

Lima Township

Draft Solar Energy Collection Systems Ordinance Language

Section 2.2: Definitions

- X. **Photovoltaic Device:** A system of components that generates electric energy from incident sunlight by means of the photovoltaic effect, whether or not the device is able to store the electric energy produced for later use.
- X. **Solar Energy Collection Systems, Accessory:** Small scale solar panels or technologies permitted as accessory structures or uses. Typically installed at individual residential or commercial locations, use is exclusively for private purposes, and not for any commercial resale of any energy, except for the sale of surplus electrical energy back to the electrical grid. Examples include Building-Mounted Solar Energy Collectors, and Ground-Mounted Solar Energy Collectors.
- X. **Solar Array:** Any number of Photovoltaic Devices connected together to provide a single output of electric energy or other energy.
- X. **Solar Access:** The three (3) dimensional space between a solar energy collector and the sun in which obstruction is prohibited or limited.

Section 5.57 **Solar Energy Collection Systems (Accessory)**

Accessory Solar Energy Collection Systems include all small-scale solar panels or technologies hereby permitted as accessory uses and subject to approval or a certificate of Zoning Compliance per Section 3.4 or this Ordinance. A ground mounted solar array as an accessory to a residential use shall not be considered an accessory structure. Typically installed at individual residential or commercial locations, use is exclusively for private purposes, and not for any commercial resale of any energy, except for the sale of surplus electrical energy back to the electrical grid. Any accessory solar energy collection system shall be designed and size to provide for the energy needs of the principal use. The following requirements shall apply to all Accessory Solar Energy Collection Systems for private use.

- A. **Building-Mounted Solar Energy Collector Requirements.** Any building-mounted solar energy collector shall be a permitted accessory use by right in all zoning districts, subject to the following requirements:
 - 1. Solar energy collectors that are mounted on the roof of a building shall not project more than the highest point on the roof. Additionally, they are not

to exceed the maximum building height limitation for the zoning district in which it is located and shall not project beyond the eaves of the roof.

2. Solar energy collectors that are wall-mounted shall not exceed the height of the building wall to which they are attached.
3. Solar energy collectors that are mounted on the roof or on a wall of a building, shall not be angled in such a way that glare from the surface is directed at a neighboring residential structure.
4. The design of accessory solar energy collectors, and the installation and use thereof, shall conform to the State Construction Code and all other applicable building, electrical, and fire codes.

B. Ground-Mounted Solar Energy Collector Requirements. A ground-mounted solar energy collector may be permitted as an accessory use by right in all zoning districts, and subject to the following requirements:

1. Ground-mounted solar energy collectors may be located in the rear yard and the side yard but must meet the required side and rear yard setbacks of the district in which they are located. Ground-mounted solar energy collectors may be located within the front yard if the following criteria are met:
 - a. The parcel is located in AG-1 or AG-2 district.
 - b. The principal building is located at a minimum of 200% of the required front yard setback.
 - c. Ground-mounted solar energy collectors meets the front yard setback.
 - d. Vegetative screening material is proposed or existing between the ground-mounted solar energy collector and the road or neighboring residential parcel.
2. Ground-mounted solar energy collectors shall not exceed the height of fifteen (15) feet, measured from the ground at the base of such equipment.
3. The ground-mounted solar energy collectors shall not be angled in such a way that glare from the surface is directed at a neighboring residential structure.

4. The design of ground-mounted solar energy collectors, and the installation and use thereof, shall conform to the State Construction Code and all other applicable building, electrical, and fire codes.
5. The area of the solar array shall not exceed 50% of the total square footage of the primary building of the property and shall comply with the maximum ground floor coverage for the zoning district in which it is located referred to in Table 4.6.A.

C. **Solar Structures and Easements.** Any landowner may enter into an easement, covenant, condition or other property interest in any deed or other instrument, to protect the solar access of an actual or proposed solar energy structure at a described location by forbidding or limiting activities, land uses, structures and/or trees that interfere with access to solar energy. Any property owner may give or sell the right to access to sunlight. Such Solar Access Easements shall be recorded with the Washtenaw County registrar of deeds.