



VILLAGE OF MOUNT HOREB

E. Main Street

Mount Horeb, WI 53572

Phone: (608) 437-6884 Fax: (608) 437-3190

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SUSTAINABILITY & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, July 25, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Municipal Building Board Room

138 E. Main Street

Mount Horeb, WI

- 1) Call to order
 - a. Roll Call
- 2) Agenda Items
 - a. Consideration of June 27, 2023 Meeting Minutes
 - b. Discussion: Wisconsin Travel Green Program
 - c. Planning for Solar 101 Event and Article
 - d. Solsmart Update
 - e. Dane County Rain Barrel Program
- 3) Meeting adjournment.

UPON REASONABLE NOTICE, EFFORTS WILL BE MADE TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEEDS OF DISABLED INDIVIDUALS THROUGH APPROPRIATE AIDS AND SERVICES. FOR INFORMATION OR TO REQUEST THIS SERVICE, CONTACT ALYSSA GAFFNEY, CLERK, AT 138 E MAIN STREET, MOUNT HOREB, WI (608) 437-9404.



AGENDA ITEM REPORT

MEETING DATE

July 25, 2023

PREPARED BY**AGENDA ITEM # 2.a**

Consideration of June 27, 2023 Meeting Minutes

BACKGROUND**RECOMMENDATION****ATTACHMENTS**

1. SNR Minutes 062723



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SUSTAINABILITY & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, June 27, 2023 at 7:00 PM

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

- 1) Call to order
Chair White called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present were White, Saltes, Butosov, Gottwald and Grabe. Absent were Gauger, Fendrick and Beheler.
- 2) Agenda Items
 - a. Consideration of May 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes
Motion by Saltes, second by Butosov to approve the May 23, 2023 meeting. Motion carried.
 - b. Update/Discussion: SolSmart Initiative
White reported on the SolSmart/CARPC webinar attended by White, Owen and Butosov. Another SolSmart webinar is behind held on June 28th.
 - c. Report on June outdoor Work and Learn Partnership Events
Rachel said that 10-12 people took advantage of her garden tour, learning more about edible landscapes. Saltes reported that there unfortunately were no volunteers for the Friends of Stewart Park workday. The committee discussed ways to improve volunteer turnout in the future.
 - d. Discussion/Consideration of Landscaping Request from Mount Horeb Children's Community School
The Committee discussed the request from the Children's Community School at last month's meeting for assistance in completing natural plantings at their new facility. With budget limitations, the committee environment at this time would be limited to physical assistance and advice with plantings. The Committee discussed grant opportunities that may help with funding for the project. Chair White will meet with the Village President and Administrator to discuss future budget requests for the Committee.
 - e. Discussion on future publicity and news column
Gottwald sent the article about the survey results to the Mount Horeb Mail, it should be published in the next few weeks. Grabe to work on a column on solar data to be released to publicize the solar event at CCS.
 - f. Discussion and Consideration of programming: Solar 101

Chair White presented the idea of a Solar 101 program at CCS. The program could highlight CCS' efforts, give the basics of solar projects and discuss the Village's solar permitting process. White will attend the CCS Board meeting to discuss and get their approval.

g. Future Agenda Items

Planning for Solar 101 event and article, pollinator and garden ordinances, Solsmart update.

3) Meeting adjournment.

Motion to adjourn by Gottwald, second by Grabe. Motion carried. 7:52.



TRAVEL GREEN PLEDGE

Please review the following form and check all applicable boxes. Applications will be reviewed to determine whether the applicant is accepted into the program. Specifically, the applicant must be taking sustainability actions on a minimum of four key focus areas and committing to taking action on the remaining key focus areas within one year of signing the pledge. In order to check “yes,” the applicant need only take one action within the key focus area among those listed or provide an alternative action in the “other actions” section.

Six Key Focus Areas

As a Travel Green member your organization or business is pledging your commitment to sustainability in the six key focus areas of:

Education

Community

Energy efficiency

Transportation

Waste reduction

Water conservation

Education

Is education of your employees and customers part of your sustainability goals?

- Yes
- No, but my organization has plans to improve in the coming year. Explain your plans:

If yes, check all that apply:

- Employees receive education about how to support our sustainability goals at regular staff meetings, through written communication, organized trainings, posted signage or other means.
- Guests can learn how to support our sustainability goals through staff interactions, our website, posted signage or other means.
- Other actions - Explain the other action(s) you have taken:

Why is education important?

- Providing educational opportunities for your employees ensures that your daily operations are in line with your organization’s commitment to sustainable practices.

- Sharing how you are greening your operations with visitors will create market distinction, advance market transformation in favor of sustainability and enable visitors to make informed decisions that reduce their impacts on the environment.
- Educating employees and visitors of your organization's efforts inspires collaboration, sparks new ideas and leads to favorable recognition of your organization's commitment to sustainability.

Community

Is community engagement and support part of your sustainability goals?

- Yes. My organization or business:
- No, but my organization has plans to improve in the coming year. Explain your plans:

If yes, check all that apply:

- Supports local conservation organizations or initiatives through donations of time, money, items or services
- Participates in community-wide sustainability efforts
- Shares our sustainability goals with our local community
- Offers/uses locally sourced products
- Other actions - Explain the other action(s) you have taken:

Why is community engagement important?

- Think Global, Act Local: Supporting community-level efforts can make a big impact while providing avenues for employees and visitors to find new ways to put their sustainability values into action.
- Incorporating practices that benefit surrounding neighborhoods and community groups improves both the health of local citizens and the local economy.
- Sourcing local products reduces an organization's carbon footprint and supports nearby businesses.

Energy Efficiency

Is energy efficiency or renewable energy part of your sustainability goals?

- Yes. My organization or business:
- No, but my organization has plans to improve in the coming year. Explain your plans:

If yes, check all that apply:

- Uses LED lighting, motion-activated lights and/or programmable thermostats
- Uses renewable energy (solar, wind, hydro) on-site
- Purchases power from renewable energy sources via our energy company
- Uses [ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager](#) to benchmark our energy usage
- Schedules preventative maintenance for our heating and cooling systems
- Chooses energy-efficient equipment at replacement (including ENERGY STAR appliances)
- Other actions - Explain the other action(s) you have taken:

Why is energy efficiency important?

- Energy efficiency practices will improve your bottom line, provide a competitive advantage and improve your work environment.
- According to energystar.gov, an average commercial building can save up to 30% on energy bills with no-cost actions, strategic investments and proper maintenance.
- For larger projects focused on HVAC and renewable energy sources, grants, tax incentives and other programs are available to help you get started. Learn more at www.focusonenergy.com/organization.

Transportation

Is transportation a part of your sustainability goals?

- Yes. My organization or business:
- No, but my organization has plans to improve in the coming year. Explain your plans:

If yes, check all that apply:

- Makes bicycles or other alternative modes of transportation available for use or rental
- Has an electric vehicle charging station
- Is accessible without a car
- Encourages walking, biking, ridesharing, and bicycling for employees and visitors
- Other actions - Explain the other action(s) you have taken:

Why is this important?

- Visitors take cues from their hosts on how to travel throughout a community. As such, tourism organizations are in a unique position to promote alternative modes of transportation such as walking, bicycling and public transportation.
- Transportation accounts for the largest portion (29%) of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.¹ Giving visitors alternative means to see the sights will help decrease emissions and promote energy independence.

Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling

Is waste reduction, reuse and recycling part of your sustainability goals?

- Yes. My organization or business:
- No, but my organization has plans to improve in the coming year. Explain your plans:

If yes, check all that apply:

- Clearly labels recycling containers next to each trash can
- Has clear waste reduction measures in place
- Uses eco-friendly disposables
- Takes steps to avoid single-use plastics
- Uses ecological and biodegradable detergents and cleansers
- Offers a reusable takeout container program

- Composts food waste
- Takes steps to reduce food waste
- Donates unopened, uneaten foods
- Other actions - Explain the other action(s) you have taken:

Why is this important?

- More and more, consumers are evaluating waste reduction practices when making their purchasing decisions.
- The easiest way to reduce your environmental footprint is to avoid creating waste in the first place.
- Proper disposal of unwanted items and waste is important to keep toxic materials out of our landfills and groundwater and to reduce carbon emissions from landfills while also improving operational efficiency.

Water Conservation

Is water conservation or wastewater management part of your sustainability goals?

- Yes
- No, but I have plans to do better. Explain your plans:

If yes, check all that apply:

- Uses [WaterSense](#) products
- Uses an ENERGY STAR certified water heater
- Uses water flow reducers Recovers and reuses rainwater
- Utilizes green building practices like sustainable design, materials and construction
- Uses native plants or rain gardens in landscaping
- Other actions - Explain the other action(s) you have taken:

Why is this important?

- Water conservation and management of stormwater and wastewater can help to improve your bottom line by reducing your level of water consumption and lowering costs.
- Simple equipment and behavioral practices can amount to significant reductions in water use and prevent pollution of lakes and streams.

Courses and Programs (Optional)

If you have gone the extra mile in your sustainability efforts, we want to know about your commitment so we can promote it in the future. Please check the box of any relevant programs.

The following programs are not required to become a Travel Green member, but we encourage you to use this list to take your sustainability commitment to the next level.

- My organization is a member of the [DNR Green Tier](#) program.
- My organization is a member of the Wisconsin Sustainable Organization Council's [Green Masters program](#).
- My organization attended or played a role in the [Midwest Renewable Energy Fair](#).

- My organization received an [Energy Innovation Grant](#) from the Public Service Commission.
- My organization is certified with [1% for the Planet](#).
- My organization is listed in the [Farm Atlas](#).
- My organization is a [Bicycle Friendly Organization](#) member
- My organization completed a [Focus on Energy](#) project or [training](#).
- My organization is recognized as a [Dane County Climate Champion](#).
- My organization received the [Sustainable Eau Claire Award](#).
- My organization partnered with UW-La Crosse Sustainable Tourism Course.
- My organization took the [Plastic Free MKE Pledge](#)
- Leaders from my organization have completed a [Sustain Dane course](#).
- Leaders from my organization have completed a [Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewage District \(MMSD\) Fresh Coast project](#).

If you completed a program or course not listed here, please share the program name, briefly describe the program and provide a link to more information.

Certifications (Optional)

If you have gone the extra mile by earning an eco-certification, we want to know about your commitment so we can promote it in the future. Please check the box of any relevant certifications.

The following certifications are not required to become a Travel Green member, but we encourage you to learn more about these certifications to take your sustainability commitment to the next level.

- [BREEAM](#)
- [Clean Marina](#)
- [EarthCheck](#)
- [Green Globe](#)
- [Green Key Eco Rating](#)
- [Green Seal](#)
- [Green Tourism Active Standard](#)
- [Hilton LightStay](#)
- [Hostelling International's Quality and Sustainability Standard](#)
- [LEED](#)
- [TRUE Certification Program \(Zero Waste\)](#)
- [Wild Ones Certified Garden](#)

If you have earned a certification not listed here, please share the certification name, briefly describe it, and provide a link to more information.

Compliance and Transparency (Required)

Please agree to the following statements by checking each box.

- My organization or business is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- My organization or business will make certification documents, including this application, available to the public, visitors and others upon request.
- I certify that the preceding information is complete and accurate, and that all practices checked have been or will be completed one year from today's date.

For more information contact:

Travel Wisconsin

P.O. Box 8690

Madison, WI 53708-8690

Email: TravelGreen@travelwisconsin.com

Travel Green is a voluntary program created by Travel Wisconsin.

Travel Green | Sustainable Business

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https://www.travelwisconsin.com/plan-your-vacation/travel-green-wisconsin

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TRAVEL GREEN



Travel brings us to new, unforgettable places — places we want future generations to enjoy, just like we have. From experiencing Wisconsin's stunning natural beauty to exploring our thriving communities, sustainable travel makes it possible for us to make memories here again and again.

Travel Green, a Travel Wisconsin eco-focused program, makes it easy to support businesses, nonprofit organizations, visitor centers, and more that prioritize environmental sustainability. Ranging from large hotels to small B&Bs, cafes to Main Street shops, Travel Green members are leading the way in sustainable travel. Through an annual pledge, Travel Green organizations commit to sustainability in the following areas: education, community, energy efficiency, transportation, waste reduction and water conservation.

By supporting Travel Green organizations, you're using your dollars to support local communities and producers. You're helping Wisconsinites who have made a conscientious decision to reduce their environmental footprint. And you're paving the way for future travelers to enjoy everything Wisconsin has to offer.

Businesses around Wisconsin have taken the pledge to commit to doing their part in advancing sustainability. Check out the pledge [here](#), to see all the ways sustainability is being pursued. Travel Green members are required to sign the Travel Green Pledge each year.

How to Find a Travel Green Business

Whether you're looking for places in Wisconsin to eat, stay or play, find Travel Green organizations below or by checking the Travel Green box filter when searching listings.

Search Travel Green Listings

Popular Filters:

Travel Green Pledge.pdf

Show all

Page 11 of 105



AGENDA ITEM REPORT

MEETING DATE

July 25, 2023

PREPARED BY

AGENDA ITEM # 2.c

Planning for Solar 101 Event and Article

BACKGROUND

Chair White's attendance at the CCS Board meeting was delayed until they could have an internal discussion about the partnership for the event. They asked White to provide a summary of the event which is included in your packet.

RECOMMENDATION

ATTACHMENTS

1. Sustainability and Natural Resource Committee Solar 101 Public Programming (1)

Sustainability and Natural Resource Committee Solar 101 Public Programming

The Mount Horeb Sustainability and Natural Resource Committee would be interested in holding a public presentation on the basics and benefits of solar technology. We are looking to do the presentation in the fall of 2023. It would be great if we could have the presentation at the school. Like “show and tell”, presenters would have a model installation to show off.

The program would include a presentation by Glow Solar, which would present a basic overview of how solar energy is converted into usable energy. Also, they will highlight the process of installation at the Children’s Community School.

Another component of the program would be having the Mount Horeb Energy Supervisor Jordan Schmitz explain the permitting process for the Village, and answer questions. We would also have information available on the Inflation Reduction Act and Focus on Wisconsin.

This programming would serve many purposes.

1. It would reinforce the prioritizing of renewable energy in Mount Horeb while providing interested residents information they need to start the process.
2. Holding a program would help the Village achieve [SolSmart](#) designation, (as public programming is one qualifier in the program),
3. We could have post event buzz, by presenting a column in the Mount Horeb Mail, and the event would be recorded by our Village Troll TV.
4. Finally, it would serve highlight the great school as a, (soon to be Dane County Climate Champion) and show proof positive that net zero can be a reality in the community.

Please let us know if you’re interested in this proposal. The timing could be an evening or weekend of your choice. Thank you for your consideration.

Tim White,
131 Jennifer Circle
Mount Horeb, WI 53572
608-294-0394
Tim.white@mounthorebwi.info

PZ-1 Zoning Review

Community:



PZ-1: Review zoning requirements and identify restrictions that intentionally or unintentionally prohibit solar PV development. Compile findings in a memo. (Required for Bronze)

To assist your local government, the national solar experts at SolSmart have conducted a review of your community's zoning and land use regulations to assess the use of best practices, possible barriers (i.e. height restrictions, set-back requirements, etc.) and gaps related to solar PV development. Below, please find the outcome of the review. By reading the narrative and signing the statement at the bottom of the page, your community will satisfy the PZ-1 pre-requisite and be one step closer to achieving SolSmart designation.

Summary

The Mount Horeb Zoning Code [<https://ecode360.com/MO3188>] was accessed and reviewed during June 2023. The code was accessed via the [Mount Horeb](https://ecode360.com/MO3188) website with a redirect to the [<https://ecode360.com/MO3188>] website.

- A search for "photovoltaic" yielded [0] results.
- A search for "solar" yielded [0] results.
- A search for "renewable energy" yielded [0] results in reference to
- A search for "clean energy" yielded [0] results in reference to

Best Practice Review

Mount Horeb's code was reviewed to determine if it incorporates best practice regulations for solar energy. Incorporating best practices improves transparency of processes and clarity of development standards and can enhance the growth of the local solar market in an organized and efficient manner

Purpose or Intent			
The code does NOT contain a purpose or intent for including solar energy regulations in the code.			
Code Language	Section: 17.03 Intent		
N/A			
Reviewer Comments	Best Practice: ☐	Needs Improvement: ☒	Barrier: ☐
Section 17.03 Intent can be used to reference solar energy use within the Town.			
Suggested Language			
It is the general intent of this chapter to regulate and restrict the use and development of all structures, lands and waters; to regulate and restrict lot coverage, population distribution and density, dredging and lagooning in shoreland areas, and the size and location of all structures, so as to lessen congestion in, and promote the safety and efficiency of the streets and highways; secure safety from fire, flooding, panic, and other dangers; provide adequate light and air; prevent overcrowding; avoid undue population concentration; facilitate the adequate provision of public facilities and utilities; promote renewable energy systems ; stabilize and protect property values; prevent water pollution; protect spawning grounds, fish and aquatic life and otherwise further the appropriate use of land and conservation of natural resources; preserve and promote the beauty of the community; and implement the community's Comprehensive Plan and plan components. It is further intended to provide for the administration and enforcement of this chapter and to provide penalties for its violation.			

