



## Commercial Solar Farm Fees and Permitting Guidelines

Last Revision: October, 2016

Pima County Development Services has prepared the following for developers of solar generating stations (solar farms) on non-REID sites<sup>1</sup> for initial budget estimates of fees and timelines relating to the site development plan process and the permitting process. Fees and timelines will vary depending on the size, complexity and location of the proposed solar farm.

It is recommended that solar developers use the process for a Building/Site Construction Permit. The general process for site permitting is described at: [www.pima.gov/developmentservices](http://www.pima.gov/developmentservices). Click on Building and Site Development and then the tab for Commercial Development & Plats. This page provides an overview of the process. Detailed information can be found by clicking on a step in the process and following the links in the information box at the bottom of the page. A link to the submittal checklist for a Building and Site Combination is shown under step 3.

The fees for a solar farm are of two types: site and building. The fees for the site work are approximately \$6,500 for the initial submittal. This fee includes a 2<sup>nd</sup> submittal, if applicable. Additional fees, some of which are site specific, (i.e. Landscape plan/Native Plant Preservation, Technical Reports/Documents, etc.) can be found on-line in the [fee schedule](#) at the above web page in the right hand banner.

Building permit fees are contingent on the type of equipment and construction system used. Site walls/fences and accessory buildings are fee separately per the [fee schedule](#). A typical solar installation employing a pylon foundation system includes a minimum fee of \$83 for all permits requiring an inspection and would be fee at \$1,587 for major electrical work and \$1,270 for major mechanical/plumbing work. Systems employing slab foundation systems could incur much larger fees. Fee estimates may be obtained by submitting a project design draft to Building and Site Development at [site@pima.gov](mailto:site@pima.gov). Indicate in the subject line that this is for a solar farm fee estimate.

In general, plan on a total timeline of less than one month for projects that do not require a conditional use permit. The reviews for the site work and building will be performed concurrently, and there is a 10 working day review period. For projects that require conditional use permits, plan on a timeline of up to four months. These timelines are based on the assumption that submittal documents have addressed all of the requirements for submittal and significant revision and re-review cycles will not occur.

Development Services is committed to working with solar farm developers to expedite these processes. Your first step in developing your solar farm is to contact our solar concierge at the number at the bottom of the page. We will provide you with initial guidance and set up a preliminary review meeting on your project. The Pima County GIS system has extensive information on parcels including zoning and flood plain information, see <http://www.dot.pima.gov/gis/maps/mapguide/>.

The following table outlines requirements and is generally in the process order. Many elements will be reviewed concurrently in an integrated process resulting in the overall timelines mentioned above.

For further information contact: Betty Stamper, Pima County Regional Solar Coordinator, at 520-724-6463, or [betty.stamper@dsd.pima.gov](mailto:betty.stamper@dsd.pima.gov)

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<sup>1</sup> For a description of REID (Renewable Energy Incentive District) sites and requirements, refer to the SOLAR One Stop webpage at: <http://solaronestopaz.org/residents/typesofsolar/solarthermalsystem/DevelopersManufacturers/LandsAvailableforSolar.aspx>



