

We have identified the following goals for revising the Village of Cottage Grove Ordinances regarding solar energy systems/solar panels.

1. Small scale solar energy systems shall be a permitted use in all zoning districts.

Roof mounted, building mounted and ground mounted solar energy systems are permitted in all zoning districts as an accessory use and structure to a permitted principal use subject to the standards for accessory structures in the applicable zoning district, and the specific criteria set forth in this section.

2. Define the height requirements and setbacks.

Except as provided for in this paragraph, solar energy systems shall comply with the height limits and setback requirements for accessory structures in the zoning district in which the solar energy system is located. For a roof mounted system installed on a flat roof, the highest point of the system shall be permitted to exceed the district's height limit by up to 15 feet above the rooftop to which it is attached. Ground-mounted solar energy systems are prohibited in the front yard of a residential zoned district.

3. Define safety requirements for roof or building mounted systems to allow for roof access for fire-fighting purposes as necessary.

4. Define requirements for ground mounted systems regarding storm water management if installed over impervious surfaces. Consider setting coverage requirements/maximums for ground mounted systems (shall not exceed half the building footprint of the primary structure on the property).

5. Define what size solar development is considered a large-scale solar development. Identify where large-scale solar developments, or solar farms, are allowed as a permitted use as the primary land use for the property (rural, industrial, ag, or airport district). This land use is subject to stormwater management and erosion control requirements. Identify the setbacks required for this land use as necessary.

6. Address permits and plan approvals as necessary.
7. Address any other zoning/land-uses as recommended by Village Planner.
8. Refer to State Statutes when necessary.

Other Policies to Consider Implementing

1. Consider/promote incentives for commercial developers to install Renewable/Solar Energy Systems or EV infrastructure within Tax Increment Districts
2. Distribute educational information about Solar Ready Homes to anyone applying for a building permit. See EPA's Solar Photovoltaic Specification, Checklist and Guide
3. Installation be completed by licensed installers (as required by building permits)