Definitions			
The code does NOT contain definitions for solar energy.			
Code Language	Section: 17.161 Definitions		
N/A			
Reviewer Comments	Best Practice: ☐	Needs Improvement: ☒	Barrier: ☐
Needs Improvement Solar energy systems are not defined. Definitions form the basis of understanding for the terms used throughout the solar energy section(s) of the code and reduces the chance for misinterpretation. At a minimum, the ordinance should include definitions that distinguish between solar energy system type (roof-mounted vs ground-mounted) and use (accessory vs primary) to provide clarity and a foundation on which to specify permissible uses in specific zoning districts and provide development standards.			
Suggested Language			
Definitions: Add the following definitions to the ordinance Renewable Energy System An energy-generating system for the generation of electric or thermal energy, to be used primarily at such property, except when the qualified property owner is a commercial entity, in which case the system may be used for other properties in addition to the subject property, by means of solar thermal, solar photovoltaic, wind, geothermal, anaerobic digester gas-to-electricity systems, fuel cell technologies, or other renewable energy technology approved by the Authority not including the combustion or pyrolysis of solid waste. Roof-mounted solar energy system: A solar photovoltaic system mounted on a rack that is ballasted on, or is attached to, the roof of a building or structure. Roof-mount systems are accessory to the primary use. Ground-mounted solar energy system (Accessory Use) A solar photovoltaic system mounted on a rack or pole that is ballasted on, or is attached to, the ground and the system is accessory to the primary use. Ground-mounted solar energy system (Primary Use) A solar photovoltaic system mounted on a rack or pole that is ballasted on, or is attached to, the ground and is the primary land use for the parcel(s) on which it is located. Primary use systems are permitted through a discretionary approval process.			

Roof-mounted Accessory Use Solar			
The code does NOT explicitly permit accessory use roof-mounted solar PV systems as a by-right or allowed use.			
Code Language	Section: 17.15 Use Restrictions		
N/A			
Reviewer Comments	Best Practice ☐	Needs Improvement ☒	Barrier ☐
Needs Improvement The zoning code does not clearly state that certain types/sizes of roof-mounted solar energy systems are considered an allowed or by-right accessory use. Codifying solar as an accessory use and as an allowed or by-right use in all major zoning categories provides policy certainty and clarity which can			

promote easier and more equitable solar deployment. It can increase solar development and save property owners time and money because they avoid going through a more extensive discretionary process to have their solar system considered. For example, removing the need for a planning commission or equivalent entity to make a judgement prior to approving the project (this can also save local government staff capacity to focus on other priorities and projects).

Often accessory use solar is not listed as a permitted use in a zoning code, even though it may be treated as such in practice (though in other instances, if it is not listed it may be considered prohibited). This lack of clarity on language could cause confusion and open the door to various interpretations/determinations of use.

Applicable SolSmart Credit: PZ-5, Codify in the zoning ordinance that accessory use rooftop solar PV is explicitly allowed by-right in all major zones.

Suggested Language

Principal uses; accessory uses. Only those principal uses specified for a district, their essential services, and the following uses shall be permitted in that district. Accessory uses include home occupations; incidental repairs; storage; parking facilities; **roof-mounted and ground mounted solar energy systems**; gardening; servants' and watchmen's quarters not for rent; and private emergency shelters. Except as herein otherwise regulated, accessory uses shall not include the keeping, propagation or culture of pigeons, poultry or livestock.

Roof-mounted Solar Height

Option 1	The code does NOT exempt roof-mounted solar PV from height restrictions.
Option 2	The code does NOT allow roof-mounted solar PV to exceed height restrictions by a defined number.

Code Language	Section: Zoning Code, Lot, Yard and Building Requirements (Chart 1)
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N/A

Reviewer Comments	Best Practice ☐	Needs Improvement ☒	Barrier ☐
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Needs Improvement

The height requirements referenced in the code are reasonable, however it is best practice to exempt roof-mounted solar energy systems from district height requirements.

Applicable SolSmart Credit: PZ-6, Ensure the zoning ordinance language does not include intentional or unintentional barriers to accessory use rooftop solar PV, including but not limited to aesthetic or performance standards, screening requirements, limits to visibility, excessive restrictions to system size or rooftop coverage, glare or glint regulations, and subjective design reviews. (Required for Gold, PZ-4 is optional)

Suggested Language

Chart 1: Zoning Code, Lot, Yard and Building Requirements (Notes Section)

¹⁵On a pitched/sloped roof, solar energy systems shall be installed parallel to the roof surface and may not extend beyond the edge of the roof peak. On a flat roof, solar energy systems are exempt from zoning district height limits.

Ground-mounted Accessory Use Solar

The code does NOT explicitly permit accessory use ground-mounted solar PV systems as a by-right or allowed use in at least 1 zoning district.

Code Language		Section: 17.15 Use Restrictions	
N/A			
Reviewer Comments	Best Practice ☐	Needs Improvement ☒	Barrier ☐
Needs Improvement The zoning code does not clearly state that certain types/sizes of solar energy systems are considered an allowed or by-right accessory use.			
Applicable SolSmart Credit: PZ-7, Ensure the zoning ordinance permits small ground-mounted solar PV as an accessory use in at least one zoning district.			
Suggested Language			
Model language included in prior recommendation			

Ground-mounted Solar Setbacks			
The code does NOT contain setback standards for accessory use ground-mounted solar PV.			
Code Language	Section: Chart 1: Zoning Code, Lot, Yard and Building Requirements (Notes Section)		
N/A			
Reviewer Comments	Best Practice ☐	Needs Improvement ☒	Barrier ☐
Needs Improvement Accessory use ground-mounted solar energy systems should have similar setback requirements to other residential accessory use structures. These setbacks generally allow accessory structures to be built closer to a property line than primary structures.			
Applicable SolSmart Credit: PZ-8, Ensure the zoning ordinance exempts small ground-mounted solar PV from certain restrictions on accessory uses (e.g. setbacks, coverage or impervious surface calculations, or other restrictions).			
Suggested Language			
¹⁶ Ground-mounted solar energy systems shall be located in the side or rear yard of the property and comply with accessory structure setback requirements.			

Ground-mounted Solar Placement			
The code does NOT contain placement standards for accessory use ground-mounted solar PV.			
Code Language	Section: Chart 1: Zoning Code, Lot, Yard and Building Requirements (Notes Section)		
N/A			
Reviewer Comments	Best Practice ☐	Needs Improvement ☒	Barrier ☐
Needs Improvement Depending on the character and typical lot size of the community, it may be appropriate to encourage the siting of accessory use ground-mounted PV systems in the side or rear yard of a property. Rural communities or those with large lots can be less restrictive and allow solar energy systems in front yards.			
Suggested Language			
Recommended in prior section			

Ground-mounted Solar Lot Coverage/Impervious Surface			
The code does NOT exempt accessory use ground-mounted solar PV from lot coverage and/or impervious surface standards.			
Code Language	Section: 17.16 Accessory buildings and uses		
Reviewer Comments	Best Practice ☐	Needs Improvement ☒	Barrier ☐
Needs Improvement As long as the area beneath a ground-mounted solar PV system is pervious (e.g. grass, native vegetation, etc.) the system should be exempt from lot coverage and impervious surface requirements.			
Applicable SolSmart Credit: PZ-8, Ensure the zoning ordinance exempts small ground-mounted solar PV from certain restrictions on accessory uses (e.g. setbacks, coverage or impervious surface calculations, or other restrictions).			
Suggested Language 3) Lot coverage limitations. Accessory buildings and uses in residential districts shall occupy no more than 30% of the area of the required rear yard. Patios, unenclosed decks or porches, swimming pools, and tennis courts shall not be included in calculating the total coverage percentage for a particular parcel. <u>Ground-mounted solar energy systems are exempt from lot coverage and impervious surface requirements if the area under the system contains vegetative ground cover</u>			

Ground-mounted Solar Primary Use			
The code does NOT include standards for primary use ground-mounted solar PV.			
Code Language	Section: Article IV Zoning Districts		
N/A			
Reviewer Comments	Best Practice ☐	Needs Improvement ☒	Barrier ☐
Needs Improvement The code doesn't contain any requirements for primary use solar energy systems. If the community has enough usable land that could be developed for a large-scale solar energy system, development standards for primary use solar energy systems can be into the zoning code.			
Applicable SolSmart Credits: PZ-9, Ensure the zoning ordinance establishes a clear regulatory pathway for large-scale solar PV (e.g. through a special use permit or through inclusion among allowed conditional uses).			
Suggested Language Include ground mounted solar energy systems as a conditional use (primary) in all zoning districts.			

Barrier Review

Solar energy standards should serve to guide and enable solar development, not create ambiguity or restrict solar development. Certain design and performance standards can create significant barriers to solar PV. The inclusion of any of the following standards are not best practices and will likely impact the local government's ability to achieve SolSmart Gold designation. The statements containing NOT align with best practices.

Roof-mounted Solar Screening	
The code does NOT require screening for roof-mounted solar PV systems.	
Code Language	Section: N/A
N/A	
Reviewer Comments	
It is not a best practice to require screening for roof-mounted solar energy systems. Screening requirements may increase installation costs and decrease system efficiency. Solar PV performance depends on optimal siting of the system and clear access to solar radiation. Screening requirements could negatively impact system performance if the screening results in shading. Screening requirements could also hide the location of important system components that are necessary to shut off a system in case of a fire or other type of emergency.	

Limits to System Visibility	
The code does NOT include standards to limit system visibility (e.g. not visible from public rights of way).	
Code Language	Section: N/A
N/A	
Reviewer Comments	
It is not a best practice to prohibit solar energy systems [on the street-facing side of a building] or [from being visible from public rights-of-way] or [from public view] or [from being visible from neighboring/adjacent properties]. In fact, it could severely limit where solar energy systems are installed. Solar PV performance depends on panel location with the best performance occurring when panels are located on a southerly exposure. Less than optimal siting for solar panels can decrease the amount of sunlight a system receives and thereby negatively impact performance.	
It is not a best practice to suggest the placement of solar panels should be done to [reduce] or [minimize] their visibility. In fact, it could severely limit where solar energy systems are installed. Solar PV performance depends on panel location with the best performance occurring when panels are located on a southerly exposure. Less than optimal siting for solar panels can decrease the amount of sunlight a system receives and thereby negatively impact performance.	
[The standard also appears subjective since there is no defined guidance on “least visibly obtrusive location” and “functional”. If a house faces south towards the principal street, the least visibly obtrusive location would be the north-facing rear roof. While the panels would still be functional, their performance would be severely restricted since system performance depends on panel location, with the best performance occurring when panels are located on a southerly exposure.]	

Aesthetic Standards	
The code does NOT include aesthetic standards for solar PV systems.	
Code Language	Section: N/A
N/A	
Reviewer Comments	
It is not a best practice to require systems to [blend into the architecture of the structure] or [be camouflaged from public view] or [be consistent with the color of roofing materials or architecture] or [be painted to match the color schemes or the building or structure] or [be constructed of dull or dark colors] or [be non-reflective]. Aesthetic requirements can increase installation costs but would most likely prohibit a solar energy system from being installed since key system components like solar	

panels cannot be altered or painted to blend into the architecture or color scheme of a building. Aesthetic requirements could also hide the location of important system components that are necessary to shut off a system in case of a fire or other type of emergency.

Glare, Glint, and/or Noise Standards

The code does NOT include glare, glint, and/or noise standards for solar PV systems.

Code Language	Section: N/A
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N/A

Reviewer Comments

It is not a best practice to require a glare study prior to the installation of a solar energy system. Solar PV panels are designed to absorb incoming solar radiation and limit the amount of reflected light. Solar panels are designed with anti-reflective glass. A glare study will increase installation costs

It is not a best practice to suggest the placement of solar panels should be done to [reduce] or [minimize] glare. In fact, it could severely limit where solar energy systems are installed. Solar PV performance depends on panel location with the best performance occurring when panels are located on a southerly exposure. Less than optimal siting for solar panels can decrease the amount of sunlight a system receives and thereby negatively impact performance. Additionally, solar PV panels are designed to absorb incoming solar radiation and limit the amount of reflected light. Solar panels are designed with anti-reflective glass.

[The glare from a solar panel is similar to that of smooth water](#). A glare study is recommended if solar panels will be sited close to an airport but otherwise the analysis is usually unnecessary, adding time and cost to a project.

It is not a best practice to [require an acoustic study] or [have maximum level of noise the system can produce]. Roof-mounted solar energy systems produce very minimal noise. An acoustic study will increase installation costs.

Roof Space Coverage Limit

The code does NOT limit solar PV system coverage to a percentage/part of the available roof space.

Code Language	Section: N/A
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N/A

Reviewer Comments

It is not a best practice to limit the coverage of a roof-mounted solar energy system. All buildings should have the opportunity to install a roof-mounted solar energy system to the maximum extent possible, so long as the roof is structurally capable of holding the load and applicable emergency access requirements are maintained. Maximizing a solar PV systems roof coverage is important goal since buildings are transitioning to electric appliances and systems and incorporating electric vehicle charging equipment.

Prohibition on Flat or Low Sloped Roofs

The code does NOT prohibit solar PV systems on flat or low sloped roofs.

Code Language	Section: N/A
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N/A

Reviewer Comments

It is not a best practice to prohibit solar energy systems on flat or low sloped roofs. All buildings should have the opportunity to install a roof-mounted solar energy system regardless of roof slope, so long as the roof is structurally capable of having a solar energy system. Many buildings with flat roofs like warehouses, data centers, distribution centers, and big box retail stores are excellent candidates for roof-mounted solar energy systems.

Limits on Electricity Production

The code does NOT include limits on how much electricity a solar PV system can produce.

Code Language	Section: N/A
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N/A

Reviewer Comments

It is not a best practice to include limits on the amount of electricity a solar energy system can produce. Regulations and policies like this are normally set by a state entity (Public Utility Commission/Public Service Commission) and/or local electric utility and are not appropriate for zoning codes.

Limits on Electricity Consumption

The code does NOT include limits on where a solar PV system's energy is consumed.

Code Language	Section: N/A
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N/A

Reviewer Comments

It is not a best practice to include limits on where a solar energy system's electricity can be consumed. Regulations and policies like this are normally set by a state entity (Public Utility Commission/Public Service Commission) and/or local electric utility and are not appropriate for zoning codes.

Discretionary Review Process

The code does NOT identify a discretionary review process for accessory use solar PV.

Code Language	Section: N/A
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N/A

Reviewer Comments

It is not a best practice to have a discretionary review process for accessory use solar PV. This has the potential to be an onerous and/or subjective process for roof-mounted solar energy systems and could increase a project's timeline and costs. Roof-mounted systems should be an allowed or by-right use and only need to go through the building permit process to ensure compliance with applicable building and electrical codes.

[The zoning code indicates small solar energy systems are permitted as a conditional use in all zoning districts. Depending on the complexity of the conditional use permit process, the time it takes to permit a small solar energy system may increase the cost of the project and therefore decrease the ability of all residents and business to be able to access and afford solar. Permitting solar energy systems as a permitted use in all zoning districts can improve equitable access to solar by reducing installation time and costs.]

[In addition to the need for building and electrical permits, roof-mounted solar energy systems also require a zoning certificate. It would be helpful to understand the complexity of the zoning approval process (what is required for the submission, what details are evaluated), timeline for approval for solar panels, and why the certificate is needed.]

Additional Notes

The Mount Horeb Zoning Code does not provide standards for the development of solar energy. As stated in the recommendations above, the code could be enhanced by adding definitions for various types of solar systems, exemptions or an allowance to exceed a districts height requirement, and greater clarity for small-scale ground-mounted systems requirements. Depending on the volume of solar energy permit requests, a comprehensive rewrite of the zoning ordinance as it relates to solar energy standards should be considered.

Please see [Best Practice Guidance for Solar and Zoning - Accessory Use](#) for additional recommendations.

I, [full name] as [title] of [community], [state] have received the zoning review and read its findings.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please note that this review is not an endorsement or recommendation for changing and/or updating the zoning code. This is an informational review only.

If the local government has clarifying comments, please provide them in a memo to the SolSmart team.

WELCOME TO THE SOLSMART SCORECARD

- The SolSmart Designation Criteria scorecard is used to baseline a local government's current solar processes and identify areas for technical assistance that create a pathway towards designation.
- The SolSmart scorecard is comprised of 75 unique credits in 5 categories that aim to improve local solar markets
 - Each credit has a corresponding point value ranging from 5 to 20
- Local governments are awarded points based on credits they have completed to make their local processes more solar-friendly
- Credits are verified by the Designation Administrator through a review of online information and documents provided by the community
- Local governments that complete the required level of prerequisites and points are awarded SolSmart designation
- A few things to note about the scorecard:
 1. This will be our primary tracking document.
 2. Credits identified as **TA Plan** indicate high priority credits to help achieve designation. The comments section might contain helpful information on next steps.
 3. Credits identified as **In Progress** indicate credits for ongoing technical assistance delivery or those that need documentation for verification.
 4. Credits identified as **Ready for Designation Review** indicate that no further action is required.
 5. Credits identified as **Verified** indicate the Designation Administrator has verified the credit has been completed.
 6. The **Baseline** tab and **Baseline Status** rows & tables throughout the scorecard are used by the SolSmart TA team to note a community's solar progress prior to engaging with SolSmart and should not be modified by the community. As TA continues, updates will be made to the **TA Status** section to track further progress.
 7. The points attributed to your community in the assessment are not guaranteed, a separate SolSmart designation team will conduct a thorough review of documentation to determine if your community's actions meet the best practices adopted by SolSmart.
- Next steps for the local government:
 1. Review the **Status** dropdown and **Comments** section of the credits to familiarize yourself with the scorecard. Take note of credits identified as TA Plan and next steps.
 2. If there are credits the community does/has done that don't have a **Status**, select **In Progress** under the Status dropdown. Please add a brief comment about how the community completes the credit in the **Comments** section. This helps determine the best way to document the credit for verification.

