

WASECA UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
ARTICLE 6: ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS

§ 6.16 SPECIFIC STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL USES.

(OO)*Solar farms.* Solar farms are the primary land use for the parcel on which the array is located and are distinguished from solar arrays that are an accessory use. Solar farms are composed of multiple solar panels on multiple mounting systems (poles or racks), and generally have a direct current (DC) rated capacity greater than 100 kilowatts. Solar farms are permitted by conditional use permit and/or by zoning permit.

(1) *Stormwater management and erosion and sediment control.* Stormwater management and erosion and sediment control shall meet the requirements of § 5.04.

(2) *Setbacks.* All solar panels in the array will be considered a principal use and shall be required to meet the setbacks of a principal structure. In addition, other than on the property of an owner, no solar farm shall be located within 500 feet of a residence.

(3) *Foundations.* The manufacturer's engineer or another qualified engineer shall certify that the foundation and design of the solar panels is within accepted professional standards, given local soil and climate conditions.

(4) *Other standards and codes.* All solar farms shall be in compliance with any applicable local, state and federal regulatory standards, including the State Uniform Building Code, as amended; and the National Electric Code, as amended.

(5) *Power and communication lines.* Power and communication lines running between banks of solar panels and to electric substations or interconnections with buildings shall be buried underground. Exemptions may be granted by the Planning and Zoning Administrator in instances where shallow bedrock, watercourses or other elements of the natural landscape interfere with the ability to bury lines.

(6) *Application requirements for conditional use or zoning permit.* A site plan of existing conditions showing the following (any drawing shall be submitted in paper format drawn to scale and in AutoCAD DWG format):

(a) Existing property lines and property lines extending 100 feet from the exterior boundaries, including the names of the adjacent property owners and current use of those properties;

(b) Existing public and private roads, showing widths of the roads and any associated easements;

(c) Location and size of any abandoned wells, sewage treatment systems and dumps;

(d) Existing buildings and any impervious surface;

(e) Topography at two-foot intervals and source of contour interval, unless determined otherwise by the Department. A contour map of the surrounding properties may also be required;

(f) Existing vegetation (list type and percent of coverage; i.e., grassland, plowed field, wooded areas and the like);

(g) Waterways, watercourses, lakes and public water wetlands;

(h) Delineated wetland boundaries;

(i) The 100-year flood elevation and regulatory flood protection elevation, if available;

(j) Floodway, flood fringe and/or general floodplain district boundary, if applicable;

(k) The Shoreland District boundary and the appropriate shoreland setback, if any portion of the project is located in a Shoreland Overlay District;

(l) Mapped soils according to the county soil survey;

(m) Surface water drainage patterns;

(n) In the shoreland overlay district, the ordinary high water level and the highest known water level; and

(o) In the shoreland overlay district, the toe and top of any bluffs within the project boundaries.

(7) *Site plan of proposed solar farm.* The following information shall be provided to the Planning and Zoning Department prior to issuance of the conditional use permit or zoning permit (any drawing shall be submitted in paper format drawn to scale and in AutoCAD DWG format):

(a) Location and spacing of solar panels;

(b) Location of access roads;

(c) Location of underground or overhead electric lines connecting the solar farm to the building, substation or other electric load;

(d) New electrical equipment other than at the existing building or substation that is the connection point for the solar farm; and

(e) Proposed erosion and sediment control measures and proposed stormwater

management measures as required in Article 5 of this ordinance.

(8) *Large ground-mounted systems.* Ground-mounted solar systems that result in the creation of one or more acres of impervious surface must comply with § 5.04. Sketch elevation of the premises accurately depicting the proposed solar energy conversion system and its relationship to structures on adjacent lots (if any).

(9) *Manufacturer's specifications.* Manufacturer's specifications and recommended installation methods for all major equipment, including solar panels, mounting systems and foundations for poles or racks;

(10) The number and size of the panels to be installed;

(11) A description of the method of connecting the array to a building or substation;

(12) A copy of any easement required to cross private property or any permit to use any public right-of-way to connect the project to the utility grid or substation.

(13) A copy of the interconnection agreement with the local electric utility or a written explanation outlining why an interconnection agreement is not necessary;

(14) Contractor's name and license number;

(15) Contractor certificate of liability insurance; and

(16) A decommissioning plan shall be required to ensure that facilities are properly removed after their useful life. Decommissioning of solar panels must occur in the event they are not in use for 12 consecutive months. The plan shall include provisions for removal of all structures and foundations, restoration of soil and vegetation and a plan ensuring financial resources will be available to fully decommission the site. Disposal of structures and/or foundations shall meet the provisions of state law and the requirements of the county solid waste ordinance. The Board may require the posting of a bond, letter of credit or the establishment of an escrow account to ensure proper decommissioning in an amount equal to the estimated cost to restore the site if the use is discontinued.