

SUCCESS STORY

Rancho Vista Celebrates Solar Installation Through SOMAH Program



UNITS

125

SYSTEM SIZE

570.9 kW DC / 521.527 kW CEC-AC

INCENTIVE

\$1,659,965.56

ESTIMATED ANNUAL PRODUCTION

861,372 kWh

SOLAR CREDIT ALLOCATION

Tenant: 95.38%;

Common: 4.62%

TERRITORY

SCE

LOCATION

**Ontario, San Bernardino County,
CA**

YEAR BUILT

1984

ESTIMATED SAVINGS

\$130/month

In April 2026, Rancho Vista Townhomes in Ontario, California, celebrated a 521-kilowatt solar installation incentivized through the SOMAH Program.

Members of the SOMAH Program Administrator (PA) team gathered with solar contractor [BPI](#), property manager [Greystar](#), property owner [Convenient Holdings](#), and a representative from the SOMAH Advisory Council for a ribbon-cutting ceremony recognizing the project's completion.

The system will provide long-term energy savings to the 125 households at Rancho Vista, with more than 95% of the project's solar credits allocated directly to tenants and under 5% offsetting common area energy use. With this tenant/common-area split, the SOMAH incentive amount totaled \$1,659,965.

The project reflects a continued commitment by Convenient Holdings and BPI to expanding equitable access to solar energy while helping reduce utility costs for affordable housing residents. With the system generating approximately 548 kWh per unit per month, each household is expected to have an estimated savings of \$130 per month on their utility bill.

Solar contractor BPI initiated this project as one of multiple projects it has enrolled in SOMAH. Over time, the company has developed expertise around program requirements, tenant benefit allocations, utility coordination, billing support and other elements of SOMAH project implementation.

A Contractor's Commitment to SOMAH Success

The Rancho Vista project reflects BPI's broader SOMAH approach and shows how projects can move through the program without relying on the federal [Investment Tax Credit \(ITC\) which can no longer be claimed after the 2026 deadline](#). BPI can achieve this by combining SOMAH incentives with carefully structured financing options tailored to each client's financial needs and goals.

BPI's President Barend Venter stressed the importance of in-house wrap-around services and construction financing when working with affordable housing property owners. Many property owners that struggle with the upfront investment of roof repairs and solar installation costs benefit from contractors that can provide their own construction financing and support to guide property owners through each phase of the SOMAH project and beyond to the solar system's operation and maintenance.

After the phase out of federal ITC, it's likely more SOMAH projects entering the pipeline will be host-customer owned systems rather than third-party owned systems or power purchase agreements. In this new landscape, contractors will need to build buy-in from property owners and managers and communicate the value of a solar investment on the property.

Their turnkey approach requires deep expertise and careful coordination. As Venter explains, experience has been critical to successfully moving projects from application through operation:

"The challenge is applying SOMAH and getting projects deployed. We've done enough of these projects that it's like riding a bike now. It's not easy, but we're comfortable with the process and know how to make it work."

Commitment Beyond Installation

Beyond the solar credits shown on utility bills, the ultimate measure of success is the value delivered directly to residents. More than simply installing solar panels, the company works with property owners and managers to ensure tenant benefits are visible and understandable.

Following the ribbon cutting, the SOMAH PA Tenant Engagement team hosted a resident-focused open house. Throughout the morning, residents stopped by to enjoy coffee and donuts, learn more about SOMAH and ask questions through one-on-one conversations with PA staff. Residents received a takeaway toolkit of educational resources, including SCE bill samples showing solar credits and children's activity pages illustrating how solar works. On-site property management also participated in the event to help residents become more familiar with the new solar system and the SOMAH Program.

BPI's leadership emphasizes the importance of building buy-in among multifamily housing stakeholders by keeping property owners, managers and residents informed about the solar installation, its performance, and the value it brings to their community.

"We don't just tell residents they're receiving solar benefits," Venter explained. "We show them the savings on their utility bills so they can see the impact month after month."



Key Takeaways from the Rancho Vista Project

The Rancho Vista project highlights several lessons for affordable housing owners considering participation in the SOMAH Program:

- **SOMAH can create substantial long-term value for residents.** Solar installations continue generating savings for decades after construction is complete.
- **Tenant education is essential.** Direct outreach and ongoing engagement help residents understand how solar benefits are reflected on their utility bills.
- **Successful projects require more than solar construction.** Coordination among contractors, property owners, utilities, and residents is critical throughout the process.
- **Projects can succeed without the ITC.** Rancho Vista demonstrates that affordable housing properties can leverage SOMAH incentives with other financial options to realize meaningful tenant benefits even without the federal tax credit.
- **Property owners can realize additional value.** Beyond tenant savings, owners can benefit from reduced utility-related expenses and long-term asset improvements when systems are owned by the property owner.

As Venter noted, investments made through SOMAH continue generating value long after installation:

"Each dollar spent on a solar system creates years and years of value. It's a very effective way of deploying resources to help low-income residents reduce energy costs while expanding access to clean power."

— Barend Venter, President, BPi



As more SOMAH projects reach interconnection and operation across California, milestones like Rancho Vista's ribbon-cutting ceremony and resident open house demonstrate how collaboration among contractors, property owners, community partners, and residents can ensure the benefits of solar power reach the communities that need them most.



The **Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing** (SOMAH) Program provides financial incentives for installing photovoltaic solar energy systems and delivers clean power and energy bill credits to residents.

To find out how to bring solar to your community, visit CalSOMAH.org
858-244-1177 ext. 5 | contact@CalSOMAH.org