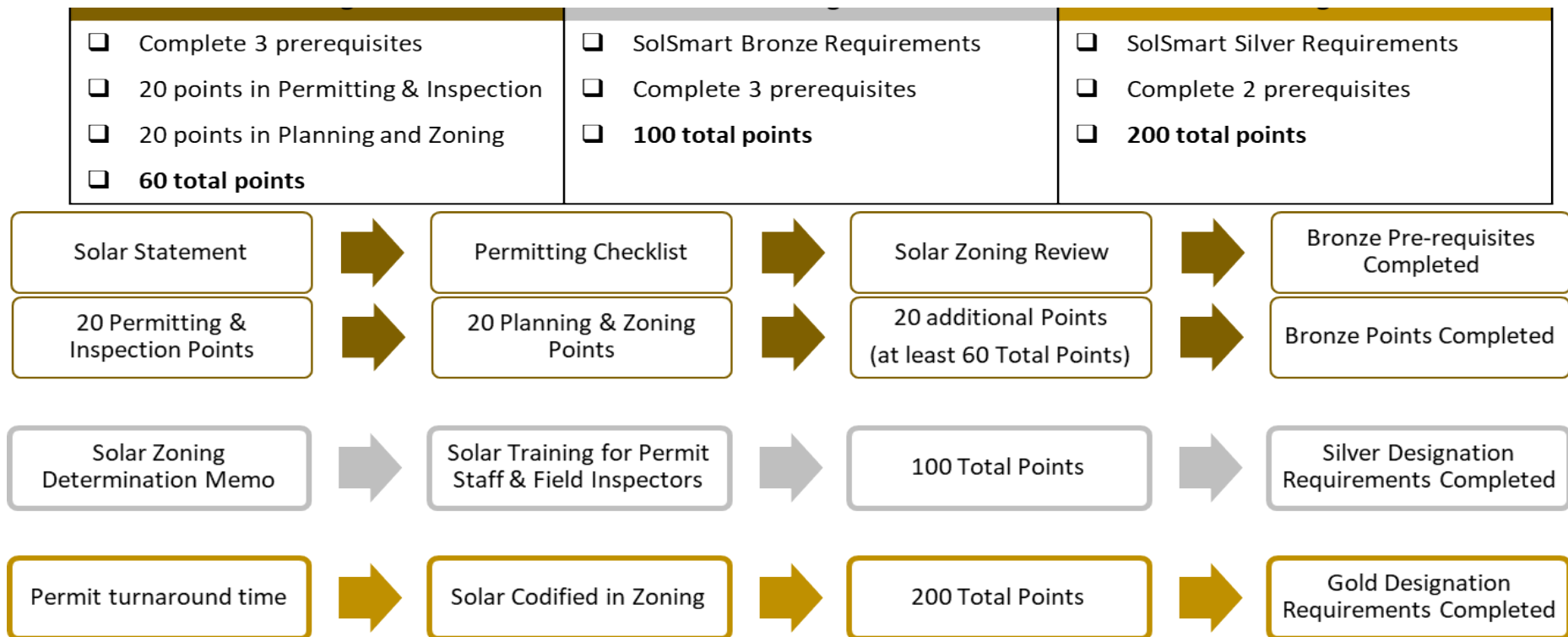
SolSmart provides no-cost technical assistance and nationally recognizes local solar achievements by awarding local governments a Gold, Silver, or Bronze designation. SolSmart is funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office.

SolSmart Designation Requirements

Bronze Designation

Silver Designation

Gold Designation



Understanding the scorecard layout for individual credits

1	2	3	
PI-4	20		Post an online statement confirming a three-business day turnaround time for small rooftop solar PV. (Required for Gold)

4	Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to a webpage outlining a permitting pathway for small PV systems of less than three days.
5	Baseline Status	
6	TA Status	
7	Verification Link(s)	1) 2)
8	Comments	

1. Credit Identifier.
2. Credit Points.
3. Credit Language.
4. Suggested options to verify the credit. Most verification will be a link or a document to upload such as a memo, plan, agenda, slide deck.
5. Baseline Status – Filled in by SolSmart TA team during baseline assessment.
6. TA Credit Status – dropdown options, editable based on current status.
7. Cell to paste verification links (if an additional line is needed press Alt+Enter, to move to a new line in the same cell).
8. Area for comments, questions, and additional information (to create a return space press Alt+Enter to move to a new line in the same cell).



SolSmart Designation Requirements			
Bronze Designation	Silver Designation	Gold Designation	Platinum Designation
☐ Complete 3 prerequisites ☐ 20 points in Permitting & Inspection ☐ 20 points in Planning and Zoning ☐ 60 total points	☐ SolSmart Bronze Requirements ☐ Complete 4 prerequisites ☐ 100 total points	☐ SolSmart Silver Requirements ☐ Complete 3 prerequisites ☐ 200 total points	☐ SolSmart Gold Requirements ☐ Complete 4 prerequisites ☐ 350 total points

TA Status

TA Plan - Credit Recommended to Achieve Designation
TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering
TA Complete - Ready for Designation Review
Verified by Designation Review

Solar Statement (PR-1)	Complete - Signed Solar Statement Received
------------------------	--

Bronze	TA Plan	In Progress	Ready	Verified
Permitting Checklist (PI-1)				
Zoning Review (PZ-1)				

Silver	TA Plan	In Progress	Ready	Verified
Permitting Training (PI-2)				
Inspection Training (PI-3)				
Zoning Memo (PZ-4)				
Solar Landing Page (CE-1)				

Gold	TA Plan	In Progress	Ready	Verified
Permitting Turnaround (PI-4)				
Zoning Codified (PZ-5)				
Barrier Removal+ (PZ-6)				

Platinum	TA Plan	In Progress	Ready	Verified
Automatic Permitting (PI-5)				
Post Metrics (PI-6)				
Lead by Example (GO-1)				
Serve Disadvantaged (CE-2)				

Points Status Tracking

Total Complete Points	10
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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DELIVERY - Estimated points					
Foundational Category Points	TA Plan	TA In Progress	TA Complete	Verified	Total
Permitting & Inspection	0	0	0	0	0
Planning & Zoning	0	0	10	0	10
Special Category Points	TA Plan	TA In Progress	TA Complete	Verified	Total
Government Operations	0	20	0	0	20
Community Engagement	0	10	0	0	10
Market Development	0	0	0	0	0

SOLAR STATEMENT		
PR-1	Req'd	Provide a document that demonstrates your local government's commitment to pursue SolSmart designation.
Ways to Verify		Local governments interested in pursuing SolSmart designation must indicate their commitment to supporting solar development in their community by completing the PR-1 Solar Statement Pre-requisite. The solar statement should be signed by an individual who can speak on behalf of the local government. It is preferred that the statement is signed by a Department executive or an elected official, but it does not need to go through an official approval process. The solar statement demonstrates your community's commitment to pursue SolSmart designation. If possible, please place the solar statement on your local government's letterhead. The solar statement should address the items listed in the bullets below. The statement does not need to be more than one page in length. Provide a signed solar statement that includes: • A commitment to participate in the SolSmart designation process • A statement of solar goals, areas of focus or community priorities (e.g. streamlining the permitting process or supporting a non-profit led solar initiative) • A statement of support for solar development to be inclusive and equitable for all residents • Past achievements or programs related to solar PV and/or renewable energy • A commitment to tracking metrics related to solar PV and/or provide a benchmark of available solar metrics (e.g. the number of installed systems, capacity, growth in residential installations, etc.) • A commitment of staff time and resources to improve the local market for solar PV
	Status	Complete - Signed Solar Statement Received
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		

PERMITTING AND INSPECTION

Total	Points	Baseline Status
	0	Verification Needed - Additional Documentation Required
	0	Credit Complete - Ready for Designation Review
	0	
	Points	TA Status
	0	TA Plan - Credit Recommended to Achieve Designation
Total	0	TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering
	0	TA Complete - Ready for Designation Review
	0	Verified by Designation Review
	0	

PI-1	Req'd	Post an online checklist detailing the required permit(s), submittals, and steps of your community's permitting process for residential rooftop solar PV. (Required for Bronze)
	Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the online solar PV permitting checklist.
	Baseline Status	
	TA Status	
	Verification Link(s)	1) 2)
	Comments	
PI-2	10	Train permitting staff on best practices for permitting solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred in the past two years. (Required for Silver).
	Ways to Verify	• Provide a signed memo with details about the permit training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department), date and time, location, agenda, and presentation/slides.
	Baseline Status	
	TA Status	
	Verification Link(s)	1) 2)
	Comments	
PI-3	10	Train inspection staff on best practices for inspecting solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred within the past two years. (Required for Silver).
	Ways to Verify	• Provide a signed memo with details about the inspection training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department), date and time, location, agenda, and presentation/slides.
	Baseline Status	
	TA Status	
	Verification Link(s)	1) 2)
	Comments	
PI-4	20	Post an online statement confirming a three-business day turnaround time for residential rooftop solar PV. (Required for Gold)
	Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to a webpage outlining a permitting pathway for small PV systems of less than three days.
	Baseline Status	
	TA Status	
	Verification Link(s)	1) 2)
	Comments	
PI-5	20	Demonstrate pathway for instant/automatic approval of residential rooftop solar PV systems (e.g. using SolarAPP+). (Required for Platinum)
	Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the online automated platform • Utilize SolSmart Solar Permitting Checklist (see PI-1) to summarize instructions for using the automated platform

Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-6	10	Post community metrics related to the number of solar PV and solar + storage permits & inspections processed by the community annually, average annual permitting & inspection timelines. (Required for Platinum)
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to this information posted on the community's website or solar landing page. Include date when the information was last updated and when tracking began.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-7	5	Adopt a standard solar PV permit application form aligned with best practices.
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the standard solar PV permit application form.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-8	5	Distinguish between solar PV systems qualifying for streamlined and standard permit review
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to a document or web page outlining a streamlined and standard permit review policy • Provide details in an e-mail or other written documentation from a permitting official or staff member describing the policy is also acceptable
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-9	5	Require no more than one permit application form for a small rooftop solar PV system
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the permit application form used for small rooftop solar PV systems
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-10	20	Provide an online process for solar PV permit submission and approval
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the online platform and instructions for submission and approval • If an email-based online process is used: 1) Provide details from building officials or staff describing the process 2) Provide a copy of a sample email with personal and confidential information removed
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-11	5	Receive a demonstration of an instant automated platform (e.g. SolarAPP+) and discuss how it might be implemented in the permitting process
Ways to Verify		• Signed memo that includes date, attendees, presenter, summary of discussion topics and next steps
Baseline Status		

TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-12	20	Exempt or waive fees for residential solar PV permit applications
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the permit fee schedule or other officially approved document that shows solar PV permit fees are exempt or waived
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-13	5	Exempt or waive fees for residential solar PV permit applications for LMI customers
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the permit fee schedule or other officially approved document that shows solar PV permit fees are exempt or waived with detail on the income qualifications
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-14	5	Demonstrate that residential permit fees for solar PV are \$500 or less
Ways to Verify		(t
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-15	10	Demonstrate that commercial permit fees for solar PV are based on cost-recovery and capped at a reasonable level so fees do not become a net revenue source (e.g. fees cover the cost of the staff time required to review and process the permit application).
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the permit fee schedule or a document that outlines the permit fees applied to a solar installation • Provide a narrative that explains the costs incurred in processing the permits (this should include estimates of the amount of staff hours for each stage of the process and the hourly cost of staff time). This narrative should show that the fee is not significantly higher than these costs.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-16	10	Post an online checklist detailing the required permit(s), submittals, and steps of your community's solar plus (e.g. battery storage and/or electric vehicle charging) permitting process.
Ways to Verify		• Provide link to online permitting checklist for solar plus, EV charging or other "solar plus" technologies
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-17	10	Post an online checklist detailing the required permit(s), submittals, and steps of your community's permitting process for primary use ground-mount solar and include any additional state required permits
Ways to Verify		• Provide link to the online ground-mount solar PV permitting checklist
Baseline Status		
TA Status		

Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-18	10	Post solar PV inspection requirements online, including the inspection process and what details inspectors will review
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the online document outlining the inspection process and requirements.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-19	10	Require no more than one inspection for small rooftop solar PV
Ways to Verify		• Provide details about the solar PV inspection process that includes information on the type of inspections (and which departments are involved) and total number inspection trips required
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-20	10	Offer inspection appointment issues in lieu of appointment windows for solar PV
Ways to Verify		• Provide details about the solar PV inspection process that includes information on inspection appointment times and how to request an appointment
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		

PI-21	10	Provide an online process for solar PV inspection scheduling
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the online platform for inspection scheduling • If an email-based online process is used: 1) Provide details from building officials or staff describing the process 2) Provide a copy of a sample email with personal and confidential information removed
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-22	10	Show that the community has implemented virtual, photo, or another innovative inspection practice wioth solar and/or solar plus storage
Ways to Verify		• Include details on virtual, photo, or another innovative inspection practice in the community's Inspection Checklist (PI-1); or "• Describe the innovative practices in a signed memo
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-23	10	Post solar plus (e.g. battery storage and/or electric vehicle charging) inspection requirements online, including the inspection process and what details inspectors will review
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the online document outlining the inspection process and requirements.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		

Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-24	10	Train fire and safety staff on solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred in the past two years
Ways to Verify		• Provide a signed memo with details about the fire and safety staff training including name of trianing, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department), date and time, location
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-25	10	Train fire and safety staff on specific plans and procedures for responding to an emergency at a large-scale solar PV system within the jurisdiction. (This may include a walk-through of the site, coordinated with the project's owner/operator). Training must have occurred in the last two years
Ways to Verify		• Provide a signed memo with details about emergency response plans and procedures • Provide a link to the requirement in the community's code of ordinances
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-26	10	Share site specific solar PV and/or solar and storage permit data, including addresses, with first responders and their departments. (e.g. through software that allows users to view searchable, filterable data about a specific site and system).
Ways to Verify		• Provide details about the process for information sharing, including how fire and safety staff received the data • Provide a link to the platform that allows fire and safety staff to access the data
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-27	5	Clearly identify all local amendments to model codes where local code deviates from model code for solar and solar plus storage. Summarize those local amendments on a public webpage
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to this information posted on the community's website or solar landing page
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PI-28	10	Demonstrate that current model code (IRC, IBC, and NEC) cycle is implemented in the community for solar and solar plus storage (codes must be most recent editions or penultimate edition)).
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to this information posted on the community's website or solar landing page. Include date when the information was last updated and when tracking began.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		

PLANNING AND ZONING

Total	Points	Baseline Status
	0	Verification Needed - Additional Documentation Required
	10	Credit Complete - Ready for Designation Review
	10	
	Points	TA Status
	0	TA Plan - Credit Recommended to Achieve Designation
	0	TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering
	10	TA Complete - Ready for Designation Review
	0	Verified by Designation Review
Total	10	

PZ-1	Req'd	Review zoning requirements and identify restrictions that intentionally or unintentionally prohibit solar PV development. Compile findings in a memo. (Required for Bronze). Examples include: height restrictions, set-back requirements, screening requirements, visibility restrictions, etc.
	Ways to Verify	• Provide a signed SolSmart Zoning Review Memo.
	Baseline Status	
	TA Status	
	Verification Link(s)	1) 2)
	Comments	
PZ-2	5	Present PZ-1 memo findings to planning commission or relevant body.
	Ways to Verify	• Provide meeting minutes, meeting agenda, or materials prepared for the meeting (e.g., handouts and slides) that demonstrate a discussion about the zoning review.
	Baseline Status	
	TA Status	
	Verification Link(s)	1) 2)
	Comments	
PZ-3	5	Draft proposed language for changes to zoning code based on PZ-1 memo and PZ-2 dialogue. Involve planners and/or local zoning experts and/or the public (e.g. through community-based organizations) in the creation of the draft language.
	Ways to Verify	• Provide draft language of the proposed zoning ordinance changes that clarify solar energy requirements, address gaps identified by PZ-1 memo, and remove barriers to solar development
	Baseline Status	
	TA Status	
	Verification Link(s)	1) 2)
	Comments	

