



NATIONALLY DISTINGUISHED. **LOCALLY POWERED.**



CATEE
2016

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What is SolSmart?



DESIGNATION

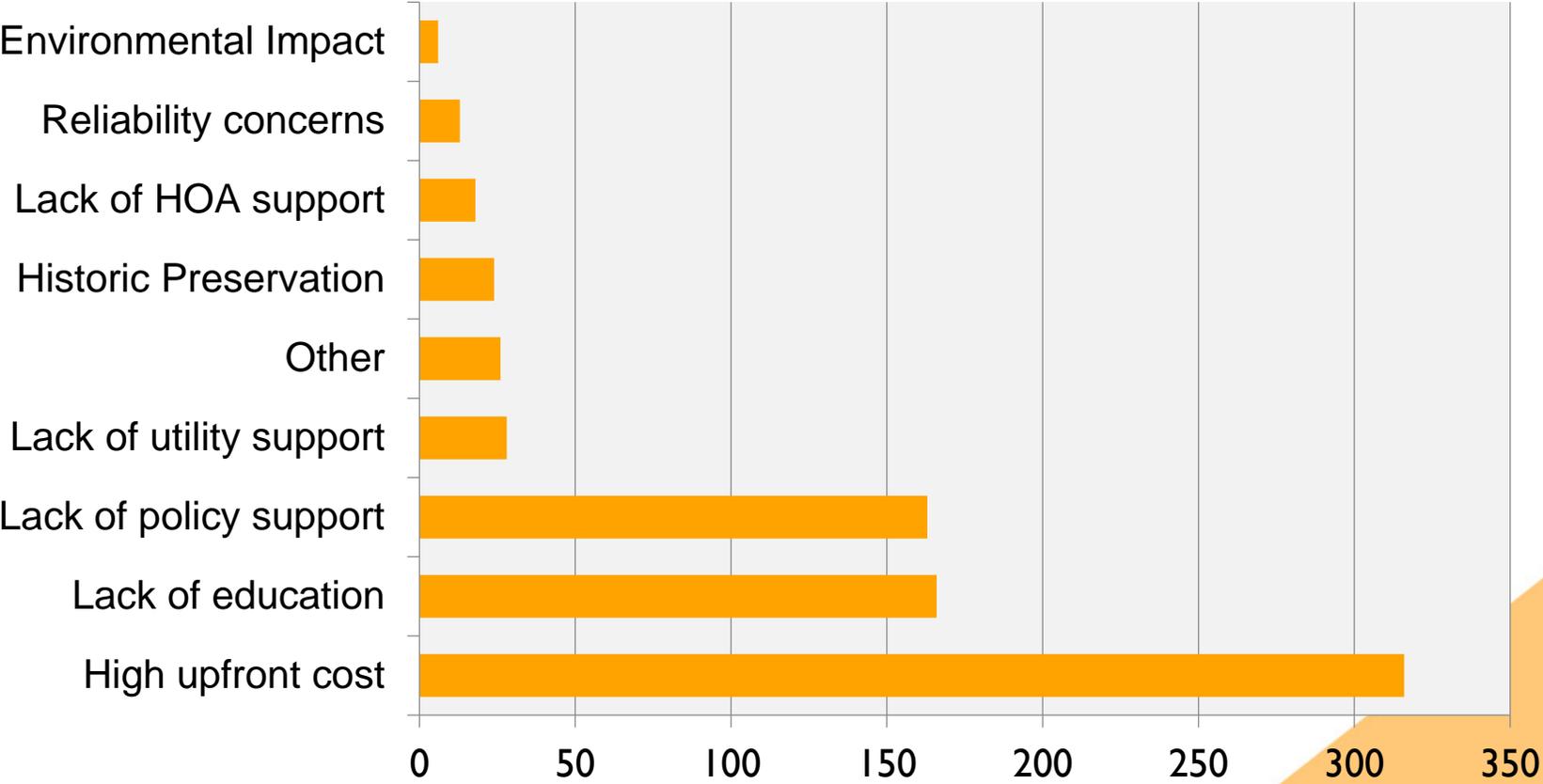
- Three-tiered designation program
- Core pre-requisites and options for pathways to success
- Annual awards program and special awards available



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Communities seeking designation can receive technical assistance to help achieve desired tier
- All SolSmart TA is program-funded.

