

Wells County Zoning Ordinance Amendment 2025_2_3 (Modified) 3/6/2026
 Regarding Solar Energy Facilities

ARTICLE 9: ZONING DISTRICTS

TABLE 9-15 (Part 5 of 5) Permitted Uses in Zoning Districts																
Development Plan Required = Highlighted Text SE = Special Exception x = Multiple On One Lot																
USES	A-R	A-1	B-1	B-2	B-3	C-1	I-1	I-2	L-1	M-1	M-2	R-1	R-2	R-3	S-1	P-1
Solar Energy Facility, Medium	SE	x					SE	SE								

INCLUDES: Modifications from Wells County, City of Bluffton, and the Town of Ossian.
 AMENDMENT NOTES: **REMOVED TEXT** or **ADDED TEXT**

ARTICLE 11: GENERAL REGULATIONS

11-15 SMALL AND STRUCTURE MOUNTED SOLAR ENERGY FACILITIES:

(1) Small Solar Energy Facility:

(A) Setbacks and Height Limitations: A Small Solar Energy Facility must meet all Setback and Height requirements for an Accessory Structure.

(B) Use: Except for Municipal or Community-Serving Solar Energy Facilities, a Small Solar Energy Facility shall be located on the same Parcel or a property or part of a property owned or leased by the primary user(s) of the generated energy. Projects are allowed to be interconnected with the grid.

(2) Structure-Mounted Solar Energy Facility:

(A) Setbacks and Height Limitations: A Structure-Mounted Solar Energy Facility must meet all Setback and Height requirements for the Structure to which it is mounted.

(B) Use: Except for Municipal or Community-Serving Solar Energy Facilities, a Structure-Mounted Solar Energy Facility shall be located on the same Parcel or a property or part of a property owned or leased by the primary user(s) of the generated energy. Projects are allowed to be interconnected with the grid.

(3) Municipal or Community-Serving Solar Energy Facilities shall interconnect at the local distribution level and shall not be aggregated, co-located, or phased in a manner intended to function as a single Large Solar Energy Facility.

ARTICLE 14: DEVELOPMENT PLAN

14-08 (3) (C) a) Non-Participating Property Line Setbacks: An SES Facility shall ~~be at least two hundred (200) feet~~ meet the required setbacks for that Zoning District, except for A-1 zoned property which the setback shall be sixty (60) feet from a non-participating property line.

14-08 (3) (C) c) Non-Participating Pre-existing Residence Setbacks: An SES Facility shall be at least ~~one thousand five hundred (1,500) four hundred (400)~~ feet from a non-participating pre-existing ~~residence residential~~ property line.

14-08 (3) (L) Visual Buffers: A visual buffer shall be installed ~~and maintained for the life of the project~~ between a non-participating pre-existing residence ~~that is within one thousand three hundred twenty (1,320) feet from a participating property in~~ and the SES Facility. This includes non-participating pre-existing residences located across a public Right-Of-Way. The visual buffer can be comprised of natural vegetation or plantings to provide a reasonable ~~opaque~~ visual buffer and lighting buffer for the non-participating preexisting residences. The buffer shall cover the entire viewshed from the non-participating preexisting residence to the SES Facility. The buffer must be a minimum of six (6) feet in Height when installed and must be designed to grow to a minimum of twenty (20) feet in Height. ~~The buffer cannot be located within a public Right-Of-Way (existing or proposed by this Zoning Ordinance). The buffer cannot be located within an Easement without compliance with section 11-12 of this Zoning Ordinance.~~

ARTICLE 18: DEFINITIONS:

SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY, LARGE:

Incorporated City or Town:

Any free-standing solar array or solar arrays that include greater than ten (10) acres of total panel surface area, excluding access drives, drainage features, vegetative buffers, agricultural spacing between rows, or other non-panel areas. have a combined nameplate power rated capacity of more than 10 MW (megawatts) of peak generating capacity. AKA LARGE SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM or LARGE SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY

Unincorporated Area:

Any free-standing solar array or solar arrays that include greater than twenty (20) acres, as measured from the outer perimeter of the solar array or solar arrays. have a combined nameplate power rated capacity of more than 10 MW (megawatts) of peak generating capacity. AKA LARGE SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM or LARGE SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY

SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY, MUNICIPAL OR COMMUNITY-SERVING: A solar energy facility developed for the primary purpose of supplying electricity to a municipal electric utility, rural electric membership corporation, or regulated public utility for distribution to customers within Wells County or an incorporated municipality therein. Such facilities shall not be developed for wholesale merchant power generation or regional export. AKA MUNICIPAL OR COMMUNITY-SERVING SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY

~~**SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY, MEDIUM:** Any free-standing solar array or solar arrays that have a combined nameplate power rated capacity of greater than 10 KW (kilowatts) or less than or equal to 10 five (5) MW (megawatts) of peak generating capacity.~~

SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY, SMALL:

Incorporated City or Town:

Any free-standing solar array or solar arrays that include up to ten (10) acres of total panel surface area, excluding access drives, drainage features, vegetative buffers, agricultural spacing between rows, or other non-panel areas. have a combined nameplate power rated capacity of less than or equal to ten (10) KW (kilowatts) of peak generating capacity. A permit is not required for a solar array or solar arrays that include up to thirty (30) square feet of total panel surface area, excluding access drives, drainage features, vegetative buffers, agricultural spacing between rows, or other non-panel areas. array or arrays with a nameplate capacity of less than or equal to 1KW (kilowatts). AKA SMALL SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY

Unincorporated Area:

Any free-standing solar array or solar arrays that occupy an area up to twenty (20) acres, as measured from the outer perimeter of the solar array or solar arrays. have a combined nameplate power rated capacity of less than or equal to ten (10) KW (kilowatts) of peak generating capacity. A permit is not required for a solar array or solar arrays that include up to thirty (30) square feet, as measured from the outer perimeter of the solar array or solar arrays. array or arrays with a nameplate capacity of less than or equal to 1KW (kilowatts). AKA SMALL SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY

SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY, STRUCTURE-MOUNTED: Any solar array or solar arrays that are mounted directly to the roof of a pre-existing or new Structure. This would be considered an expansion of the pre-existing structure and would be permitted and/or approved as this ordinance directs. A permit is not required for a solar array or solar arrays that include up to thirty (30) square feet of total panel surface area, excluding access drives, drainage features, vegetative buffers, agricultural spacing between rows, or other non-panel areas. for an array or arrays with a nameplate capacity of less than or equal to 1 KW (kilowatts). AKA STRUCTURE MOUNTED SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY

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