PZ-4	0	Post an online document from the Planning/Zoning Department that states accessory use solar PV is allowed by-right in all major zones. (e.g. via a zoning determination letter). (Required for Silver unless Gold Requirement PZ-5 is achieved. If PZ-5 is achieved, PZ-4 is not necessary.)
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to an online document (and the parent webpage) that clarifies that accessory solar PV is an allowed or by-right use in all major zones. • This document should: 1) show that the process does not involve staff discretion, special permits, conditional permits, use permits, or variances 2) have language that demonstrates its applicability in all major zones 3) be made public; and 4) be dated and signed by a Department or Committee head
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-5	10	Codify in the zoning ordinance that accessory use rooftop solar PV is explicitly allowed by-right in all major zones. (Required for Gold, PZ-4 is optional)
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the zoning ordinance, use table and/or land use regulations that codify solar as an accessory use and is an allowed, permitted or by-right use. Please indicate the relevant section(s).
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-6	10	Ensure the zoning ordinance language does not include intentional or unintentional barriers to accessory use rooftop solar PV, including but not limited to aesthetic or performance standards, screening requirements, limits to visibility, excessive restrictions to system size or rooftop coverage, glare or glint regulations, and subjective design reviews. (Require for Gold, PZ-4 is optional)
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations regarding accessory use solar. Please indicate the relevant section(s) that describe the review process, standards, or related exemptions applicable to accessory use rooftop solar
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-7	5	Ensure the zoning ordinance permits small ground-mounted solar PV as an accessory use in at least one zoning district.
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that allows small ground-mounted solar PV as an accessory use. Please indicate the relevant section(s).
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)

Comments		
PZ-8	5	Ensure the zoning ordinance exempts small ground-mounted solar PV from certain restrictions on accessory uses (e.g. setbacks, coverage or impervious surface calculations, or other restrictions).
Ways to Verify		Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that exempts small ground-mounted solar PV from certain restrictions on accessory uses. Please indicate the relevant section(s).
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-9	5	Ensure the zoning ordinance establishes a clear regulatory pathway for large-scale solar PV (e.g. through a special use permit or through inclusion among allowed conditional uses).
Ways to Verify		Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that establishes a regulatory pathway for large-scale solar PV development. Please indicate the relevant section(s).
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-10	10	Ensure the zoning ordinance includes a native perennial vegetation and/or habitat-friendly ground cover requirement or standard for large-scale solar PV.
Ways to Verify		Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that includes language about a native perennial vegetation and/or habitat-friendly ground cover requirement or standard. Please indicate the relevant section(s).
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-11	5	Ensure the zoning ordinance enables co-location of solar PV with an agricultural use such as grazing, apiaries, or crops (agrivoltaics).
Ways to Verify		Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that includes language enabling the co-location of solar with an agricultural use. Please indicate the relevant section(s).
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-12	5	Ensure the zoning ordinance requires a decommissioning plan that outlines the terms and conditions for a large-scale solar PV system's proper removal at the end of its useful life cycle or in the event of cessation of operation. (The decommissioning plan may include steps to remove the system, requirements for disposal and/or recycling of system components, and restoration as needed to allow for return to agriculture or other land use).

Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that includes language about a decommissioning plan for large-scale solar PV. Please indicate the relevant section(s).	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
PZ-13	5	Ensure the zoning ordinance establishes solar energy zones and/or solar overlays for large-scale solar PV.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that establishes solar energy zones and/or solar overlays for large-scale solar PV. Please indicate the relevant section(s).	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
PZ-14	10	Require new construction to be solar ready in at least one zoning district by adopting Appendix U (International Code Council), Appendix RB (International Energy Conservation Code), or another mechanism.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the adopted code(s) or language that requires new construction to be solar ready.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
PZ-15	20	Codify a solar requirement for new construction and/or retrofits meeting a specific threshold, in at least one zoning district.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the adopted code(s) or language that requires solar on new construction or retrofits.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
PZ-16	10	Require new construction affordable housing and multifamily housing to be solar ready
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the adopted code(s) or language that requires new construction to be solar ready.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
PZ-17	10	Provide clear guidance for the installation of solar PV in areas such as historic properties, flood zones or special overlay districts
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that includes guidance on the installation of solar PV on historic properties and in special overlay districts. Please indicate the relevant section(s). • Provide a link to guidance for the installation of solar PV on historic properties and in special overlay districts	

Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-18	10	Train planning and zoning staff on best practices in planning and zoning for solar PV. Training must have occurred in the past two years.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a signed memo with details about the planning and zoning training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department), date and time, location, agenda, and presentation/slides.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-19	5	Post an online fact sheet that provides an overview of what zoning allows for solar PV under what conditions and in which districts (e.g. types and sizes of solar systems permitted, the processes required, and other relevant information).
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the fact sheet, zoning determination letter, or other online document that clarifies and summarizes how the zoning ordinance and land use regulations regulate solar energy.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-20	10	Include specific solar PV goals, metrics, and strategies in the most current published version of relevant local plans (e.g. energy plan, climate plan, comprehensive plan).
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the relevant plans that incorporate solar PV goals, metrics, and/or strategies. Please indicate the relevant section(s).	
Baseline Status	Credit Complete - Ready for Designation Review	
TA Status	TA Complete - Ready for Designation Review	
Verification Link(s)	1) https://www.mounthorebwi.info/DocumentCenter/View/175/2022-Mount-Horeb-Comprehensive-Plan-PDF?bidId= 2)	
Comments	Solar strategies included throughout	
PZ-21	5	Draft new or updated language and provide a timeline for the inclusion of specific solar PV goals, metrics, and/or strategies into existing and/or future plans.
Ways to Verify	• Provide draft language of the proposed plan changes that relate to solar energy and a timeline for inclusion in future plans.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-22	5	Share solar PV progression towards achieving targets or metrics from PZ-20 on the solar landing page.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the relevant information on the solar landing page. Include date when the information was last updated.	

Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-23	10	Include specific large-scale solar PV goals, metrics, and strategies in the most current published version of relevant local plans (e.g. energy plan, climate plan, comprehensive plan).
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the relevant plans that incorporate large-scale solar PV goals, metrics, and/or strategies. Please indicate the relevant section(s).
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-24	20	Develop a solar PV assessment that identifies community-wide feasibility for solar PV development within a jurisdiction (differentiate between large-scale, municipal, etc.)
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the PV assessment.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-25	10	Enable solar rights through a local solar access ordinance.
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that protect solar rights and access. Please indicate the relevant section(s).
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
PZ-26	20	Codify in the zoning ordinance that accessory use energy storage systems are explicitly allowed by-right in all major zones.
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that codify energy storage as an accessory use and allowed or by-right use. Please indicate the relevant section(s).
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Total	Points	Baseline Status
	20	Verification Needed - Additional Documentation Required
	0	Credit Complete - Ready for Designation Review
	20	
	Points	TA Status
Total	0	TA Plan - Credit Recommended to Achieve Designation
	20	TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering
	0	TA Complete - Ready for Designation Review
	0	Verified by Designation Review
	20	

GO-1	20	Install solar PV on local government facilities and/or local government-controlled land. (Required for Platinum)
Ways to Verify		• Provide news articles, a press release announcing the commissioned system, or webpage that summarizes the details of the installation(s) including total number of systems, size, location, and photos.
Baseline Status		Verification Needed - Additional Documentation Required
TA Status		TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering
Verification Link(s)		1) https://easyview.auroravision.net/easyview/index.html?entityId=663745 2)
Comments		Need confirmation memo that confirms the link is for solar municipal installation.
GO-2	10	Discuss community goals for solar PV, net metering, community solar, and/or interconnection processes with the local utility and explore areas for future collaboration.
Ways to Verify		• Provide meeting minutes (including a list of follow-up action items), e-mail correspondence, meeting agenda, materials prepared for the meeting (e.g., handouts and slides), or other evidence that at least one meeting occurred with your local utility.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
GO-3	10	Coordinate with regional organizations and/or local governments to engage utilities on advancing solar policies such as utility procurement of solar PV, green tariffs, and/or interconnection process improvements.
Ways to Verify		• Provides details about your community's participation in coordinated efforts between local governments and/or regional organizations to engage utilities with the goal of advancing solar initiatives.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
GO-4	20	Demonstrate coordination between local government inspectors and utility staff to reduce Permission to Operate timeline for solar PV.

Ways to Verify	• Provide details about the coordination process and explaining how this process reduces the time between inspection and Permission to Operate.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
GO-5	10	Conduct feasibility analysis for solar PV on local government facilities and/or local government-controlled land.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the feasibility analysis or details about the feasibility analysis that was conducted - who conducted, what were the sites, when was it conducted, what were the recommendations and next steps.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
GO-6	20	Install solar PV integrated with other technologies such as battery storage or electric vehicle charging on local government facilities and/or local government-controlled land.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a news article, a press release announcing the commissioned system, or webpage that summarizes the details of the installation(s) integrated with other technologies including total number of systems, size, location, technologies used, and photos.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
GO-7	20	Install solar PV on local government-controlled brownfields and/or under-utilized properties.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a news article, a press release announcing the commissioned system, or webpage that summarizes the details of the solar installation(s) including total number of systems, size, location, and photos.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
GO-8	10	Require new local government facilities and/or facility retrofits meeting a specific threshold to be solar ready.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to adopted code(s) or language that require new construction and/or retrofits of local government facilities to be solar ready.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
GO-9	20	Procure solar energy for municipal operations through an offsite physical PPA, virtual PPA, green tariff, or similar structure.

Ways to Verify		• Provide a document such as a news article, contract, press release, or similar official document containing the details how the local government has procured solar energy.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
GO-10	5	Obtain a Community Benefits Agreement with a solar developer for solar installation.
Ways to Verify		• Provide a copy of the CBA or a public document that summarized teh details of the CBA.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
GO-11	10	Post metrics related to the number of municipal solar PV or solar PV plus storage/EV installations and installed capacity, municipal solar PV energy procured (ownership, PPAs, community solar offtake), and percent (%) of municipal energy usage offset by renewable energy.
Ways to Verify		• Provide a link to this information on the solar landing page. Include date when the information was last updated and date tracking began.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
GO-12	10	Directly install or provide technical or financial support for the installation of solar PV on affordable housing, multifamily housing, community-based organizations and/or resilience hubs.
Ways to Verify		• Provide links and/or signed memo outlining the support provided.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		
GO-13	10	Train local government staff on regulatory and (where applicable) wholesale market barriers to solar deployment and potential engagement pathways to address these barriers. Training must have occurred in the past two years.
Ways to Verify		• Provide meeting minutes (including a list of follow-up action items), or materials prepared for the meeting (e.g., handouts and slides) from within the past year and provide documentation of the regularly scheduled frequency of these meetings.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1) 2)
Comments		

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Total	Points	Baseline Status
	0	Verification Needed - Additional Documentation Required
	10	Credit Complete - Ready for Designation Review
	10	
	Points	TA Status
	0	TA Plan - Credit Recommended to Achieve Designation
	10	TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering
	0	TA Complete - Ready for Designation Review
	0	Verified by Designation Review
	10	

CE-1	10	Post a solar landing page on local government's website with information that may include the community's solar goals, educational materials and tools that promote solar, and resources for solar development (e.g. permitting checklist, application forms, zoning regulations, etc.). (Required for Silver).
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the solar landing page.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
CE-2	20	Establish partnerships with local community-based organizations or other organizations focused on serving disadvantaged communities within your community to define your community's solar equity goals, development implementation strategies, and establish a plan for tracking and reporting on progress. (Required for Platinum).
Ways to Verify	• Signed memo summarizing the names of partner organizations, scope of the partnership, defined goals, outcomes (or intended outcomes), plan for tracking progress, and next steps for the partnership.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
CE-3	5	Post online resources about residential and commercial solar PV financing options and incentives.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to this information on the solar landing page.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		

CE-4	5	Post online resources about consumer protection and solar PV.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to a webpage containing consumer protection resources.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
CE-5	5	Post an online summary of state policies related to a property owner's solar access and solar rights, including links to state-level policy.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to a webpage with information about state policies relating to solar access and/or rights.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
CE-6	5	Post an online summary of state policies related to Homeowner Associations (HOAs) ability to regulate and/or restrict solar PV, including links to state-level policy.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the summary of state policies relating to Homeowner Associations and solar PV.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
CE-7	5	Post online resources about solar installers and/or solar quote platforms for solar PV.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to a webpage that contains information about local solar installers and/or solar quote platforms.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
CE-8	5	Post an online solar map for your community.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the solar map for your community.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
CE-9	5	Post an online dashboard or summary of solar PV metrics for your community, including total installed solar PV capacity, solar PV + storage intallations, and community solar and/or solarize subscribers (if applicable). Metrics should identify solar PV adoption in disadvantaged communities as well.

Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to a webpage displaying solar PV metrics. Include date when the information was last updated and date tracking began.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
CE-10	5	Distribute solar job training and career opportunities in coordination with local colleges and/or workforce development organizations.
Ways to Verify	• Provide posted job descriptions, screenshots from employment websites, or advertisement of job trainings.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
CE-11	5	Demonstrate local government support for local solar projects through speeches, press releases, opinion articles, etc.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to this information posted on the community's website or solar landing page.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
CE-12	10	Discuss solar PV goals and/or strategies for increasing solar PV development, including large-scale solar plans, solar access, and/or solar adoption in disadvantaged communities, within an appropriate committee, commission, taskforce, and/or working group. (e.g. solar is a recurring agenda item during monthly sustainability commission meetings).
Ways to Verify	• Provide meeting minutes (including a list of follow-up action items), or materials prepared for the meeting (e.g., handouts and slides) from within the past year and provide documentation of the regularly scheduled frequency of these meetings.	
Baseline Status	Credit Complete - Ready for Designation Review	
TA Status	TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering	
Verification Link(s)	1) https://www.mounthorebwi.info/264/Sustainability-Natural-Resources-Committ 2) https://mounthorebwi.portal.civicclerk.com/event/2163/overview	
Comments	Committee discuss solar. See second link for meeting materials.	
CE-13	5	Support a solar informational session and/or solar tour explaining solar PV opportunities and policies. Show that session/tour was made accessible to all members of the community including those in disadvantaged communities. Session/Tour must have occurred within the last two years.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link(s) to details about the solar informational session or tour such as an agenda, date, time, and location. • Provide a signed memo describing efforts to make sessions inclusive, including presentational materials or tour itinerary, and information on the level of attendance.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		
Comments		

MARKET DEVELOPMENT

Total	Points	Baseline Status
	0	Verification Needed - Additional Documentation Required
	0	Credit Complete - Ready for Designation Review
	0	
	Points	TA Status
	0	TA Plan - Credit Recommended to Achieve Designation
	0	TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering
	0	TA Complete - Ready for Designation Review
	0	Verified by Designation Review
Total	0	

MD-1	20	Demonstrate activity in state regulatory and/or legislative proceedings regarding solar PV.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to public comments on solar energy or related energy proceedings, the minutes and/or recordings of meetings attended by representatives of the local government, or a signed memo summarizing involvement in the proceedings.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
MD-2	20	Support a community-wide group purchase program (e.g. Solarize). Program must have occurred within the last 2 years.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to a website where the Solarize campaign has been publicly announced. • Provide details about the status of an ongoing solarize campaign or final metrics of a completed solarize campaign.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
MD-3	10	Define and implement a pathway specifically for low-to-moderate income (LMI) residents to participate in a community-wide group purchase program through program design and/or financing support options.
Ways to Verify	• Link to information on solar landing page or provide signed memo summarizing the forms of financing support or program design elements that support LMI residents in solar PV group purchase program.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		

MD-4	20	Support a community solar program.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to information about the community solar program, including any outreach materials and details about program design.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
MD-5	10	Define and implement a pathway specifically for low-to-moderate income (LMI) residents to participate in a community solar program through program design and/or financing support options.
Ways to Verify	• Provide details that explain program design elements, including outreach and financing, that support LMI resident participation in a community solar program.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
MD-6	20	Provide residents with Community Choice Aggregation/Energy that includes solar PV as a power generation source.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to details about a Community Choice program (with solar PV as a power generation source) that is available for residents.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
MD-7	10	Provide a PACE financing program that includes solar PV as an eligible technology.
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to the local ordinance creating a PACE program. • Provide a link to the PACE program webpage.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)	1) 2)	
Comments		
MD-8	20	Provide local incentives or locally-enabled finance (e.g. a revolving loan fund) for solar PV and/or solar PV + technologies (e.g. battery storage, and/or electric vehicle charging).
Ways to Verify	• Provide a link to an ordinance creating local incentives or financing options. • Provide a link to an application or form that are required for a solar PV system to be eligible for incentives or financing.	
Baseline Status		
TA Status		

Verification Link(s)		1)
		2)
Comments		
MD-9	5	Provide local incentives for solar PV to low-to-moderate income (LMI) households, disadvantaged communities, Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), and/or non-profit organizations that provide community services.
Ways to Verify		• Provide a signed memo describing the local incentives and who is eligible to receive them. • Provide a link to a webpage or press release with program information.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1)
		2)
Comments		
MD-10	20	Partner with financial institutions and/or foundations to offer loans, rebates, grants, or other incentives for solar PV projects. (Financial institutions could include entities such as a local or regional bank, CDFI, or credit union).
Ways to Verify		• Provide link to financing options for solar energy. • Provide a signed memo detailing how the local government partnered with the financial institution to offer a financial incentive for solar energy.
Baseline Status		
TA Status		
Verification Link(s)		1)
		2)
Comments		