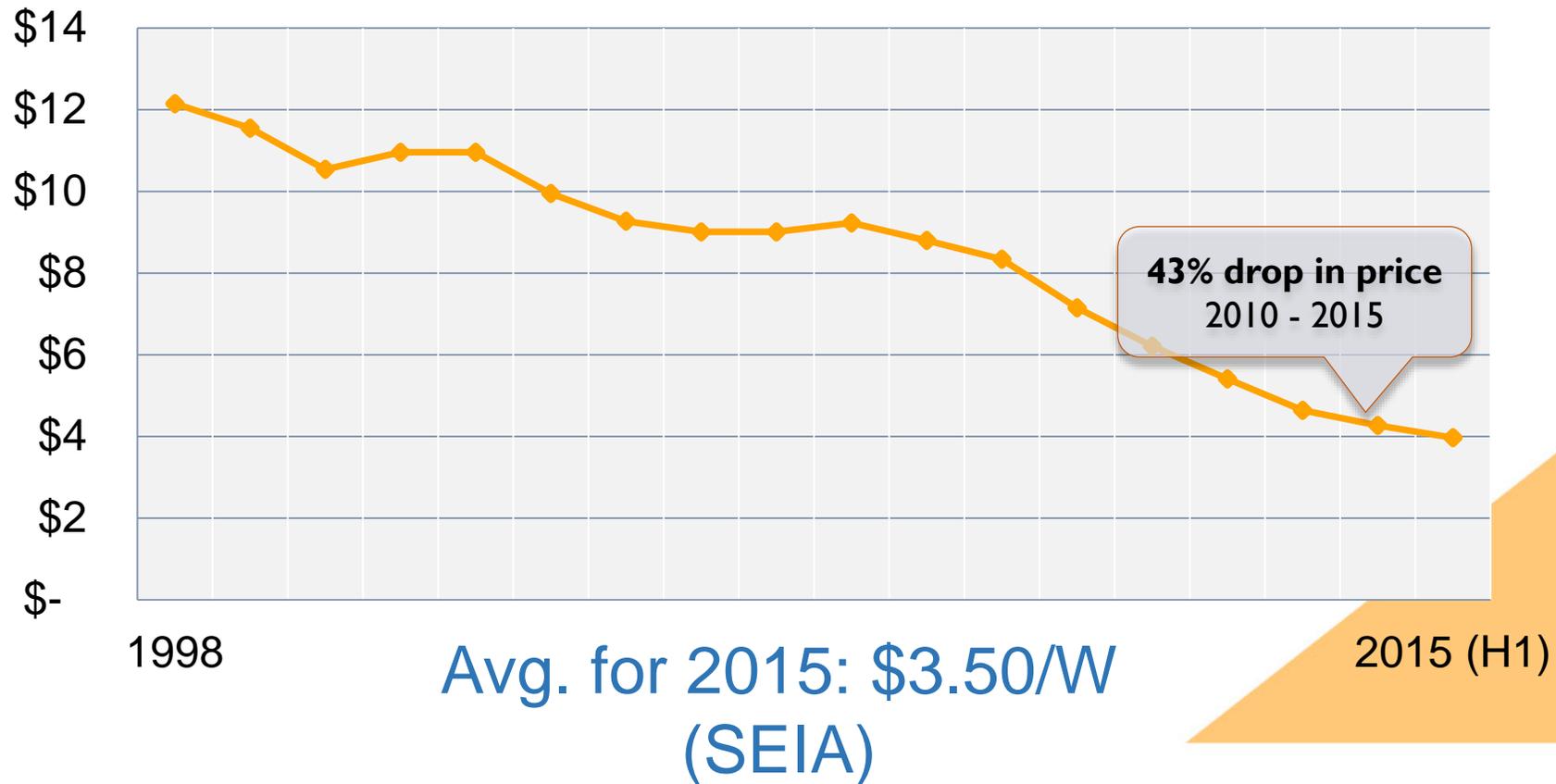
Common Barriers to Solar



The Cost of Solar PV



