

CDBG Success Story

Orchard Arms Solar Carports

Los Angeles County, CA

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LACDA

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Total Cost \$1,900,000

CDBG, Capital Fund

And SOMAH Rebates

Problem or need addressed: One of the main challenges for public housing residents on a fixed income is the increase in all utility costs such as electricity, gas, and water. The LACDA also has the need to become a more sustainable agency and aid in climate reform. The LACDA is proud to aid in efforts to mitigate environmental problems and its carbon footprint through its ongoing effort to operate our public housing sites and headquarters in an environmentally friendly manner.

Solution: The Orchard Arms Solar Project, sets the tone for implementing sustainable and energy efficient sources. In return, our contribution plays a significant role in tackling the environmental issues that harm our communities. The LACDA and utility companies have formed a partnership to market all utility company incentive programs at each housing development. For example, the common area measures that have been installed at no cost to LACDA or residents are water heater replacements, interior and exterior lighting, and weatherization in the units. The newest program to the LACDA was the Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH) grant which focused on reducing resident utility cost as part of the eligibility requirements. The LACDA jumped at the opportunity to assist residents as well as the commitment of including additional energy efficiency capital improvements for its housing stock.

Results: The Orchard Arms Solar Project proved that the agency could tackle projects that require meticulous planning and critical collaboration from various parties. A solar project of this size and magnitude is the first of its kind for the LACDA's public housing portfolio. With the Project now complete, the PV system will generate 453,843 KWH of energy annually. The energy that is generated from the system will offset 31% of the common area and 82% of the residential unit electricity usage. With this Project, we are seeing a savings of 61% of total offset of the electricity supplied by the utility company. Orchard Arms residents will directly benefit from the credits that are applied to their monthly utility bill – roughly between 30-40% depending on the amount of energy that is generated and how much is used. The construction itself provides an added value to the Orchard Arms residents. The carports holding up the solar technology provide shade to residents and keep their vehicles safe from the rain and sun.