INNOVATIVE ACTION		
IA-1	Varies	The actions identified in the categories above represent many of the most common and impactful efforts communities are taking to make going solar easier and more affordable for residents and businesses. However, we know that communities across the country are developing innovative ways to promote and deploy solar energy. If your community has taken action that was not captured in any of the credits above, please share it with us.
Ways to Verify		• Provide a signed memo describing the innovative action and include any supporting documentation or links that provide additional details.
Verification Link(s)		1)
		2)
Comments		



For SolSmart TA Team Use Only

SolSmart Designation Requirements			
Bronze Designation	Silver Designation	Gold Designation	Platinum Designation
□ Complete 3 prerequisites □ 20 points in Permitting & Inspection □ 20 points in Planning and Zoning □ 60 total points	□ SolSmart Bronze Requirements □ Complete 4 prerequisites □ 100 total points	□ SolSmart Silver Requirements □ Complete 3 prerequisites □ 200 total points	□ SolSmart Gold Requirements □ Complete 4 prerequisites □ 350 total points

TA Status

TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering
TA Complete - Ready for Designation Review
Verified by Designation Review

Prerequisites Status Tracking

Solar Statement (PR-1)	Complete - Signed Solar Statement Received
------------------------	--

Bronze	Baseline	TA
Permitting Checklist (PI-1)		
Zoning Review (PZ-1)		
Silver	Baseline	TA
Permitting Training (PI-2)		
Inspection Training (PI-3)		
Zoning Memo (PZ-4)		
Gold	Baseline	TA
Permitting Turnaround (PI-4)		
Zoning Codified (PZ-5)		
Barrier Removal (PZ-6)		
Platinum	Baseline	TA
Automatic Permitting (PI-5)		
Post Metrics (PI-6)		
Lead by Example (GO-1)		
Serve Disadvantaged (CE-2)		
Total Complete Points	30	

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DELIVERY - Estimated points

Foundational Category Points	TA In Progress	TA Complete	Verified	Total
Permitting & Inspection	0	0	0	0
Planning & Zoning	0	10	0	10
Special Category Points	TA In Progress	TA Complete	Verified	Total
Government Operations	20	0	0	20
Community Engagement	10	0	0	10
Market Development	0	0	0	0

BASELINE ASSESSMENT - Estimated points

Foundational Category Points	TA Plan	Verification Needed	Credit Complete	Total
Permitting & Inspection	0	0	0	0
Planning & Zoning	0	0	10	10
Special Category Points	TA Plan	Verification Needed	Credit Complete	Total
Government Operations	0	20	0	20
Community Engagement	0	0	10	10
Market Development	0	0	0	0

PERMITTING AND INSPECTION					
Credit	Baseline Status		TA Status		Comments
PI-1	0		0	0	
PI-2	0		0	0	
PI-3	0		0	0	
PI-4	0		0	0	
PI-5	0		0	0	
PI-6	0		0	0	
PI-7	0		0	0	
PI-8	0		0	0	
PI-9	0		0	0	
PI-10	0		0	0	
PI-11	0		0	0	
PI-12	0		0	0	
PI-13	0		0	0	
PI-14	0		0	0	
PI-15	0		0	0	
PI-16	0		0	0	
PI-17	0		0	0	
PI-18	0		0	0	
PI-19	0		0	0	
PI-20	0		0	0	
PI-21	0		0	0	
PI-22	0		0	0	
PI-23	0		0	0	
PI-24	0		0	0	
PI-25	0		0	0	
PI-26	0		0	0	
PI-27	0		0	0	
PI-28	0		0	0	
PLANNING AND ZONING					
Credit	Baseline Status		TA Status		Comments
PZ-1	0		0	0	
PZ-2	0		0	0	
PZ-3	0		0	0	
PZ-4	0		0	0	
PZ-5	0		0	0	
PZ-6	0		0	0	
PZ-7	0		0	0	
PZ-8	0		0	0	
PZ-9	0		0	0	
PZ-10	0		0	0	
PZ-11	0		0	0	
PZ-12	0		0	0	
PZ-13	0		0	0	
PZ-14	0		0	0	
PZ-15	0		0	0	
PZ-16	0		0	0	
PZ-17	0		0	0	

PZ-18	0	0	0	
PZ-19	0	0	0	
PZ-20	Credit Complete - Ready for Designation Review	TA Complete - Ready for Designation Review	Solar strategies included throughout	
PZ-21	0	0	0	
PZ-22	0	0	0	
PZ-23	0	0	0	
PZ-24	0	0	0	
PZ-25	0	0	0	
PZ-26	0	0	0	
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS				
Credit	Baseline Status	TA Status	Comments	
GO-1	Verification Needed - Additional Documentation Required	TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering	Need confirmation memo that confirms the link is for solar municipal ir	
GO-2	0	0	0	
GO-3	0	0	0	
GO-4	0	0	0	
GO-5	0	0	0	
GO-6	0	0	0	
GO-7	0	0	0	
GO-8	0	0	0	
GO-9	0	0	0	
GO-10	0	0	0	
GO-11	0	0	0	
GO-12	0	0	0	
GO-13	0	0	0	
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT				
Credit	Baseline Status	TA Status	Comments	
CE-1	0	0	0	
CE-2	0	0	0	
CE-3	0	0	0	
CE-4	0	0	0	
CE-5	0	0	0	
CE-6	0	0	0	
CE-7	0	0	0	
CE-8	0	0	0	
CE-9	0	0	0	
CE-10	0	0	0	
CE-11	0	0	0	
CE-12	Credit Complete - Ready for Designation Review	TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering	Committee discussess solar. See second link for meeting materials.	
CE-13	0	0	0	
MARKET DEVELOPMENT				
Credit	Baseline Status	TA Status	Comments	
MD-1	0	0	0	
MD-2	0	0	0	
MD-3	0	0	0	
MD-4	0	0	0	
MD-5	0	0	0	
MD-6	0	0	0	
MD-7	0	0	0	
MD-8	0	0	0	
MD-9	0	0	0	
MD-10	0	0	0	

*Paste here level-up criteria conversion output

Conversion Key: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19u2YU9G86l98-WJb9Cb7wv2bVe3tm6J4/edit?pli>

i=1#gid=2218370

Credit	Points	Credit
	Req'd	
PR-1		Provide a document that demonstrates your local government's commitment to pursue SolSmart designation.
	Req'd	
PI-1		Post an online checklist detailing the required permit(s), submittals, and steps of your community's permitting process for residential rooftop solar PV. (Required for Bronze)
	10	Train permitting staff on best practices for permitting solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred in the past two years. (Required for Silver).
PI-2		Train inspection staff on best practices for inspecting solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred within the past two years. (Required for Silver).
	10	Post an online statement confirming a three-business day turnaround time for residential rooftop solar PV. (Required for Gold)
PI-3		
	20	
PI-4		
	20	
PI-5		Demonstrate pathway for instant/automatic approval of residential rooftop solar PV systems (e.g. using SolarAPP+). (Required for Platinum)
	10	Post community metrics related to the number of solar PV and solar + storage permits & inspections processed by the community annually, average annual permitting & inspection timelines. (Required for Platinum)
PI-6		
	5	Adopt a standard solar PV permit applicated form aligned with best practices.
PI-7		

	5	
PI-8		Distinguish between solar PV systems qualifying for streamlined and standard permit review
PI-9	5	Require no more than one permit application form for a small rooftop solar PV system
	20	
PI-10		
		Provide an online process for solar PV permit submission and approval
	5	Receive a demonstration of an instant automated platform (e.g. SolarAPP+) and discuss how it might be implemented in the permitting process
PI-11		
	20	
PI-12		Exempt or waive fees for residential solar PV permit applications
	5	
PI-13		Exempt or waive fees for residential solar PV permit applications for LMI customers
	5	Demonstrate that residential permit fees for solar PV are \$500 or less
PI-14		
	10	
PI-15		Demonstrate that commercial permit fees for solar PV are based on cost-recovery and capped at a reasonable level so fees do not become a net revenue source (e.g. fees cover the cost of the staff time required to review and process the permit application).

PI-16	10	Post an online checklist detailing the required permit(s), submittals, and steps of your community's solar plus (e.g. battery storage and/or electric vehicle charging) permitting process.
PI-17	10	Post an online checklist detailing the required permit(s), submittals, and steps of your community's permitting process for primary use ground-mount solar and include any additional state required permits
PI-18	10	Post solar PV inspection requirements online, including the inspection process and what details inspectors will review
PI-19	10	Require no more than one inspection for small rooftop solar PV
PI-20	10	Offer inspection appointment issues in lieu of appointment windows for solar PV
PI-21	10	
PI-22	10	Provide an online process for solar PV inspection scheduling Show that the community has implemented virtual, photo, or another innovative inspection practice with solar and/or solar plus storage

PI-23	10	Post solar plus (e.g. battery storage and/or electric vehicle charging) inspection requirements online, including the inspection process and what details inspectors will review
	10	Train fire and safety staff on solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred in the past two years
PI-24	10	Train fire and safety staff on specific plans and procedures for responding to an emergency at a large-scale solar PV system within the jurisdiction. (This may include a walk-through of the site, coordinated with the project's owner/operator). Training must have occurred in the last two years
	10	Share site specific solar PV and/or solar and storage permit data, including addresses, with first responders and their departments. (e.g. through software that allows users to view searchable, filterable data about a specific site and system).
PI-25	5	Clearly identify all local amendments to model codes where local code deviates from model code for solar and solar plus storage. Summarize those local amendments on a public webpage
	10	Demonstrate that current model code (IRC, IBC, and NEC) cycle is implemented in the community for solar and solar plus storage (codes must be most recent editions or penultimate edition)).
PI-26	10	Share site specific solar PV and/or solar and storage permit data, including addresses, with first responders and their departments. (e.g. through software that allows users to view searchable, filterable data about a specific site and system).
	5	Clearly identify all local amendments to model codes where local code deviates from model code for solar and solar plus storage. Summarize those local amendments on a public webpage
PI-27	10	Demonstrate that current model code (IRC, IBC, and NEC) cycle is implemented in the community for solar and solar plus storage (codes must be most recent editions or penultimate edition)).
	10	Share site specific solar PV and/or solar and storage permit data, including addresses, with first responders and their departments. (e.g. through software that allows users to view searchable, filterable data about a specific site and system).
PI-28	5	Clearly identify all local amendments to model codes where local code deviates from model code for solar and solar plus storage. Summarize those local amendments on a public webpage
	10	Demonstrate that current model code (IRC, IBC, and NEC) cycle is implemented in the community for solar and solar plus storage (codes must be most recent editions or penultimate edition)).

	Req'd	
PZ-1	5	Review zoning requirements and identify restrictions that intentionally or unintentionally prohibit solar PV development. Compile findings in a memo. (Required for Bronze). Examples include: height restrictions, set-back requirements, screening requirements, visibility restrictions, etc.
PZ-2	5	Present PZ-1 memo findings to planning commission or relevant body. Draft proposed language for changes to zoning code based on PZ-1 memo and PZ-2 dialogue. Involve planners and/or local zoning experts and/or the public (e.g. through community-based organizations) in the creation of the draft language.
PZ-3	0	
PZ-4	10	Post an online document from the Planning/Zoning Department that states accessory use solar PV is allowed by-right in all major zones. (e.g. via a zoning determination letter). (Required for Silver unless Gold Requirement PZ-5 is achieved. If PZ-5 is achieved, PZ-4 is not necessary.)
PZ-5		Codify in the zoning ordinance that accessory use rooftop solar PV is explicitly allowed by-right in all major zones. (Required for Gold, PZ-4 is optional)

PZ-6	10	ensure the zoning ordinance language does not include intentional or unintentional barriers to accessory use rooftop solar PV, including but not limited to aesthetic or performance standards, screening requirements, limits to visibility, excessive restrictions to system size or rooftop coverage, glare or glint regulations, and subjective design reviews. (Require for Gold, PZ-4 is optional)
PZ-7	5	Ensure the zoning ordinance permits small ground-mounted solar PV as an accessory use in at least one zoning district.
PZ-8	5	Ensure the zoning ordinance exempts small ground-mounted solar PV from certain restrictions on accessory uses (e.g. setbacks, coverage or impervious surface calculations, or other restrictions).
PZ-9	5	Ensure the zoning ordinance establishes a clear regulatory pathway for large-scale solar PV (e.g. through a special use permit or through inclusion among allowed conditional uses).
PZ-10	10	Ensure the zoning ordinance includes a native perennial vegetation and/or habitat-friendly ground cover requirement or standard for large-scale solar PV.
PZ-11	5	Ensure the zoning ordinance enables co-location of solar PV with an agricultural use such as grazing, apiaries, or crops (agrivoltaics).

	5	Ensure the zoning ordinance requires a decommissioning plan that outlines the terms and conditions for a large-scale solar PV system's proper removal at the end of its useful life cycle or in the event of cessation of operation. (The decommissioning plan may include steps to remove the system, requirements for disposal and/or recycling of system components, and restoration as needed to allow for return to agriculture or other land use).
PZ-12		
	5	Ensure the zoning ordinance establishes solar energy zones and/or solar overlays for large-scale solar PV.
PZ-13		
	10	Require new construction to be solar ready in at least one zoning district by adopting Appendix U (International Code Council), Appendix RB (International Energy Conservation Code), or another mechanism.
PZ-14		
	20	Codify a solar requirement for new construction and/or retrofits meeting a specific threshold, in at least one zoning district.
PZ-15		
	10	Require new construction affordable housing and multifamily housing to be solar ready
PZ-16		
	10	
PZ-17		Provide clear guidance for the installation of solar PV in areas such as historic properties, flood zones or special overlay districts

PZ-18	10	Train planning and zoning staff on best practices in planning and zoning for solar PV. Training must have occurred in the past two years.
PZ-19	5	Post an online fact sheet that provides an overview of what zoning allows for solar PV under what conditions and in which districts (e.g. types and sizes of solar systems permitted, the processes required, and other relevant information).
PZ-20	10	Include specific solar PV goals, metrics, and strategies in the most current published version of relevant local plans (e.g. energy plan, climate plan, comprehensive plan).
PZ-21	5	Draft new or updated language and provide a timeline for the inclusion of specific solar PV goals, metrics, and/or strategies into existing and/or future plans.
PZ-22	5	Share solar PV progression towards achieving targets or metrics from PZ-20 on the solar landing page.
PZ-23	10	Include specific large-scale solar PV goals, metrics, and strategies in the most current published version of relevant local plans (e.g. energy plan, climate plan, comprehensive plan).
PZ-24	20	Develop a solar PV assessment that identifies community-wide feasibility for solar PV development within a jurisdiction (differentiate between large-scale, municipal, etc.)
PZ-25	10	Enable solar rights through a local solar access ordinance.

PZ-26	20	Codify in the zoning ordinance that accessory use energy storage systems are explicitly allowed by-right in all major zones.
GO-1	20	Install solar PV on local government facilities and/or local government-controlled land. (Required for Platinum)
GO-2	10	Discuss community goals for solar PV, net metering, community solar, and/or interconnection processes with the local utility and explore areas for future collaboration.
GO-3	10	Coordinate with regional organizations and/or local governments to engage utilities on advancing solar policies such as utility procurement of solar PV, green tariffs, and/or interconnection process improvements.
GO-4	20	Demonstrate coordination between local government inspectors and utility staff to reduce Permission to Operate timeline for solar PV.
GO-5	10	Conduct feasibility analysis for solar PV on local government facilities and/or local government-controlled land.
GO-6	20	Install solar PV integrated with other technologies such as battery storage or electric vehicle charging on local government facilities and/or local government-controlled land.