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|   | Permit/ Authorization                          | Issuing Agency  | Estimated Timeline  | Notes  |
|---|--|---|---------------------|--|
| <b>Step 1<br/>(if applicable)</b>                   | Zoning Approval                                | Pima County Development Services (DSD)                | 2 weeks to 4 months | Type 2 conditional use in rural zones (IR, RH, GR-1, SR, SR-2, SH); permitted use in CB-2, CI-1, CI-2 and CI-3. Information on Conditional Use Permits here:<br><a href="http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&amp;pageId=66516">http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&amp;pageId=66516</a>                                    |
| <b>Step 2</b>                                       | Archaeology Official Site Records Check        | Pima County Office of Sustainability and Conservation | 1 month             | Can be concurrent with Zoning Approval. See the Office of Sustainability and Conservation website at: <a href="http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&amp;pageId=62419">http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&amp;pageId=62419</a>  |
| <b>Step 3<br/>Building/Site Construction Permit</b> | Building and Site Permit (BSP)                 | Pima County Development Services (DSD)                | 2 weeks             | The following agency reviews are included in the integrated BSP process: DSD Planning review, DSD Site and Building Review, Flood Plain, and Archaeology. Plans by a registered architect or engineer with: Structural - Foundation design, towers, structures; Electrical - single line and three line with grounding, conductor and conduit sizing |
|   | Right-of-way use permit                        | Pima County Development Services (DSD)                |                     | Review is integrated with the BSP permit review. Permit is issued by DOT   |
|   | Flood Plain use Permit                         | PC Regional Flood Control District (RFCD)             | <1 week             | Review is integrated with the BSP permit review. Permit issued by RFCD if site is located in regulatory floodplain, erosion hazard area, and/or regulated riparian habitat   |
| <b>Step 4<br/>Construction Permits</b>              | AZPDES Storm Water Construction General Permit | Arizona Department of Environmental Quality           | <1 month            | Coverage obtained through ADEQ Smart NOI process. SWPPP must be developed and implemented before construction begins<br><a href="https://az.gov/app/noi/(S(zg5ahvrpjb35uo45fkblo02s))/Default.aspx">https://az.gov/app/noi/(S(zg5ahvrpjb35uo45fkblo02s))/Default.aspx</a>  |
|   | Activity Permit                                | Pima County Department of Air Quality                 | < 1 month           | Address dust control during construction. See <a href="http://www.pima.gov/DEQ">www.pima.gov/DEQ</a> under Air and <a href="#">Fugitive dust</a> for requirements  |

The Federal and State requirements on the following page may apply.

## FEDERAL:

1. The Hazard Communication Act, CFR 1910-1200- handling hazardous materials
2. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, 42 USC 6901 et. Seq.-Hazardous waste disposal
3. 36 CFR 800 - Protection of Historical and Cultural Properties
4. National Historic Preservation Act of 1996
5. 23 CFR 771 – Environmental Impact and Related Procedures
6. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), PL 101-336
7. Section 49(f) of the Department of Transportation Act
8. Executive Order 11988 (Flood Plain Management)
9. FHPM 7-7-3 – Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise
10. FHPM 7-7-9 – Air Quality Guidelines
11. National Environment Policy Act of 1969, 1973 and supplements
12. Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands)
13. Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968
14. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1977
15. Federal Farmlands Act of 1981
16. FHWA Technical Advisory T6640.8m, “Guidance Material for the Preparation of Environmental Documents”
17. Section 1424 (e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (Sole Source Aquifer Review)
18. 36 CFR 60 – Determinations of Eligibility for Inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places
19. Public Law – 91-646 - Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970
20. Wilderness Act of 1964, Public Law 88-577
21. Arizona Deserts Wilderness Act of 1990, Public Law 101-628
22. Resource Conservation and Recovery (RCRA)
23. Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Recovery Act of 1980 (CERCLA)
24. Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA)
25. United States Forest Service, Integrated Resource Management (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition), August 1990
26. Endangered Species Act
27. Other Authorities : OSHA, Occupational Safety & Healthy Administration
28. Other governmental authorities having jurisdiction over the design or implementation of the Project.

## STATE:

1. ARS Title 41 Section 41-844 – Findings of subsurface archeological remains
2. ARS Title 34 Section 34-401 - Designing for the physically disabled
3. Arizona Native Plant Law - ARS 3-904-Notice of Intent to Clear Land;  
<http://www.azda.gov/ESD/clearland.pdf>
4. Arizona Historic Preservation Law
5. State Water Quality Law (See attached guidance from ADWR)
6. ADOT Action Plan
7. ADOT Highways Division Policy and Implementation Memorandum 89-05, “Preservation of Arizona’s Wetlands,” August 1, 1989
8. Noise Abatement Policy for State Funded Projects
9. Arizona Environmental Quality Act (EQA)
10. Hazardous Waste Management Act (HWMA)
11. Underground Storage Tank Act of 1986