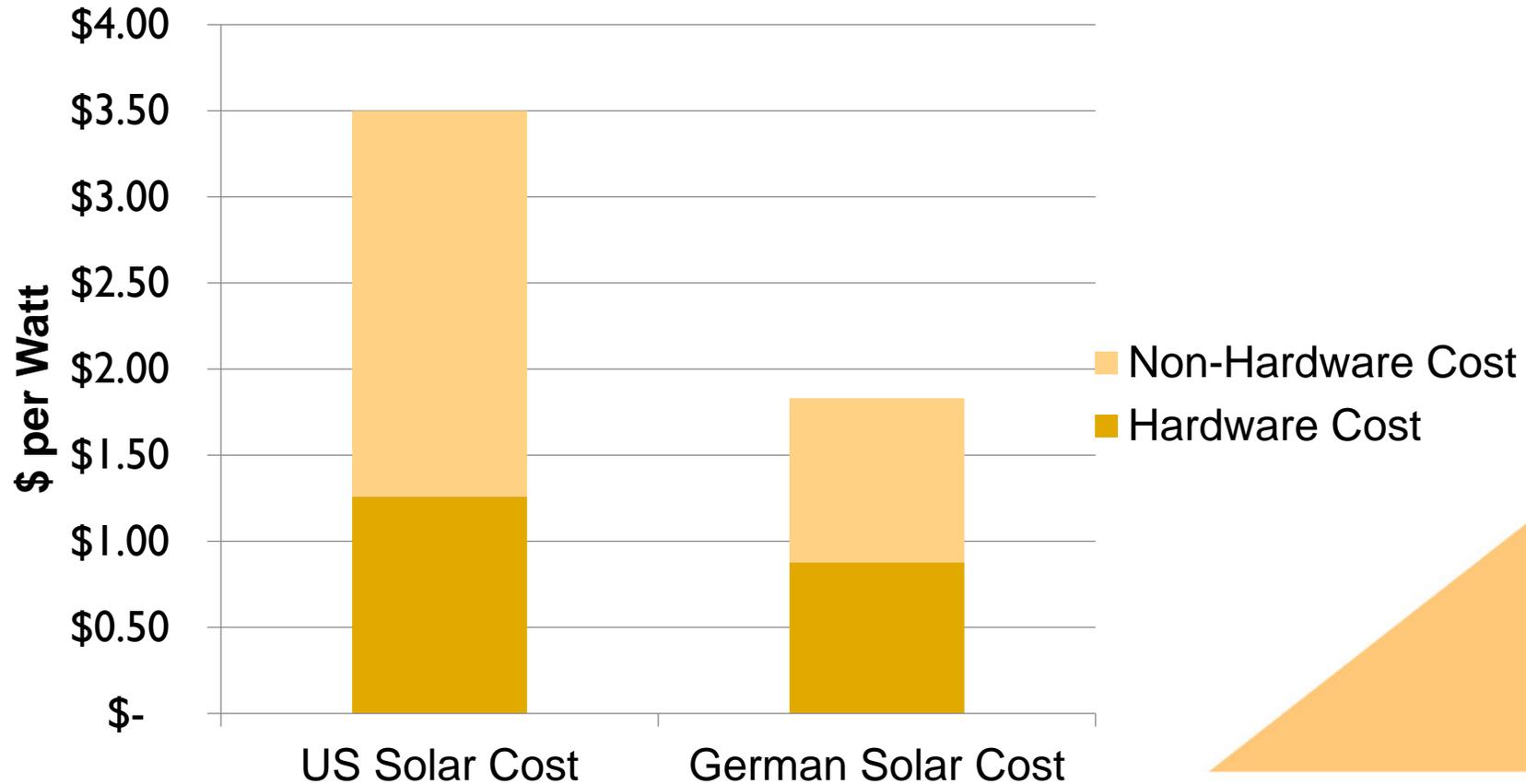
US Average Installed Cost for Residential PV



