

BUSINESS

The plan: A rooftop solar project that can power 5,000 homes -- and 500 L.A. jobs



A large-scale solar panel project at Warehouses No. 9 and 10 at the Port of Los Angeles in San Pedro on Feb. 24. (Luis Sinco / Los Angeles Times)



By **Ivan Penn** · Contact Reporter

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A Los Angeles developer announced plans Friday to build the nation's largest rooftop solar array that supplies electricity directly into a city's power grid.

The project by developer PermaCity includes a 16.4-megawatt solar system -- enough to power 5,000 L.A. homes -- that the company will install on 2 million square feet of space on Westmont Drive buildings.

The power from the system, which is expected to be completed by year's end, will feed directly into the Department of Water and Power's grid through what is known as a feed-in tariff, or FiT, program. The

project is expected to create 500 local jobs.

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In addition, the project is expected to provide up to \$400,000 in annual energy savings.

PermaCity announced the project during the Los Angeles Business Council's Sustainability Summit at the Getty Center.

"We are leading the region and the nation with FiT," said Mary Leslie, president of the L.A. Business Council. "We have fought hard for local solar programs."

Tres Reid of CBRE, which represented the owner of the Westmont buildings, said several such proposals have been made over the years but the PermaCity plan offered the greatest benefit for the community.

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"The benefits are so compelling that there was no question it was a win-win," Reid said in a statement. "It provides a great incentive for building owners while creating jobs and pumping clean energy into the grid at the same time."

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