

Government

## Case Study: City of Santa Barbara

**CHALLENGE** Installing the largest solar array possible given the amount of space available; Responding to a looming proof-of-project milestone with the California Solar Initiative (CSI) in time to prevent losing the reservation

**SOLUTION** SurePath™ Solar power purchase agreement with Tioga Energy

- BENEFITS**
- Relieves the City of financial and administrative burdens; *little or no impact on the City's facility department and staff.* Enables the City to take advantage of tax incentives and rebates not normally available to government entities
  - Provides a hedge against rising electric costs; *locks in long-term electricity rates*
  - Supports the City's long-term commitment to renewable energy and the wellbeing of the environment

**HIGHLIGHTS** Tioga provided the lowest bid but also provided the largest generation capacity, which was a mandate from the City Council

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### PROJECT SUMMARY

Santa Barbara, on the central coast of California, is a city of 400,000. As early as 2007 it was recognized as a national leader in the green building movement and a proponent of sustainability, having already completed a 15 kW solar panel installation on a fire station.

With the success of its first venture into solar power, the City Council directed the Facilities department to pursue renewable energy on a much larger scale. The City favored a power purchase agreement (PPA) in which the City would pay a predictable rate for energy generated by photovoltaic panels over the 20-year life of the contract, with no upfront capital expense or ongoing maintenance responsibilities. The City had filed for a rebate reservation with the California Solar Initiative (CSI) and needed to move quickly to issue a Request for Proposal, evaluate responses, and select a PPA provider. Tioga worked closely with the City during the final stages of the bidding process and completed the solar system within three months of signing the agreement.

***"Tioga submitted a lower bid, but more importantly, they offered the largest generation capacity, which was a mandate from our City Council. And they demonstrated that they knew what they were doing."***

– Bill Ferguson, Water Resources Supervisor and driver of the selection process

As the PPA provider, Tioga retains ownership and management responsibility for the solar electric system. The PPA structure shields the City of Santa Barbara from all the complexities associated with financing, construction and ongoing operation, allowing City staff to focus on their other duties.



### Project Summary

**LOCATION**

City of Santa Barbara  
Public Works  
Santa Barbara, CA

**EPC PARTNER**

El Solutions  
San Rafael, CA

**INSTALLATION TYPE**

Roof-mounted tilt arrays

**SYSTEM SIZE**

384 kW DC

**SOLAR ARRAY**

1,830 Suntech 210 PV panels

**ONLINE DATE**

December 2008

**FIRST YEAR POWER GENERATION**

540,000 kWh

**ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS**

Annual CO2 reduction -  
130 tons not released; equivalent to  
283,000 vehicle miles not traveled

**TIOGA ENERGY** enables commercial, government and non-profit organizations to reduce energy costs while lowering carbon emissions. Through its SurePath™ Solar power purchase agreement (PPA), Tioga owns and operates renewable energy systems that provide organizations a hedge against energy price volatility and accelerate their access to clean energy without any capital outlay.