	20	
GO-7		Install solar PV on local government-controlled brownfields and/or under-utilized properties.
	10	Require new local government facilities and/or facility retrofits meeting a specific threshold to be solar ready.
GO-8		
	20	Procure solar energy for municipal operations through an offsite physical PPA, virtual PPA, green tariff, or similar structure.
GO-9		
	5	
GO-10		Obtain a Community Benefits Agreement with a solar developer for solar installation. Post metrics related to the number of municipal solar PV or solar PV plus storage/EV installations and installed capacity, municipal solar PV energy procured (ownership, PPAs, community solar offtake), and percent (%) of municipal energy usage offset by renewable energy.
	10	
GO-11		
	10	Directly install or provide technical or financial support for the installation of solar PV on affordable housing, multifamily housing, community-based organizations and/or resilience hubs.
GO-12		
	10	Train local government staff on regulatory and (where applicable) wholesale market barriers to solar deployment and potential engagement pathways to address these barriers. Training must have occurred in the past two years.
GO-13		

GO-14	10	Train local government staff on best practices and issues regarding solar interconnection with the local utility. Training must have occurred within the past two years.
	10	Post a solar landing page on local government's website with information that may include the community's solar goals, educational materials and tools that promote solar, and resources for solar development (e.g. permitting checklist, application forms, zoning regulations, etc.). (Required for Silver).
CE-1	20	Establish partnerships with local community-based organizations or other organizations focused on serving disadvantaged communities within your community to define your community's solar equity goals, development implementation strategies, and establish a plan for tracking and reporting on progress. (Required for Platinum).
CE-2	5	Post online resources about residential and commercial solar PV financing options and incentives.
CE-3	5	Post online resources about consumer protection and solar PV.
CE-4	5	Post an online summary of state policies related to a property owner's solar access and solar rights, including links to state-level policy.
CE-5		

CE-6	5	Post an online summary of state policies related to Homeowner Associations (HOAs) ability to regulate and/or restrict solar PV, including links to state-level policy.
	5	Post online resources about solar installers and/or solar quote platforms for solar PV.
CE-7	5	Post an online solar map for your community.
CE-8	5	Post an online dashboard or summary of solar PV metrics for your community, including total installed solar PV capacity, solar PV + storage installations, and community solar and/or solarize subscribers (if applicable). Metrics should identify solar PV adoption in disadvantaged communities as well.
CE-9	5	Distribute solar job training and career opportunities in coordination with local colleges and/or workforce development organizations.
	5	Demonstrate local government support for local solar projects through speeches, press releases, opinion articles, etc.
CE-10	10	Discuss solar PV goals and/or strategies for increasing solar PV development, including large-scale solar plans, solar access, and/or solar adoption in disadvantaged communities, within an appropriate committee, commission, taskforce, and/or working group. (e.g. solar is a recurring agenda item during monthly sustainability commission meetings).
CE-11		
CE-12		

	5	
CE-13		Support a solar informational session and/or solar tour explaining solar PV opportunities and policies. Show that session/tour was made accessible to all members of the community including those in disadvantaged communities. Session/Tour must have occurred within the last two years.
	20	
MD-1		Demonstrate activity in state regulatory and/or legislative proceedings regarding solar PV.
	20	
MD-2		Support a community-wide group purchase program (e.g. Solarize). Program must have occurred within the last 2 years.
	10	Define and implement a pathway specifically for low-to-moderate income (LMI)
MD-3		residents to participate in a community-wide group purchase program through program design and/or financing support options.
	20	
MD-4		Support a community solar program.
	10	
MD-5		Define and implement a pathway specifically for low-to-moderate income (LMI) residents to participate in a community solar program through program design and/or financing support options.

MD-6	20	Provide residents with Community Choice Aggregation/Energy that includes solar PV as a power generation source.
	10	Provide a PACE financing program that includes solar PV as an eligible technology.
MD-7	20	Provide local incentives or locally-enabled finance (e.g. a revolving loan fund) for solar PV and/or solar PV + technologies (e.g. battery storage, and/or electric vehicle charging).
	5	Provide local incentives for solar PV to low-to-moderate income (LMI) households, disadvantaged communities, Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), and/or non-profit organizations that provide community services.
MD-8	20	Partner with financial institutions and/or foundations to offer loans, rebates, grants, or other incentives for solar PV projects. (Financial institutions could include entities such as a local or regional bank, CDFI, or credit union).
MD-9		
MD-10		

Varies	The actions identified in the categories above represent many of the most common and impactful efforts communities are taking to make going solar easier and more affordable for residents and businesses.
IA-1	However, we know that communities across the country are developing innovative ways to promote and deploy solar energy. If your community has taken action that was not captured in any of the credits above, please share it with us.

Verify

- Provide a link to the online solar PV permitting checklist.
- Provide a signed memo with details about the permit training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department), date and time, location, agenda, and presentation/slides.
- Provide a signed memo with details about the inspection training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department), date and time, location, agenda, and presentation/slides.
- Provide a link to a webpage outlining a permitting pathway for small PV systems of less than three days.
- Provide a link to the online automated platform
- Utilize SolSmart Solar Permitting Checklist (see PI-1) to summarize instructions for using the automated platform
- Provide a link to this information posted on the community's website or solar landing page. Include date when the information was last updated and when tracking began.
- Provide a link to the standard solar PV permit application form.

- Provide a link to a document or web page outlining a streamlined and standard permit review policy
- Provide details in an e-mail or other written documentation from a permitting official or staff member describing the policy is also acceptable
- Provide a link to the permit application form used for small rooftop solar PV systems
- Provide a link to the online platform and instructions for submission and approval
- If an email-based online process is used:
 - 1) Provide details from building officials or staff describing the process
 - 2) Provide a copy of a sample email with personal and confidential information removed
- Signed memo that includes date, attendees, presenter, summary of discussion topics and next steps
- Provide a link to the permit fee schedule or other officially approved document that shows solar PV permit fees are exempt or waived
- Provide a link to the permit fee schedule or other officially approved document that shows solar PV permit fees are exempt or waived with detail on the income qualifications

(t

- Provide a link to the permit fee schedule or a document that outlines the permit fees applied to a solar installation
- Provide a narrative that explains the costs incurred in processing the permits (this should include estimates of the amount of staff hours for each stage of the process and the hourly cost of staff time). This narrative should show that the fee is not significantly higher than these costs.

- Provide link to online permitting checklist for solar plus, EV charging or other "solar plus" technologies

- Provide link to the online ground-mount solar PV permitting checklist

- Provide a link to the online document outlining the inspection process and requirements.

- Provide details about the solar PV inspection process that includes information on the type of inspections (and which departments are involved) and total number inspection trips required

- Provide details about the solar PV inspection process that includes information on inspection appointment times and how to request an appointment

- Provide a link to the online platform for inspection scheduling

- If an email-based online process is used:

- 1) Provide details from building officials or staff describing the process

- 2) Provide a copy of a sample email with personal and confidential information removed

- Include details on virtual, photo, or another innovative inspection practice in the community's Inspection Checklist (PI-1); or

- "• Describe the innovative practices in a signed memo

- Provide a link to the online document outlining the inspection process and requirements.
- Provide a signed memo with details about the fire and safety staff training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department), date and time, location

- Provide a signed memo with details about emergency response plans and procedures
- Provide a link to the requirement in the community's code of ordinances

- Provide details about the process for information sharing, including how fire and safety staff received the data
- Provide a link to the platform that allows fire and safety staff to access the data

- Provide a link to this information posted on the community's website or solar landing page

- Provide a link to this information posted on the community's website or solar landing page. Include date when the information was last updated and when tracking began.

- Provide a signed SolSmart Zoning Review Memo.
- Provide meeting minutes, meeting agenda, or materials prepared for the meeting (e.g., handouts and slides) that demonstrate a discussion about the zoning review.

- Provide draft language of the proposed zoning ordinance changes that clarify solar energy requirements, address gaps identified by PZ-1 memo, and remove barriers to solar development
- Provide a link to an online document (and the parent webpage) that clarifies that accessory solar PV is an allowed or by-right use in all major zones.

- This document should:

- 1) show that the process does not involve staff discretion, special permits, conditional permits, use permits, or variances

- 2) have language that demonstrates its applicability in all major zones

- 3) be made public; and

- 4) be dated and signed by a Department or Committee head

- Provide a link to the zoning ordinance, use table and/or land use regulations that codify solar as an accessory use and is an allowed, permitted or by-right use. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations regarding accessory use solar. Please indicate the relevant section(s) that describe the review process, standards, or related exemptions applicable to accessory use rooftop solar

- Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that allows small ground-mounted solar PV as an accessory use. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that exempts small ground-mounted solar PV from certain restrictions on accessory uses. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that establishes a regulatory pathway for large-scale solar PV development. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that includes language about a native perennial vegetation and/or habitat-friendly ground cover requirement or standard. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that includes language enabling the co-location of solar with an agricultural use. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that includes language about a decommissioning plan for large-scale solar PV. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that establishes solar energy zones and/or solar overlays for large-scale solar PV. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide a link to the adopted code(s) or language that requires new construction to be solar ready.

- Provide a link to the adopted code(s) or language that requires solar on new construction or retrofits.

- Provide a link to the adopted code(s) or language that requires new construction to be solar ready.

- Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that includes guidance on the installation of solar PV on historic properties and in special overlay districts. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide a link to guidance for the installation of solar PV on historic properties and in special overlay districts

- Provide a signed memo with details about the planning and zoning training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department), date and time, location, agenda, and presentation/slides.

- Provide a link to the fact sheet, zoning determination letter, or other online document that clarifies and summarizes how the zoning ordinance and land use regulations regulate solar energy.

- Provide a link to the relevant plans that incorporate solar PV goals, metrics, and/or strategies. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide draft language of the proposed plan changes that relate to solar energy and a timeline for inclusion in future plans.

- Provide a link to the relevant information on the solar landing page. Include date when the information was last updated.

- Provide a link to the relevant plans that incorporate large-scale solar PV goals, metrics, and/or strategies. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide a link to the PV assessment.
- Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that protect solar rights and access. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide a link to the zoning ordinance or land use regulations that codify energy storage as an accessory use and allowed or by-right use. Please indicate the relevant section(s).

- Provide news articles, a press release announcing the commissioned system, or webpage that summarizes the details of the installation(s) including total number of systems, size, location, and photos.

- Provide meeting minutes (including a list of follow-up action items), e-mail correspondence, meeting agenda, materials prepared for the meeting (e.g., handouts and slides), or other evidence that at least one meeting occurred with your local utility.

- Provides details about your community's participation in coordinated efforts between local governments and/or regional organizations to engage utilities with the goal of advancing solar initiatives.

- Provide details about the coordination process and explaining how this process reduces the time between inspection and Permission to Operate.

- Provide a link to the feasibility analysis or details about the feasibility analysis that was conducted - who conducted, what were the sites, when was it conducted, what were the recommendations and next steps.

- Provide a news article, a press release announcing the commissioned system, or webpage that summarizes the details of the installation(s) integrated with other technologies including total number of systems, size, location, technologies used, and photos.

- Provide a news article, a press release announcing the commissioned system, or webpage that summarizes the details of the solar installation(s) including total number of systems, size, location, and photos.

- Provide a link to adopted code(s) or language that require new construction and/or retrofits of local government facilities to be solar ready.

- Provide a document such as a news article, contract, press release, or similar official document containing the details how the local government has procured solar energy.

- Provide a copy of the CBA or a public document that summarized the details of the CBA.

- Provide a link to this information on the solar landing page. Include date when the information was last updated and date tracking began.

- Provide links and/or signed memo outlining the support provided.

- Provide a signed memo with details about the regulatory and wholesale market training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title, department), date and time, location.

- Provide a signed memo with details about the interconnection training including name of training, name of trainer, attendees (name, title department), date and time, location.

- Provide a link to the solar landing page.

- Signed memo summarizing the names of partner organizations, scope of the partnership, defined goals, outcomes (or intended outcomes), plan for tracking progress, and next steps for the partnership.

- Provide a link to this information on the solar landing page.

- Provide a link to a webpage containing consumer protection resources.

- Provide a link to a webpage with information about state policies relating to solar access and/or rights.

- Provide a link to the summary of state policies relating to Homeowner Associations and solar PV.
- Provide a link to a webpage that contains information about local solar installers and/or solar quote platforms.
- Provide a link to the solar map for your community.

- Provide a link to a webpage displaying solar PV metrics. Include date when the information was last updated and date tracking began.

- Provide posted job descriptions, screenshots from employment websites, or advertisement of job trainings.

- Provide a link to this information posted on the community's website or solar landing page.

- Provide meeting minutes (including a list of follow-up action items), or materials prepared for the meeting (e.g., handouts and slides) from within the past year and provide documentation of the regularly scheduled frequency of these meetings.

- Provide a link(s) to details about the solar informational session or tour such as an agenda, date, time, and location.
- Provide a signed memo describing efforts to make sessions inclusive, including presentational materials or tour itinerary, and information on the level of attendance.

- Provide a link to public comments on solar energy or related energy proceedings, the minutes and/or recordings of meetings attended by representatives of the local government, or a signed memo summarizing involvement in the proceedings.
- Provide a link to a website where the Solarize campaign has been publicly announced.
- Provide details about the status of an ongoing solarize campaign or final metrics of a completed solarize campaign.

- Link to information on solar landing page or provide signed memo summarizing the forms of financing support or program design elements that support LMI residents in solar PV group purchase program.
- Provide a link to information about the community solar program, including any outreach materials and details about program design.

- Provide details that explain program design elements, including outreach and financing, that support LMI resident participation in a community solar program.

- Provide a link to details about a Community Choice program (with solar PV as a power generation source) that is available for residents.
- Provide a link to the local ordinance creating a PACE program.
- Provide a link to the PACE program webpage.

- Provide a link to an ordinance creating local incentives or financing options.
- Provide a link to an application or form that are required for a solar PV system to be eligible for incentives or financing.

- Provide a signed memo describing the local incentives and who is eligible to receive them.
- Provide a link to a webpage or press release with program information.

- Provide link to financing options for solar energy.
- Provide a signed memo detailing how the local government partnered with the financial institution to offer a financial incentive for solar energy.

- Provide a signed memo describing the innovative action and include any supporting documentation or links that provide additional details.

TA Status

TA Plan - Credit Recommended to Achieve Designation

TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering

TA Complete - Ready for Designation Review

Verified by Designation Review

Not Verified

N/A - Credit Not Attainable/Credit Not of Interest

Baseline Status

Verification Needed - Additional Documentation Required

Credit Complete - Ready for Designation Review

Solar Statement Status

Not Complete - Signed Solar Statement Needed

Complete - Signed Solar Statement Received

Category

Points	Status
0	TA Plan - Credit Recommended to Achieve Designation
0	TA In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering
0	TA Complete - Ready for Designation Review
0	Verified by Designation Review
Total 0	

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Wisconsin Solar Model Ordinance



Photo by Katharine Chute

Prepared by Great Plains Institute with support from Sunshot and the Energy Foundation



**GREAT PLAINS
INSTITUTE**

Better Energy.
Better World.

Last Updated August 2020

Model Solar Ordinance – Wisconsin

Introduction

Wisconsin's solar energy resources are high quality and cost effective—as good as many states to the south and consistently available across the entire state. As solar energy system components have become more efficient and less costly, an increasing number of solar energy systems have been installed in Wisconsin. Market opportunities for solar development have dramatically increased in Wisconsin over the last five years, such that communities must now address solar installations as land use and development issues. Solar energy components continue to improve in efficiency and decline in price; large-scale solar energy is expected to become the least expensive form of electric energy generation within a few years, surpassing wind energy and natural gas in levelized cost of energy.

But solar energy is much more than just low-cost energy generation. Households and businesses seeking to reduce their carbon footprint see solar energy as a strong complement to energy efficiency. Agricultural producers see solar energy as an economic hedge against price volatility in commodity crops. Utilities see solar's declining cost, high reliability, and free fuel as a means to put downward pressure on electric rates. Corporate, institutional, and municipal buyers are actively acquiring carbon-free solar generation to meet climate and clean energy goals. And innovative solar site designs are capturing habitat and water quality co-benefits by using solar with habitat-friendly ground cover to restore eco-system functions.

Model Solar Energy Standards

This ordinance is based on the model solar energy ordinance originally created for Solar Minnesota, under a Million Solar Roofs grant from the U. S. Department of Energy and updated for the three-state Grow Solar initiative, funded by Rooftop Solar Challenge Phase 2. It has been substantially updated several times to address additional issues and opportunities for Wisconsin communities and the evolving solar industry, last updated May 2020

Solar Energy Issues

Local governments in Wisconsin are seeing increasing interest by property owners in solar energy installations and are having to address a variety of solar land uses in their development regulation. Given the continuing cost reductions and growing value of clean energy, solar development will increasingly be a local development opportunity, from the rooftop to the large-scale solar farm. Three primary issues tie solar energy to development regulations:

1. **Land use conflicts and synergies.** Solar energy systems have few nuisances. But solar development can compete for land with other development options, and visual impacts and perceived safety concerns sometimes create opposition to solar installations. Good design and attention to aesthetics can address most concerns for rooftop or accessory use systems. Good siting and site design standards for large- and community-scale solar can similarly resolve conflicts and create co-benefits from solar development, such as restoring habitat, diversifying agricultural businesses, and improving surface and ground waters.
2. **Protecting access to solar resources.** Solar resources are a valuable component of property ownership. Development regulations can inadvertently limit a property owner's ability to access their solar resource. Communities should consider how to protect and develop solar resources in zoning and subdivision processes, consistent with state law (Wisconsin Statute §66.0401).
3. **Encouraging appropriate solar development.** Local government can go beyond simply removing regulatory barriers and encourage solar development that provides economic development, climate protection, and natural resources co-benefits. Local governments have a variety of tools to encourage appropriately sited and designed solar development to meet local goals.

Components of a Solar Standards Ordinance

Solar energy standards should:

1. *Create an as-of-right solar installation path for property-owners.* Create a clear regulatory path (an as-of-right installation) to solar development for accessory uses and — if appropriate — for principal uses such as large-scale solar and ground-mount community shared solar installations.
2. *Enable principal solar uses.* Define where community- and large-solar energy land uses are appropriate as a principal or primary use, set development standards and procedures to guide development, and capture co-benefit opportunities for water quality, habitat, agriculture.
3. *Limit regulatory barriers to developing solar resources.* Ensure that access to solar resources is not unduly limited by height, setback, or coverage standards, unless the restriction satisfies the conditions of Wisconsin Statute §66.0401 (1m) a-c.
4. *Define appropriate aesthetic standards.* Retain an as-of-right installation pathway for accessory uses while balancing design concerns in urban neighborhoods and historic districts. Per state law, design or aesthetic standards may not restrict the installation or use of solar energy systems, unless the restriction satisfies the conditions of Wisconsin Statute §66.0401 (1m) a-c.
5. *Address cross-property solar access issues.* Ensure solar installations have protected access across property lines in the subdivision process and in all zoning districts, per state law (Wisconsin Statute §700.41).
6. *Promote “solar-ready” design.* Every building that has a solar resource should be built to seamlessly use it. Encourage builders to use solar-ready subdivision and building design.
7. *Include solar in regulatory incentives.* Encourage desired solar development by including it in regulatory incentives; density bonuses, parking standards, flexible zoning standards, financing/ grant programs, promotional efforts.