The Cost of Solar in the US



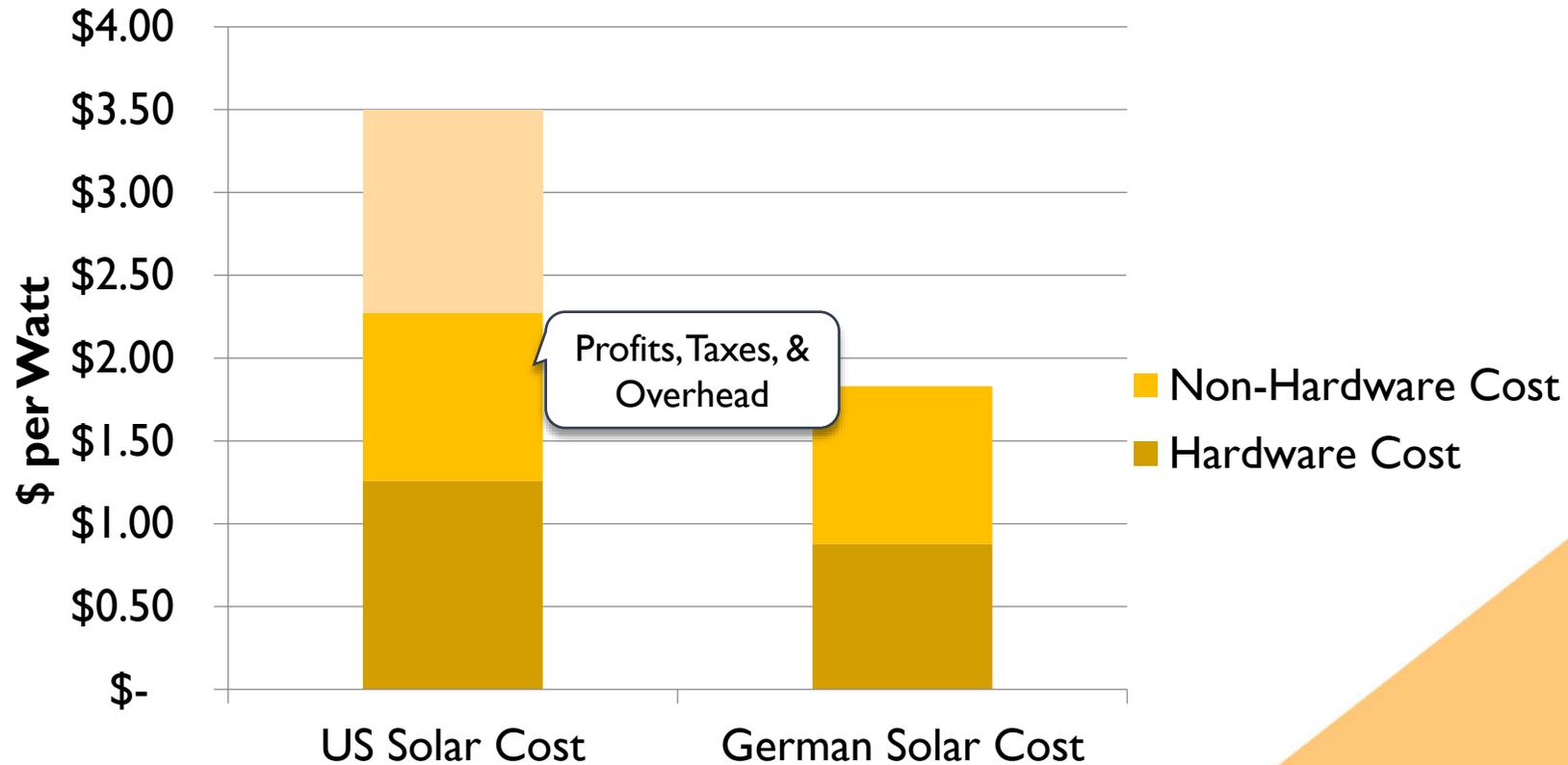
Comparison of US and German Solar Costs



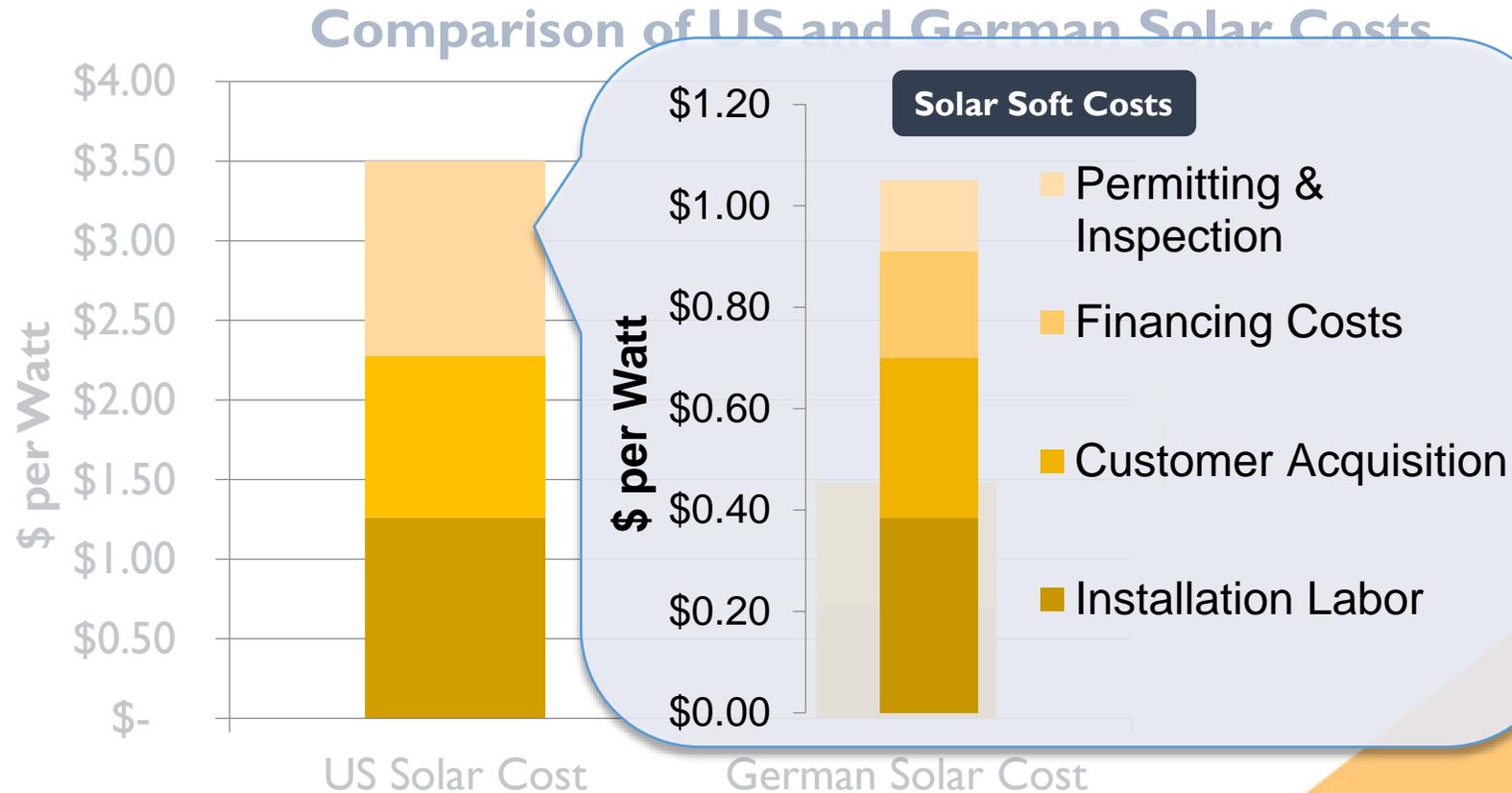
The Cost of Solar in the US



Comparison of US and German Solar Costs



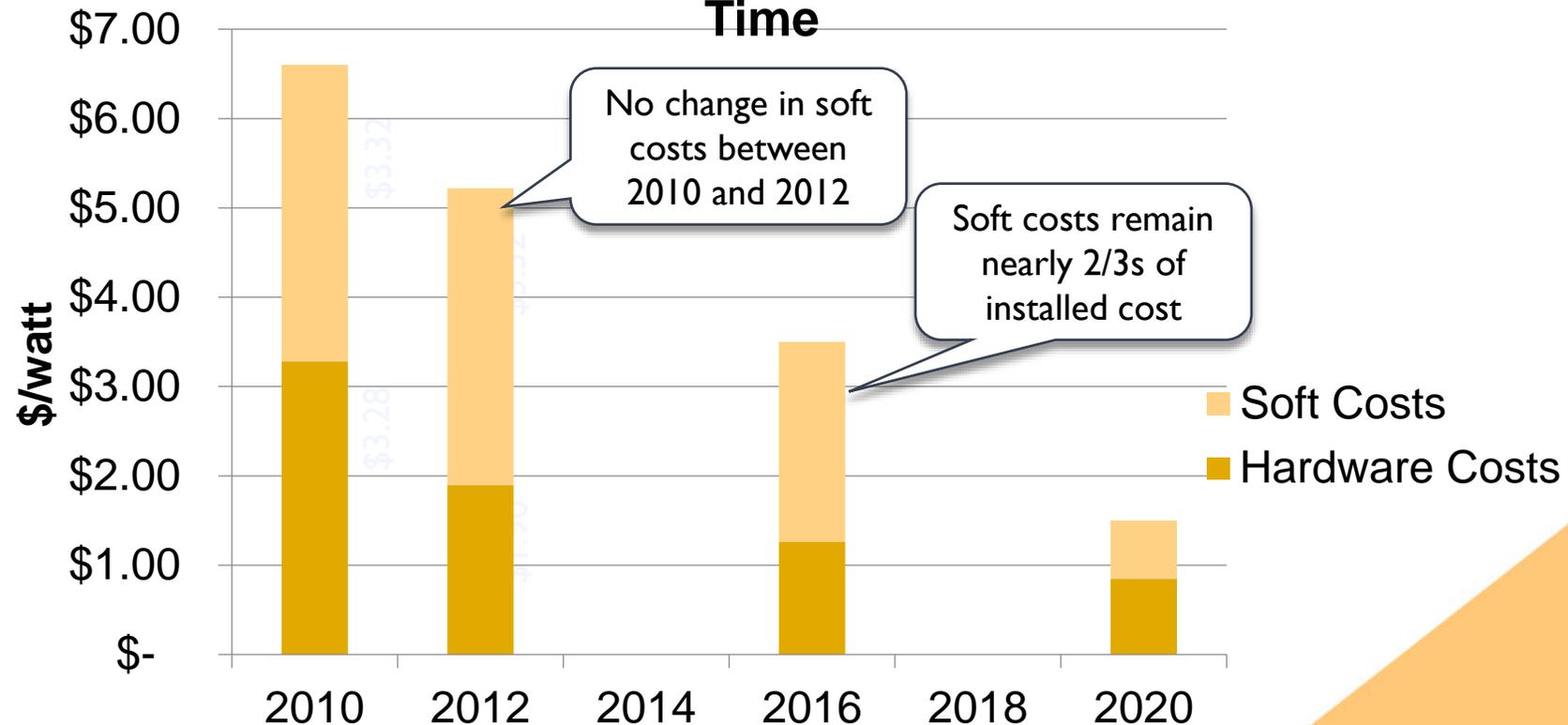
The Cost of Solar in the US



The Cost of Solar in the US

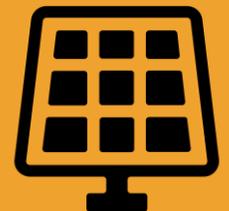


Change in Soft Costs and Hardware Costs Over Time



Soft Cost Takeaways

1. Local governments **can impact solar pricing**
2. Soft costs **slow solar market growth**
3. There is **substantial room for improvement**



Benefits of Reducing Soft Costs



Reduced Installation Costs = **Increased Return on Investment** for System Owners



