SunShares will promote the purchase of electric vehicles, which will reduce transportation-related emissions, including greenhouse gas emissions.

PUBLIC CONTACT

No public contacts have been made yet. If approved by the Committee, the program would be promoted as described in this report.

NEXT STEPS

Upon direction from the Committee, staff will send a letter to the Business Council on Climate Change (BC3) expressing Hayward's interest in participating in the program. Staff would then participate in collaborative efforts to market the program.

Prepared by: Erik Pearson, Environmental Services Manager

Recommended by: Alex Ameri, Director of Public Works

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. McAdoo', written in a cursive style.

Kelly McAdoo, City Manager