



## Small Solar Energy System

Solar is more accessible than ever for homes, businesses, and institutions to install. They reduce our carbon footprint and provide energy cost savings. If you're considering installing a small solar energy system on your property, you need to understand the City of Middleton's ordinances. Here are the answers to some frequently asked questions about solar energy systems.

### **What is the difference between "small solar energy systems" and "large solar energy systems"?**

The City of Middleton ordinances distinguish between "small solar energy systems" and "large solar energy systems." Small solar energy systems are accessory to a principal land use on a property and are designed primarily to generate energy for the principal land use. In other words, a small solar energy system isn't the primary structure located on a property.

Large solar energy systems are the principal land use and are designed to produce electricity for commercial sale off-site. Large solar energy systems are only permitted as a conditional use in the Heavy Industrial, Extraction, and Agricultural zoning districts.

### **Can I install solar on my property?**

Small solar energy systems are permitted "by right" in every zoning district except for the Conservancy district. This means that solar is pre-approved and does not require any additional zoning permits from the City as long as it follows all of the guidelines in Section 10.03.28(7) and the accessory building requirements for the zoning district in which it is located. In the Conservancy district, small solar energy systems are a conditional use, meaning that it requires approval by the Plan Commission.

### **What restrictions are there on freestanding small solar energy systems?**

Freestanding small solar energy systems can only be located within the side and rear yards of your property. They are not considered an impervious surface in the measurement of the maximum impervious surface ratio if the surface under the panels is pervious.

### **What are the height limits for solar energy systems installed on a roof?**

Rooftop and building-mounted small solar energy systems may exceed the maximum height limit of the primary structure by up to 10 feet, but in cases where the system exceeds the maximum height limit, the panel must be setback from the edge of the roof a minimum distance equal to or greater than the height of the panel.

### **What other requirements are there?**

There are no screening or design requirements for Small Solar Energy Systems.

Small solar energy systems are an accessory structure and need to follow the specific bulk, density, and intensity requirements for the zoning district it is located in. Please see Article II of the zoning code for those requirements.

### **Still have questions?**

Contact City of Middleton Planning & Community Development Department at (608) 821-8370 or [planning@cityofmiddleton.us](mailto:planning@cityofmiddleton.us).