Different Community Types and Settings

The model ordinance language addresses land use concerns for both urban and rural areas, and thus not all the provisions may be appropriate for every community. Issues of solar access and nuisances associated with small or accessory use solar energy systems are of less consequence in rural areas, where lot sizes are almost always greater than one acre. Large-scale and community- scale solar (principal solar land uses) are much more likely to be proposed in rural areas rather than developed cities. However, urban areas should consider where community- or large-scale solar can add value to the community and enable economic development of a valuable local resource. Rural communities should address rooftop and accessory ground-mount development, although The standards used in this model are designed more for the urban circumstances.

This ordinance includes language addressing solar energy as an accessory use to the primary residential or commercial use in an urban area and language for principal solar uses more typically seen in rural communities. Communities should address both types of solar development.

Solar development is not one thing

Communities would not apply the same development and land use standards to an industrial facility and a single family home, merely because both are buildings. Community and large-scale solar development is a completely different land use than rooftop or backyard solar. Standards that are appropriate for large-scale solar may well be wholly inappropriate for rooftop solar and may unnecessarily restrict or stymie solar development opportunities of homes and business owners.

Model Ordinance

I. **Scope** — This article applies to all solar energy installations in Model Community.

II. **Purpose** — Model Community has adopted this regulation for the following purposes:

A. **Comprehensive Plan Goals** — To meet the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and preserve the health, safety and welfare of the community by promoting the safe, effective and efficient use of solar energy systems. The solar energy standards specifically implement the following goals from the Comprehensive Plan:

1. **Goal** — Encourage the use of local renewable energy resources, including appropriate applications for wind, solar, and biomass energy.
2. **Goal** — Promote sustainable building design and management practices to serve current and future generations.
3. **Goal** — Assist local businesses to lower financial and regulatory risks and improve their economic, community, and environmental sustainability.
4. **Goal** — Efficiently invest in and manage public infrastructure systems to support development and growth.

Comprehensive Plan Goals

Tying the solar energy ordinance to Comprehensive Plan goals is particularly important for helping users (both Planning Commission and community members) understand why the community is developing and administering regulation.

The language here provides examples of different types of Comprehensive Plan goals, and other policy goals that the community may have that are served by enabling and encouraging solar development. The community should substitute its policy goals for these examples.

The Comprehensive Plan may not include goals that are enhanced by solar development, (such as climate protection or local resource economic goals). The community should consider creating a local energy plan or similar policy document to provide a policy foundation for solar development regulation.

B. **Climate Change Goals** — Model Community has committed to reducing carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions. Solar energy is an abundant, renewable, and nonpolluting energy resource and its conversion to electricity or heat reduces dependence on nonrenewable energy resources and decreases the air and water pollution that results from the use of conventional energy sources.

C. **Wisconsin Smart Planning** — Wisconsin Smart Planning principles must be considered when local governments make planning, zoning, development, and resource management decisions. Model Community has adopted Principle 3 – Clean, Renewable, and Efficient Energy – to encourage the promotion of clean energy use through increased access to renewable energy resources.

D. **Infrastructure** — Distributed solar photovoltaic systems will enhance the reliability and power quality of the power grid and make more efficient use of Model Community's electric distribution infrastructure.

E. **Local Resource** — Solar energy is an underused local energy resource and encouraging the use of solar energy will diversify the community's energy supply portfolio and reduce exposure to fiscal risks associated with fossil fuels.

F. **Improve Competitive Markets** — Solar energy systems offer additional energy choice to consumers and will improve competition in the electricity and natural gas supply market.

III. Definitions

Agrivoltaics – A solar energy system co-located on the same parcel of land as agricultural production, including crop production, grazing, apiaries, or other agricultural products or services.

Building-integrated Solar Energy Systems – A solar energy system that is an integral part of a principal or accessory building, rather than a separate mechanical device, replacing or substituting for an architectural or structural component of the building. Building-integrated systems include but are not limited to photovoltaic or hot water solar energy systems that are contained within roofing materials, windows, skylights, and awnings.

Community-Scale Solar Energy System – A commercial solar energy system that converts sunlight into electricity for the primary purpose of serving electric demands off-site from the facility, either retail or wholesale. Community-scale systems are principal uses and projects typically cover less than 20 acres.

Community Solar Garden – A solar energy system that provides retail electric power (or a financial proxy for retail power) to multiple community members or businesses residing or located off-site from the location of the solar energy system. Also referred to as shared solar.

Grid-intertie Solar Energy System – A photovoltaic solar energy system that is connected to an electric circuit served by an electric utility company.

Ground-mount – A solar energy system mounted on a rack or pole that rests or is attached to the ground. Ground-mount systems can be either accessory or principal uses.

Large-Scale Solar Energy System – A commercial solar energy system that converts sunlight into electricity for the primary purpose of wholesale sales of generated electricity. A large-scale solar energy system will have a project size greater than 20 acres and is the principal land use for the parcel(s) on which it is located.

Off-grid Solar Energy System – A photovoltaic solar energy system in which the circuits energized by the solar energy system are not electrically connected in any way to electric circuits that are served by an electric utility company.

Passive Solar Energy System – A solar energy system that captures solar light or heat without transforming it to another form of energy or transferring the energy via a heat exchanger.

Photovoltaic System – A solar energy system that converts solar energy directly into electricity.

Renewable Energy Easement, Solar Energy Easement – An easement that limits the height or location, or both, of permissible development on the burdened land in terms of a structure or vegetation, or both, for the purpose of providing access for the benefited land to wind or sunlight passing over the burdened land, consistent with Wis Statutes 700.35.

Solar Definitions

Not all these terms are used in this model ordinance, nor is this a complete list of solar definitions. As a community develops its own development standards for solar technology, many of the concepts defined here may be helpful in meeting local goals. For instance, solar daylighting devices may change the exterior appearance of the building, and the community may choose to distinguish between these devices and other architectural changes.

Differentiating Solar Uses by Size

Community-scale and Large-scale systems are defined here as occupying less than 20 acres and greater than 20 acres respectively. Some communities will use a lower number (ten acres) and some a higher number (up to 50 acres). An ex-urban city would use a lower number and a rural county could use a higher number. Community-scale is generally a size that can fit into the land use fabric of the community without assembly of separate parcels. Some communities have chosen not to distinguish between community- and large-scale, but use a single large-scale designation.

Roof-mount — A solar energy system mounted on a rack that is fastened to or ballasted on a structure roof. Roof-mount systems are accessory to the principal use.

Roof Pitch — The final exterior slope of a roof calculated by the rise over the run, typically but not exclusively expressed in twelfths such as 3/12, 9/12, 12/12.

Solar Access — Unobstructed access to direct sunlight on a lot or building through the entire year, including access across adjacent parcel air rights, for the purpose of capturing direct sunlight to operate a solar energy system.

Solar Carport — A solar energy system of any size that is installed on a carport structure that is accessory to a parking area, and which may include electric vehicle supply equipment or energy storage facilities.

Solar Collector — A device, structure or a part of a device or structure for which the primary purpose is to transform solar radiant energy into thermal, mechanical, chemical, or electrical energy. The collector does not include frames, supports, or mounting hardware.

Solar Daylighting — Capturing and directing the visible light spectrum for use in illuminating interior building spaces in lieu of artificial lighting, usually by adding a device or design element to the building envelope.

Solar Energy — Radiant energy received from the sun that can be collected in the form of heat or light by a solar collector.

Solar Energy System — A device, array of devices, or structural design feature, the purpose of which is to provide for generation or storage of electricity from sunlight, or the collection, storage and distribution of solar energy for space heating or cooling, daylight for interior lighting, or water heating.

Solar Hot Air System — (also referred to as Solar Air Heat or Solar Furnace) — A solar energy system that includes a solar collector to provide direct supplemental space heating by heating and re-circulating conditioned building air. The most efficient performance includes a solar collector to preheat air or supplement building space heating, typically using a vertically mounted collector on a south-facing wall.

Solar Hot Water System — A system that includes a solar collector and a heat exchanger that heats or preheats water for building heating systems or other hot water needs, including residential domestic hot water and hot water for commercial processes.

Solar Mounting Devices — Racking, frames, or other devices that allow the mounting of a solar collector onto a roof surface or the ground.

Solar Resource — A view of the sun from a specific point on a lot or building that is not obscured by any vegetation, building, or object for a minimum of four hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM Standard time on all days of the year, and can be measured in annual watts per square meter.

Solar Resource

Understanding what defines a “solar resource” is foundational to how land use regulation affects solar development. Solar energy resources are not simply where sunlight falls. A solar resource has minimum spatial and temporal characteristics, and needs to be considered not only today but also into the future. Solar energy systems are economic only if the annual solar resource (measured in annual watts per square meter) are sufficiently high to justify the cost of installation. The resource is affected by the amount of annual shading, orientation of the panel, and typical atmospheric conditions. Solar resources on a particular site can be mapped and quantified, similar to quantifying other site resources that enhance property value; mineral resources, prime soils for agriculture, water, timber, habitat.

IV. Permitted Accessory Use — Solar energy systems are a permitted accessory use in all zoning districts where structures of any sort are allowed, subject to certain requirements as set forth below. Solar carports and associated electric vehicle charging equipment are a permitted accessory use on surface parking lots in all districts regardless of the existence of another building. Solar energy systems that do not meet the following design standards will require a conditional use permit.

A. Height — Solar energy systems must meet the following height requirements:

1. Building- or roof- mounted solar energy systems shall not exceed the maximum allowed height in any zoning district. For purposes of height measurement, solar energy systems other than building-integrated systems shall be given an equivalent exception to height standards as building-mounted mechanical devices or equipment.
2. Ground- or pole-mounted solar energy systems shall not exceed 15 feet in height when oriented at maximum tilt.
3. Solar carports in non-residential districts shall not exceed 20 feet in height.

B. Setback — Solar energy systems must meet the accessory structure setback for the zoning district and primary land use associated with the lot on which the system is located, except as allowed below.

1. **Roof- or Building-mounted Solar Energy Systems** — the collector surface and mounting devices for roof-mounted solar energy systems shall not extend beyond the exterior perimeter of the building on which the system is mounted or built, unless the collector and mounting system has been explicitly engineered to safely extend beyond the edge, and setback standards are not violated. Exterior piping for solar hot water systems shall be allowed to extend beyond the perimeter of the building on a side-yard exposure. Solar collectors mounted on the sides of buildings and serving as awnings are considered to be building-integrated systems and are regulated as awnings.
2. **Ground-mounted Solar Energy Systems** — Ground-mounted solar energy systems may not extend into the side-yard or rear setback when oriented at minimum design tilt, except as otherwise allowed for building mechanical systems.

C. Visibility — Solar energy systems in residential districts shall be designed to minimize visual impacts from the public right-of-way, as described in C.1-3, to the extent that doing so does not affect the cost or efficacy of the system, consistent with WI Statute §66.0401.

Limitations on Zoning Restrictions

Under Wisconsin Statute §66.0401, local governments may not place any restriction on the installation or use of solar energy systems unless the restriction:

- Serves to preserve or protect public **health or safety**
- Does not significantly increase the system cost or decrease the efficiency
- Allows for an alternative system of comparable cost and efficiency

Height - Rooftop System

This ordinance notes exceptions to the height standard when other exceptions for rooftop equipment are granted in the ordinance. Communities should directly reference the exception language rather than use the placeholder language here.

Height - Ground or Pole Mounted System

This ordinance sets a 15-foot height limit, which is typical for residential accessory uses. Some communities allow solar to be higher than other accessory uses in order to enable capture of the lot's solar resource when lots and buildings are closer together. An alternative is to balance height with setback, allowing taller systems if set back farther— for instance, an extra foot of height for every extra two feet of setback. In rural (or large lot) areas, solar resources are unlikely to be constrained by trees or buildings on adjacent lots and the lot is likely to have adequate solar resource for a lower (10-15 foot) ground-mount application.

Visibility and Aesthetics

Aesthetic regulation should be tied to design principles rather than targeted at a specific land use. If the community already regulates aesthetics in residential districts, this model language provides guidance for balancing between interests of property owners who want to use their on-site solar resources and neighbors concerned with neighborhood character. Substantial evidence demonstrates that solar installations have no effect on property values of adjacent properties. But where aesthetic regulation is used to protect community character, these standards provide balance between competing goals.

1. **Building Integrated Photovoltaic Systems** — Building integrated photovoltaic solar energy systems shall be allowed regardless of whether the system is visible from the public right-of-way, provided the building component in which the system is integrated meets all required setback, land use or performance standards for the district in which the building is located.

Building Integrated PV

Building integrated solar energy systems can include solar energy systems built into roofing (existing technology includes both solar shingles and solar roofing tiles), into awnings, skylights, and walls.

2. **Aesthetic restrictions** — Roof-mount or ground-mount solar energy systems shall not be restricted for aesthetic reasons if the system is not visible from the closest edge of any public right-of-way other than an alley, or if the system meets the following standards.

Roof-Mounted Solar Energy Systems

This ordinance sets a threshold for pitched roof installations that they not be steeper than the finished roof pitch. Mounted systems steeper than the finished roof pitch change the appearance of the roof, and create additional considerations in regard to the wind and drift load on structural roof components. If the aesthetic impacts are not a concern to the community, the structural issues can be addressed in the building permit, as described in this Toolkit.

- a. Roof-mounted systems on pitched roofs that are visible from the nearest edge of the front right-of-way shall have the same finished pitch as the roof and be no more than ten inches above the roof.

- b. Roof-mount systems on flat roofs that are visible from the nearest edge of the front right-of-way shall not be more than five feet above the finished roof and are exempt from any rooftop equipment or mechanical system screening.

Reflectors

Unlike a solar collector, reflector systems do create a potential glare nuisance. While reflector systems are unusual, communities may want to include this reference as a precaution.

3. **Reflectors** — All solar energy systems using a reflector to enhance solar production shall minimize glare from the reflector affecting adjacent or nearby properties.

Impervious Surface Coverage

Rather than consider the solar panel for a ground-mount system as a roof, this provision recognizes that the ground under the panel can mitigate stormwater risks if it is kept in vegetation so that rain water can infiltrate. Any effects are de minimis for a small array if the lot is otherwise within coverage ratios.

- D. **Lot Coverage** — Ground-mount systems total collector area shall not exceed half the building footprint of the principal structure.

1. Ground-mount systems shall be exempt from lot coverage or impervious surface standards if the soil under the collector is maintained in vegetation and not compacted.
2. Ground-mounted systems shall not count toward accessory structure limitations.
3. Solar carports in non-residential districts are exempt from lot coverage limitations.

Roof Coverage

National Fire Code standards recommend keeping solar arrays well away from roof edges and peak in order to enable some fire fighting access. Different fire departments have addressed this in different ways. Recommendations for solar friendly permitting that accommodate Fire Code recommendations can be found in the Solar America Board of Codes and Standards.

- E. **Historic Buildings** — Solar energy systems on buildings within designated historic districts or on locally designated historic buildings (exclusive of State or Federal historic designation) must receive approval of the community Heritage Preservation Commission, consistent with the standards for solar energy systems on historically designated buildings published by the U.S. Department of Interior.

Plan Approval

This process is generally part of the process for obtaining a building permit. If the community does not issue building permits, it can be tied to a land use permit instead. For rural areas or cities without standards for rooftop systems, the plan approval section may be eliminated.

- F. **Plan Approval Required** — All solar energy systems requiring a building permit or other permit from Model Community shall provide a site plan for review.

1. Plan Applications — Plan applications for solar energy systems shall be accompanied by to-scale horizontal and vertical (elevation) drawings. The drawings must show the location of the system on the building or on the property for a ground-mount system, including the property lines.
2. Plan Approvals — Applications that meet the design requirements of this ordinance shall be granted administrative approval by the zoning official and shall not require Planning Commission review. Plan approval does not indicate compliance with Building Code or Electric Code.

G. Approved Solar Components — Electric solar energy system components must have a UL or equivalent listing and solar hot water systems must have an SRCC rating.

H. Compliance with Building Code — All solar energy systems shall meet approval of local building code officials, consistent with the State of Wisconsin Building Code or the Building Code adopted by the local jurisdiction, and solar thermal systems shall comply with HVAC-related requirements of the Energy Code.

I. Compliance with State Electric Code — All photovoltaic systems shall comply with the Wisconsin State Electric Code.

J. Compliance with State Plumbing Code — Solar thermal systems shall comply with applicable Wisconsin State Plumbing Code requirements.

