BPS NEWS: Portland receives Solar America Cities Special Projects award - October 9, 2009

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Portland receives Solar America Cities Special Projects award

Portland, Ore. – The U.S. Department of Energy announced today that Portland is one of 16 U.S. cities to receive a grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for Solar America Cities Special Projects. A total of $10 million was awarded to the 16 cities to address specific barriers to solar adoption in urban settings and support innovative approaches that can be widely replicated. Portland will receive $400,000 over the next two years to increase the number of residents in Portland that use solar energy to power their homes.

"Portland is on the forefront of making solar power a reality for all residents and businesses," said Mayor Sam Adams. "Our solar power initiatives, combined with energy efficiency efforts like the Clean Energy Works Portland program, are essential to our carbon reduction goals. With this grant from the U.S. Department of Energy, we can continue driving outreach, education and installation of solar power in Portland."

The two year grant will facilitate a continued partnership with U.S. DOE and the City of Portland to execute the Neighborhood Solar Initiative — a complementary suite of neighborhood-focused activities and programs designed to lower the barriers to solar installations for residents. The initiative builds on the wealth of social capital and civic infrastructure in Portland's nationally recognized neighborhood system and couples it with powerful new tools for financing solar energy systems emerging in Oregon.

"The Department of Energy recognizes the important role of local governments in overcoming barriers to widespread solar energy use," said JoAnn Milliken, Solar Program Manager, U.S. Department of Energy. "Through these special projects, Solar America Cities will develop innovative ways of integrating solar energy into their communities, and those strategies can then be replicated across the nation."

The Neighborhood Solar Initiative leverages a broad collaboration of public and private partners, including Energy Trust of Oregon, Oregon Department of Energy, Solar Oregon, Portland General Electric and reputable private sector solar project developers, to accelerate the transformation of the solar market in Portland. By providing compelling financing options and delivering the program through the proven channels of Portland's neighborhood institutions, the Neighborhood Solar Initiative will produce results that are readily replicable in communities throughout the United States.

"It certainly is an appropriate recognition for the work the City of Portland has done to increase solar awareness and to remove barriers to solar installations in Portland," said Kathy Bash, Solar Oregon Board Member. "We see benefits at so many levels in having neighbors band together to purchase solar and are excited about the prospects for taking this model to communities across the state."

Energy Trust Residential Solar Project Manager Lizzie Rubado acknowledged, "Portland is a local and national leader in innovative clean energy strategies. Energy Trust is looking forward to working with the City in this latest effort to make solar a viable solution for all Oregonians."

The Neighborhood Solar Initiative aims to achieve an additional 600 kilowatts of installed photovoltaic capacity in the residential sector by the end of 2011, which will bring the total installed residential capacity in Portland to 1 MW.

For more information about the Solar America Cities Special Projects Awards, visit

www.solaramericacities.energy.gov/SpecialProjects.aspx.

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