

Mt. Diablo USD News Update

Where Kids Come First

Shining the Light on Solar

As the District embarks on an ambitious and exciting solar program, we are committed to sharing the process with the community. We are grateful for the community's support for Measure C, the facilities bond that will make the solar alternative a reality in our District, and we fully intend to keep you apprised of decisions and progress as this project unfolds.

The Triple Bottom Line -- The Mt. Diablo Unified School District's Solar Plan will allow the District to meet three key goals at once: achieve millions in savings, protect the environment and model an excellent "green" program for students.

Project Specifics

- District-wide solar rollout, including all schools and District offices
- Annual electricity savings projected to be approximately \$3 million
- Additional \$2 million per year for the first five years from the California Solar Initiative (CSI) Program
- From concept to completion, a three-phase project
- All action and progress will be posted online, allowing the community to follow the process

Action Plan and Timeline

In order to select the best vendor for this important project, we've established a rigorous selection process. Objectives are to: (1) conduct a thorough, public vetting of the vendors and a careful examination of their qualifications; (2) ensure all vendors are reviewed by experts in the critical areas of finance, technical and legal, and (3) maximize District return on this public investment project.

Phase I. Identify and Secure Project Bids

1. August 4, 2010 -- Issued a Request for Proposal. The RFP can be viewed at: <http://169.199.90.240/rfp.html>.
2. August 11, 12, 13, 16 and 17, 2010 -- Provided walk-thru at each site. A calendar of site visits is available at the above website.
3. August 23, 2010 -- Questions raised during walk-thru and corresponding answers were posted to the website.
4. Responses to the RFP were due at noon Thursday, September 2. The following four firms submitted responses to the RFP: Roebbelen, SolarCity, SUNPOWER, Vanir/Parsons.

Phase II. Vetting the Options

1. August 27, 2010 – Confirm a panel of solar experts in the areas of technical/engineering, project financing, and legal advice to work with Pete Pedersen (Assistant Superintendent Administrative Services), Greg Rolen (General Counsel), and the Measure C Oversight Committee members to review the responses to the RFP. None of the outside experts or Measure C Oversight Committee members are affiliated with any of the firms responding to the RFP.

Our goal is to ensure that a thoroughly vetted recommendation is made to the Board. This committee cannot approve any contract for the proposed solar project but will make a recommendation to the Board. The Board, as the elected representatives of the community, has the sole authority to approve the contract for the solar project.

Information on the panel members is attached below.

2. September 7, 2010 – Selection of firms to interview

The first step in the review of the solar project will begin. Pete Pedersen will work with the outside experts to review all proposals and select the firms to be interviewed. The panel will also review the proposed timeline to determine schedule feasibility. Any changes to the below timeline will be posted on the District's website.

3. September 9, 2010 – Interview selected vendors

Vendor interviews will be conducted by a panel that includes three members of the Measure C Oversight Committee, outside solar experts, Pete Pedersen, and Greg Rolen.

4. September 16, 2010 – Board Study Session, Dent Center 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Panel members will present recommendations and rationale to board members in a study session. The intention is to provide full information and allow for necessary community input and discussion before taking this information to a formal board meeting.

5. September 28, 2010 – Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting Dent Center 7:30 p.m.

Panel will conduct any additional research and fact finding in order to finalize a recommendation to the Board of Education. Recommendation to include a complete timeline on installation, with consideration to school schedules.

6. October 12, 2010 – Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting, Dent Center 7:30 p.m.

Present to the Board of Education a finalized contract for approval.

My Promise

It is clear that the state budget crisis is not improving. Further, there is absolutely no indication that the budget cuts to education will be returned any time soon, if at all. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the District leadership team to find savings in all possible areas.

My goal as Superintendent on this project has always been to bring a high-quality, financially responsible solar program to the District. The millions of dollars in savings from the solar project will be re-directed to return and maintain programs and services for students.

I know there have been numerous articles in the local paper about discussions between me and solar vendors. I apologize to this community for any misunderstanding or misperception my actions may have caused. I am committed to keep every step of this solar project transparent and accessible to the public.

In order to ensure transparency, we will post all meetings and decisions on the District's website. Additionally, I have personally extended an invitation to our local news media, including the Contra Costa Times, to observe and cover the solar interview process and its roll out.

My hope is that this project will be a celebrated success throughout the community and our state.

Solar Expert Panel

Russell H. Driver

Mr. Driver is a Senior Program Manager with Newcomb Anderson McCormick, Inc. (NAM), Mr. Driver has over 16 years of experience implementing comprehensive business initiatives and advanced technology projects in complex institutional environments, including statewide solar and energy efficiency programs and projects for Chico USD and Los Angeles USD, and the State of Hawaii DOT. Mr. Driver holds a Master's Degree in Urban Planning from the University of California Los Angeles and a B.A. in Urban Studies from Stanford University. Mr. Driver will lead our contract helping to facilitate and manage the California Solar Initiative evaluation program.

Kathleen J. McKee

Ms. McKee is a partner at Fagan, Friedman & Fulfroost LLP, Ms. McKee is a member of the Green Technology Advisory Board. A recognized leader in energy conservation legal matters, specifically solar, Ms. McKee helped numerous K-12 school districts implement solar projects, including the Irvine Unified School District and Antelope Valley Joint Union School District. Currently, she is working with districts that are exploring solar farms. Ms. McKee began her career as a high school English teacher, which balances her legal acumen with deference for public education.

Bruce Kerns

Mr. Kerns is Managing Director in the Public Finance Department of Stone & Youngberg, an investment banking firm whose clients are school districts, cities, and other public agencies issuing municipal bonds to fund public projects. Mr. Kerns specializes in capital financings for California public school districts, and has worked on numerous renewable energy projects using

financing techniques such as general obligation bonds, certificates of participation, Clean Renewable Energy Bonds (“CREBs”), and Qualified School Construction Bonds (“QSCBs”). His recent experience with solar projects includes Morgan Hill Unified School District, San Jose Unified School District, Santee School District, San Benito High School District, and San Ramon Valley Unified School District. Mr. Kerns has a B.A. degree from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and a Master’s Degree in city and regional planning from the University of California, Berkeley.

Anna Van Degna

Ms. Van Degna is Vice President in the Public Finance Department of Stone & Youngberg. Ms. Van Degna specializes in the financing of renewable energy and energy efficiency projects for California public agencies, including the city of Brea, Lodi Unified School District, San Ramon Valley Unified School District, and Santee School District. Prior to joining Stone & Youngberg, Ms. Van Degna provided investment banking services for communications service providers and was a corporate treasury analyst for a U.S.-based commercial bank. Ms. Van Degna is a graduate of Cornell University and holds a B.S. in hospitality administration.

Measure C Bond Oversight Committee Members serving on the interview committee

John Parker

Mr. Parker is a Project Manager for Robert L. Brown Construction, Inc. Both of his children attended and graduated from MDUSD schools. He has been an active member of the Parent Advisory Committee, Budget Advisory Committee, and other district committees. He was also an original member of the 2002 Measure C Oversight Committee.

Marc Willis

Mr. Willis is a retired electrician from the City of Concord. Mr. Willis’s children attended MDUSD schools. He is an original member of the Measure A Oversight Committee and the 2002 Measure C Oversight Committee.

Rick Callaway

Mr. Callaway has been an active parent and extremely active in MDUSD matters. Additionally, he has worked in the leadership core of the local YMCA. He was pivotal in the foundation of the Northgate High School Community Pride Foundation. An insurance broker for West Callaway Stotka, Inc., he is well versed with commercial insurance. He is an original member of the 2002 Measure C Oversight Committee and has served as Chairperson.