Streamlined processes can deliver a **time and cost savings** for local government staff



Opening your community for solar business can have **positive impacts on jobs and economic development.**



Reducing red-tape for solar can result in **improved business prospects for solar companies.**

SolSmart Benefits



- Recognition on website (map/leaderboards)
- Press opportunities (events/press releases)
- Plaques (modules for first 35)
- Awards for outstanding achievement
- No-cost technical assistance



SolSmart Designation Structure



- Address Bronze prerequisites
 - Solar statement
 - Permitting checklist
 - Zoning barrier review
- Earn 20 points in the Permitting category
- Earn 20 points in the Planning, Zoning, & Development Regulations category
- Earn 20 total points across “Special Focus” categories



- Earn SolSmart Bronze
- Address Silver prerequisites
 - Solar by-right in all major zones
 - Cross-train inspection and permitting staff
- Earn 100 total points from actions taken across any combination of categories



- Address Gold prerequisites
 - PV permitting turnaround for small systems ≤ 3 days
- Earn 200 total points from actions taken across any combination of categories

Special Awards:
Communities **that earn 60%+ of the points in a given category** are eligible for special recognition.

No-Cost Technical Assistance



- All communities pursuing SolSmart designation are **eligible for no-cost technical assistance** from national experts.
- On average, a community can expect **100 hours** of technical assistance.
- Technical assistance is designed to **help a community achieve the requirements for designation.**
- TA may also be available to help designated communities achieve higher levels of designation.



Case Study: Brownsville, TX



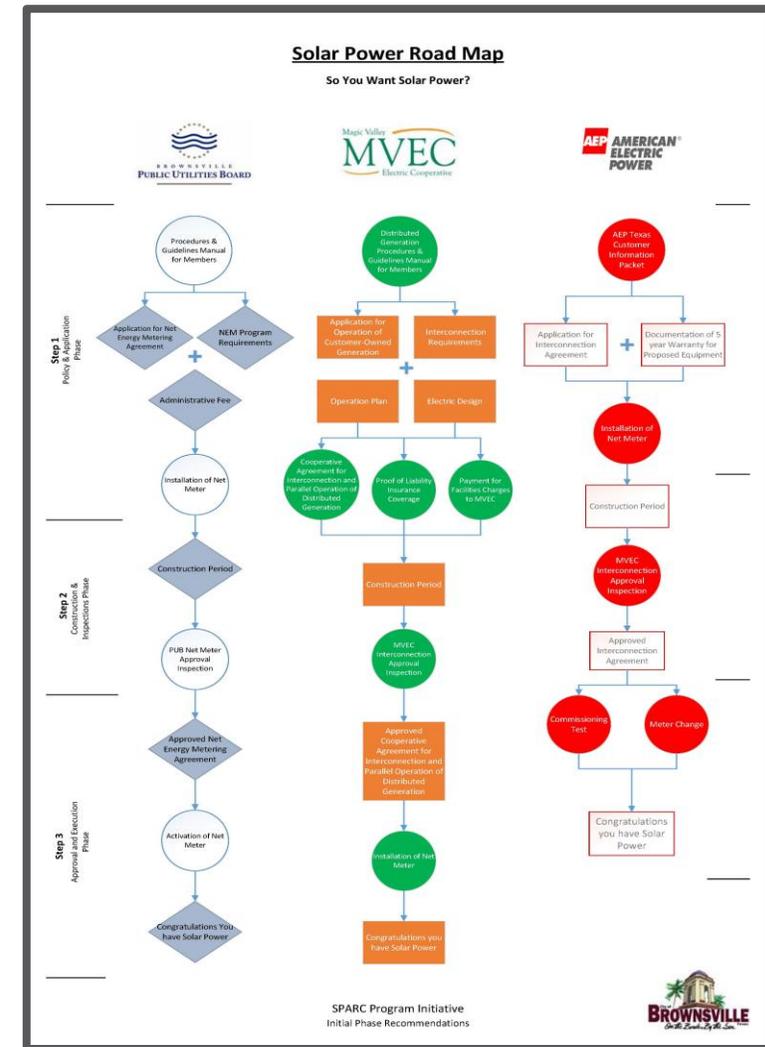
- Brownsville, TX had little background in solar.
- SolSmart helped them work with their three utility providers to determine the process to install solar.
- Brownsville also created a webpage dedicated to SolSmart (formerly called SPARC).