K. Utility Notification — All grid-intertie solar energy systems shall comply with the interconnection requirements of the electric utility. Off-grid systems are exempt from this requirement.

V. Principal Uses — Model Community encourages the development of commercial or utility scale solar energy systems where such systems present few land use conflicts with current and future development patterns. Ground-mounted solar energy systems that are the principal use on the development lot or lots are conditional uses in selected districts.

A. Principal Use General Standards

1. Site Design

a. Setbacks — Community- and large-scale solar arrays must meet the following setbacks;

1. Property line setback for buildings or structures in the district in which the system is located, except as other determined in 1.a.5 below.
2. Roadway setback of 150 feet from the ROW centerline of State highways and CSAHs, 100 feet for other roads, except as otherwise determined in 1.a.5 below.
3. Housing unit setback of 150 feet from any existing dwelling unit, except as other determined in 1.a.5 below.
4. Setback distance should be measured from the edge of the solar energy system array, excluding security fencing, screening, or berm.
5. All setbacks can be reduced by 50% if the array is fully screened from the setback point of measurement.

b. Screening — Community- and large-scale solar shall be screened from existing residential dwellings.

1. A Screening plan shall be submitted that identifies the type and extent of screening.
2. Screening shall be consistent with Model Community's screening ordinance or standards typically applied for other land uses requiring screening.
3. Screening shall not be required along property lines within the same zoning district, except where the adjoining lot has an existing residential uses.
4. Model Community may require screening where it determines there is a clear community interest in maintaining a viewshed.

Community-Scale Solar or Solar Gardens

Community solar systems differ from rooftop or solar farm installations primarily in regards to system ownership and disposition of the electricity generated, rather than land use considerations. There is, however, a somewhat greater community interest in community solar, and thus communities should consider creating a separate land use category.

This language limits the size of the garden to ten acres, which is an installation of no more than one MW of solar capacity. Communities should tailor this size limit to community standards, which may be smaller or larger.

Appropriate Setbacks

The community should consider balancing setback requirements and screening requirements for principal use solar. Since the primary impact to neighbors of large-scale solar is visual, screening becomes less useful, as the setbacks get larger (and vice versa).

The setback distances provided here are general examples that should be modified to be consistent with other setbacks already in the ordinance. Excessive setbacks that are unique to solar land uses, or that are similar to high nuisance land uses such as industrial uses or animal agriculture, are unjustified given the low level of risk or nuisance posed by the system.

Screening

The community should consider limiting screening of community- or large-scale solar to where there is a visual impact from an existing use, such as adjacent residential districts or uses. Solar energy systems may not need to be screened from adjacent lots if those lots are in agricultural use, are non-residential, or have low-intensity commercial use.

c. Ground cover and buffer areas — the following provisions shall apply to the clearing of existing vegetation and establishment of vegetated ground cover. Additional site-specific conditions may apply as required by Model Community.

1. Large-scale removal of mature trees on the site is discouraged. Model Community may set additional restrictions on tree clearing or require mitigation for cleared trees.
2. The applicant shall submit a vegetative management plan prepared by a qualified professional or reviewed and approved by a natural resource agency or authority, such as the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, County Soil and Water Conservation District, Land and Water Conservation Department or Natural Resource Conservation Service. The plan shall identify:
 - a. The natural resource professionals consulted or responsible for the plan
 - b. The conservation, habitat, eco-system, or agricultural goals, which may include: providing habitat for pollinators such as bees and monarch butterflies, providing habitat for wildlife such as upland nestine birds and other wildlife, establishing vegetation for livestock grazing, reducing on-site soil erosion, and improving or protecting surface or ground-water quality.
 - c. The intended mix of vegetation upon establishment.
 - d. The management methods and schedules for how the vegetation will be managed on an annual basis, with particular attention given to the establishment period of approximately three years.
3. Soils shall be planted and maintained in perennial vegetation for the full operational life of the project, to prevent erosion, manage run off and build soil.
4. Vegetative cover should include a mix of perennial grasses and wildflowers that will preferably result in a short stature prairie with a diversity of forbs or flowering plants that bloom throughout the growing season. Blooming shrubs may be used in buffer areas as appropriate for visual screening. Perennial vegetation (grasses and forbs) are preferably native to Wisconsin, but where appropriate to the vegetative management plan goals, may also include other naturalized and non-invasive species which provide habitat for pollinators and wildlife and/or other ecosystem services (i.e. clovers).
5. Plant material must not have been treated with systemic insecticides, particularly neonicotinoids.

Stormwater and Water Quality Standards

Perennial grasses and wildflowers planted under the panels, between arrays, and in setback or buffer areas will substantially mitigate the stormwater risks associated with solar arrays and result in less runoff than typically seen from many types of agriculture. Establishing and maintaining perennial ground cover can have important co-benefits to the community or the property owner. The ground cover standards in Section A.3. will mitigate many stormwater risks, although soil type and slope can still affect the need for additional stormwater mitigation.

Solar with native or perennial ground cover can provide multiple water quality benefits when converting from most agricultural crop uses. Both groundwater (limiting nitrate contamination) and surface waters (reducing phosphorus and sediment loading) can benefit if the system is appropriately designed.

d. Foundations — A qualified engineer shall certify that the foundation and design of the solar panel racking and support is within accepted professional standards, given local soil and climate conditions.

e. Power and communication lines — Power and communication lines running between banks of solar panels and to nearby electric substations or interconnections with buildings shall be buried underground. Exemptions may be granted by Model Community in instances where shallow bedrock, water courses, or other elements of the natural landscape interfere with the ability to bury lines, or distance makes undergrounding infeasible, at the discretion of the zoning administrator.

f. Fencing — Perimeter fencing for the site shall not include barbed wire or woven wire designs, and shall preferably use wildlife-friendly fencing standards that include clearance at the bottom. Alternative fencing can be used if the site is incorporating agrivoltaics.

2. Stormwater and NPDES — Solar farms are subject to Model Community’s stormwater management and erosion and sediment control provisions and NPDES permit requirements. Solar collectors shall not be considered impervious surfaces if the project complies with ground cover standards, as described in A.1.c. of this ordinance.

3. Other standards and codes — All solar farms shall be in compliance with all applicable local, state and federal regulatory codes, including the State of Wisconsin Uniform Building Code, as amended; and the National Electric Code, as amended.

4. Site Plan Required — The applicant shall submit a detailed site plan for both existing and proposed conditions, showing locations of all solar arrays, other structures, property lines, rights-of-way, service roads, floodplains, wetlands and other protected natural resources, topography, electric equipment, and all other characteristics requested by Model Community. The site plan should show all zoning districts and overlay districts.

5. Aviation Protection — For solar farms located within 500 feet of an airport or within approach zones of an airport, the applicant must complete and provide the results of a glare analysis through a qualitative analysis of potential impact, field test demonstration, or geometric analysis of ocular impact in consultation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Office of Airports, consistent with the Interim Policy, FAA Review of Solar Energy Projects on Federally Obligated Airports, or most recent version adopted by the FAA.

6. Agricultural Protection — Solar farms must comply with site assessment or soil identification standards that are intended to identify agricultural soils. Model Community may require mitigation for use of prime soils for solar array placement, including the following:

- a. Demonstrating co-location of agricultural uses (agrivoltaics) on the project site.
- b. Using an interim use or time-limited CUP that allows the site to be returned to agriculture at the end of life of the solar installation.
- c. Placing agricultural conservation easements on an equivalent number of prime soil acres adjacent to or surrounding the project site.
- d. Locating the project in a wellhead protection area for the purpose or removing agricultural uses from high risk recharge areas.

Site Plan

Solar farm developers should provide a site plan similar to that required by the community for any other development. Refer to your existing ordinance to guide site plan submittal requirements.

Aviation Standards, Glare

This standard was developed for the FAA for solar installations on airport grounds. It can also be used for solar farm and garden development in areas adjacent to airports. This standard is not appropriate for areas where reflected light is not a safety concern.

Agricultural Protection

If the community has ordinances that protect agricultural soils, this provision applies those same standards to solar development. Communities should understand, however, that solar farms do not pose the same level or type of risk to agricultural practices as does housing or commercial development. Solar farms can be considered an interim use that can be easily turned back to agriculture at the end of the solar farm’s life (usually 25 years.)

7. **Decommissioning** — A decommissioning plan shall be required to ensure that facilities are properly removed after their useful life.

a. Decommissioning of the system must occur in the event the project is not in use for 12 consecutive months.

b. The plan shall include provisions for removal of all structures and foundations, restoration of soil and vegetation and assurances that financial resources will be available to fully decommission the site.

c. Disposal of structures and/or foundations shall meet the provisions of the Model Community Solid Waste Ordinance.

d. Model Community may require the posting of a bond, letter of credit or the establishment of an escrow account to ensure proper decommissioning.

B. Community-Scale Solar — Model Community permits the development of community-scale solar, subject to the following standards and requirements:

1. **Rooftop gardens permitted** — Rooftop community systems are permitted in all districts where buildings are permitted.
2. **Community-scale uses** — Ground-mount community solar energy systems must cover no more than ten acres (project boundaries), and are a permitted use in industrial and agricultural districts, and permitted with standards or conditional in all other non-residential districts. Ground-mount solar developments covering more than ten acres shall be considered large-scale solar.
3. **Dimensional standards** — All structures must comply with setback and height, standards for the district in which the system is located.
4. **Other standards** — Ground-mount systems must comply with all required standards for structures in the district in which the system is located.

Defining Community-Scale Solar

The acreage size for community-scale solar garden written here (10 acres) is the high end of project size for a one megawatt system, but community-scale could be defined as high as 10 megawatts (100 acre project size). Community-scale solar is the size that can fit in to the landscape.

Drinking Water Protection

In identifying preferred areas or districts for solar principal uses, the community should consider co-benefits of solar energy development. One such potential co-benefit is protection of drinking water supplies. Solar energy development may be intentionally sited within vulnerable portions of public water supply systems as a best management practice to restore and protect perennial groundcover that reduces nitrate contamination of ground water supplies.

C. Large-Scale Solar — Ground-mount solar energy arrays that are the primary use on the lot, designed for providing energy to off-site uses or export to the wholesale market, are permitted under the following standards:

1. Conditional use permit — Solar farms are conditional uses in agricultural districts, industrial districts, shoreland and floodplain overlay districts, airport safety zones subject to A.1.5 of this ordinance, and in the landfill/brownfield overlay district for sites that have completed remediation.

Large-Scale Solar Conditional Uses

Large -scale solar should require a conditional use or interim use permit in order for the community to consider the site-specific conditions. The districts listed here are examples. Each community needs to consider where large scale solar is suitable in the context of its zoning districts and priorities.

Example Use Table

Use Type	Residential	Mixed Use	Business	Industrial	Agricultural, Rural, Landfill	Shoreland	Floodplain	Special (Conservation, Historic Districts)
Large-scale solar				C	C	C	C	C
Community-scale solar	C	C	C	P	P	PS	PS	PS
Accessory use ground-mounted solar	P	P	P	P	P	P	C	C
Rooftop solar	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	PS

P = Permitted

PS = Permitted Special (additional separate permit or review)

C = Conditional

Blank Cell = Prohibited

Solar as a Land Use

The above use table shows four types of solar development that are distinct types of land uses (two kinds of accessory uses, two principal uses), and a group of districts or overlays that are commonly used in Wisconsin.

- Rooftop system are permitted in all districts where buildings are permitted, with recognition that historic districts will have special standards or permits separate from the zoning permits.
- Accessory use ground-mount are conditional where potentially in conflict with the primary district or overlay goal.
- Community-scale solar principal uses are conditional where land use conflicts or opportunity conflicts are high, permitted where a 10 acre development can be integrated into the landscape, and requiring special consideration in shoreland and floodplain overlay districts.
- Large-scale is prohibited in higher density districts and conditional in all other districts.

Both community- and large-scale solar is allowed in shoreland and floodplain overlay districts, because the site design standards requiring beneficial habitat ground cover not only ensure a low-impact development but in most cases result in a restoration of ecosystem services from the previous (usually agricultural) use.

VI. Restrictions on Solar Energy Systems Limited — As of (adoption date for this ordinance) new homeowners' agreements, covenant, common interest community standards, or other contract between multiple property owners within a subdivision of Model Community shall not restrict or limit solar energy systems to a greater extent than Model Community' solar energy standards.

VII. Renewable Energy Condition for Certain Permits

A. Condition for Planned Unit Development (PUD) Approval

— Model Community may require on-site renewable energy systems, zero-net-energy (ZNE) or zero-net-carbon (ZNC) building designs, solar-synchronized electric vehicle charging or other clean energy systems as a condition for approval of a PUD permit to mitigate for:

1. Impacts on the performance of the electric distribution system,
2. Increased local emissions of greenhouse gases associated with the proposal,
3. Need for electric vehicle charging infrastructure to offset transportation-related emissions for trips generated by the new development,
4. Other impacts of the proposed development that are inconsistent with the Model Community Comprehensive Plan.

B. Condition for Conditional Use Permit — Model Community may require on-site renewable energy systems or zero net energy construction as a condition for a rezoning or a conditional use permit.

VIII. Solar Roof Incentives — Model Community encourages incorporating on-site renewable energy system or zero net energy construction for new construction and redevelopment. Model Community may require on-site renewable energy or zero-net-energy construction when issuing a conditional use permit where the project has access to local energy resources, in order to ensure consistency with Model Community's Climate Action Plan.

A. Density Bonus — Any application for subdivision of land in the ____ Districts that will allow the development of at least four new lots of record shall be allowed to increase the maximum number of lots by 10% or one lot, whichever is greater, provided all building and wastewater setbacks can be met with the increased density, if the applicant enters into a development agreement guaranteeing at least three (3) kilowatts of PV for each new residence that has a solar resource.

Renewable Energy Conditions, Incentives

The community can use traditional development tools such as conditional use permits, PUDs, or other discretionary permits to encourage private investment in solar energy systems as part of new development or redevelopment. This model ordinance notes these opportunities for consideration by local governments. In most cases, additional ordinance language would need to be tailored to the community's ordinances.

For instance, a provision that PUDs (or other special district or flexible design standard) incorporate solar energy should be incorporated into the community's PUD ordinance rather than being a provision of the solar standards.

Conditional use permits generally include conditions, and those conditions can include renewable energy or zero net energy design, but only if the conditions are clearly given preference in adopted policy or plans providing the Board of adjustment with clear guidance for approving the conditions. Explicit reference to climate or energy independence goals in the ordinance and explicit preference for such conditions will set a foundation for including such conditions in the permit.

Solar Roof Incentives

This section of the model ordinance includes a series of incentives that can be incorporated into development regulation. Most cities and many counties use incentives to encourage public amenities or preferred design. These same tools and incentives can be used to encourage private investment in solar energy. Communities should use incentives that are already offered, and simply extend that incentive to appropriate solar development.

Some of the incentives noted here are not zoning incentives, but fit more readily into incentive programs offered by the community (such as financing or incentive-based design standards).

B. Solar-Ready Buildings — Model Community encourages builders to use solar-ready design in buildings. Buildings that submit a completed U.S. EPA Renewable Energy Ready Home Solar Photovoltaic Checklist (or other approved solar-ready standard) and associated documentation will be certified as a Model Community solar ready home, and are eligible for low-cost financing through Model Community's Economic Development Authority. A designation that will be included in the permit home's permit history.

C. Solar Access Variance — When a developer requests a variance from Model Community's subdivision solar access standards, the zoning administrator may grant an administrative exception from the solar access standards provided the applicant meets the conditions of 1. and 2. below:

1. **Solar Access Lots Identified** — At least __% of the lots, or a minimum of __ lots, are identified as solar development lots.
2. **Covenant Assigned** — Solar access lots are assigned a covenant that homes built upon these lots must include a solar energy system. Photovoltaic systems must be at least three (3) KW in capacity.
3. **Additional Fees Waived** — Model Community will waive any additional fees for filing of the covenant.

Solar Ready Buildings

New buildings can be built "solar-ready" at very low cost (in some cases the marginal cost is zero). Solar energy installation costs continue to decline in both real and absolute terms, and are already competitive with retail electric costs in many areas. If new buildings have a rooftop solar resource, it is likely that someone will want to put a solar energy system on the building in the future. A solar ready building greatly reduces the installation cost, both in terms of reducing labor costs of retrofits and by "pre-approving" most of the installation relative to building codes.

A community's housing and building stock is a form of infrastructure that, although built by the private sector, remains in the community when the homeowner or business leaves the community. Encouraging solar-ready construction ensures that current and future owners can take economic advantage of their solar resource when doing so makes the most sense for them.

Solar Access Subdivision Design

Some communities will require solar orientation in the subdivision ordinance, such as requiring an east-west street orientation within 20 degrees in order to maximize lot exposure to solar resources. However, many such requirements are difficult to meet due to site constraints or inconsistency with other requirements (such as connectivity with surrounding street networks). Rather than simply grant a variance, the community can add a condition that lots with good solar access actually be developed as solar homes.



AGENDA ITEM REPORT

MEETING DATE	PREPARED BY
July 25, 2023	
AGENDA ITEM # 2.e	
Dane County Rain Barrel Program	
BACKGROUND	
RECOMMENDATION	
ATTACHMENTS	
None	