The screenshot shows the City of Brownsville website with a search bar at the top. The main content area features the SPARC program information:

SPARC
Earn visibility as a solar leader from the U.S. Department of Energy.
 The new Solar Powering America by Recognizing Communities (SPARC) program is coming soon! SPARC will establish a national recognition and a no-cost technical assistance program for local governments — driving greater solar deployment and making it possible for even more American homes and businesses to access affordable and renewable solar energy to meet their electricity needs. The SPARC designation, coupled with robust and agile technical assistance, will spur communities across the country to earn recognition for achievements that distinguish them from their peers as they become more solar-friendly, and in doing so, ignite local solar markets while establishing consistency in solar practices across the country. SPARC supports the goals of the SunShot Initiative to make it faster, cheaper, and easier to go solar.
Take Action! Visit www.gosparc.org for more information.

The City of Brownsville has joined the SPARC Early Adopter Campaign.
 As the designation criteria are finalized, a team of national solar experts has begun providing communities with technical assistance in critical soft cost areas - planning and zoning, permitting and inspection, and financing options - through the "Early Adopter" campaign. This exclusive campaign is reserved for the first 30 communities that 1) commit to addressing solar soft costs by working with our solar experts and 2) are on track to implementing solar best practices by March 31, 2016. The Early Adopter status is an additional distinction for early movers within the SPARC designation process. While all SPARC designees will be recognized for their efforts to foster the growth of solar in their communities, only this elite group of "Early Adopter" communities will receive the distinction of being the first to enter the program.

Navigation links at the bottom include: Home, City Government, Departments (A-Z), Business in Brownsville, Visiting Brownsville, Living in Brownsville, 546-HELP, Media, City Awards. A sidebar contains links for Community Retail Dashboard, Agendas and Minutes, Commission Videos, Employment Opportunities, West Nile Virus Information, City Forms, 2016 Adopted Budget, Board Appointment Policy, Apply for a Board Position, Volunteer Opportunities, Bid Notices, City Code of Ordinances, Street Paving Report, COB GIS Map, and Related Links (Access Brownsville App, Access Brownsville App (Android), Online Police Reports, BPUB Online Bill Pay, Pay Tickets Online, City Employee Email, Eating Well in Brownsville, Brownsville's Oppost Lower, Report a Pothole on Texas State Highways).



Process



Apply for SolSmart

Referral or interest in SolSmart

Complete Online Intake Form

Qualify for Technical Assistance

Communities matched with technical assistance

Priority given to communities which do not qualify for designation

Request Advisor

6-months funded staff position for solar support.

Applications in Fall of 2016 and 2017



SolSmart.Org



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