

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW –



[Lower Merion, PA]

**PZD-3a: Review existing planning documents and identify new opportunities (not already included) to integrate solar PV into planning goals.**

Sources:

<https://www.planning.org/research/solar/briefingpapers/localplans.htm>

<http://www.growsolar.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/MN-Solar-in-Comprehensive-Planning-.pdf>

<https://metro council.org/Handbook/Files/Resources/Fact-Sheet/RESILIENCE/Planning-for-Solar.aspx>

As there are no references to solar in the current code, the development of a solar ordinance may be advisable. Below are some considerations for the creation of such an ordinance. Solar may still be worth adding to the use tables for each district in the existing sections of the code, even solar’s status as by-right is established in the solar ordinance.

### Evaluation of Possible Areas for Solar in Plan

Element	Best Practice	Reviewer Comments	Example(s) from other codes
Purpose	A plan’s purpose statement may not explicitly reference solar energy. However, a core purpose of local planning is facilitating the development or protection of community resources. Sunlight can be considered one of these resources as it can be harvested for heat or electricity. Pointing out that most locally used energy is neither local nor renewable is an effective way to help the community view solar energy as a local resource.	The plan has a Guiding Principles section that lists Efficiency as one of those principles. “Efficiency is the principle of maximizing resources to meet community desires.” If solar power is seen as a resource, promoting the use of that resource to boost energy efficiency could fit in with the vision of the plan.	
Existing Conditions	Should identify the community’s existing solar resources, solar	Could include solar resources in “Local Setting” section of Background Information	Tucson, AZ

	capacity, energy usage, and/or economic impact from solar (i.e. solar jobs)	and Community Demographics section.	
Circulation Element			Pinal County, AZ
Water Resources Element			Pinal County, AZ
Land Use Element		Solar could be addressed in the "Natural Systems" and "Community Facilities" portions written under the "Land Use Considerations" section.	Fort Collins, CO Chico, CA
Housing Element		Could include provisions for solar ready construction in Housing Element, perhaps even including some solar provisions for affordable housing.	Fort Collins, CO Chico, CA
Community Facilities and Infrastructure Element		<p>Possibly the easiest/best place to include something for solar. Goal 1 is Cost Efficiency. Energy efficiency nor solar is listed as one of the 5 objectives for achieving that goal, but would fit nicely.</p> <p>Goal 3 is Sustainability. It has 5 objectives, none of which deal with energy efficiency or solar. However, both could be added.</p> <p>This section also lists the economic, environmental, and social contributions of trees. Something similar could be done with solar power.</p>	
Parks & Recreation Plan			

### Suggestions for Inclusion of Solar in Plan

Element	Best Practice	Reviewer Comments	Example(s) from other codes
Purpose	<p>A plan's purpose statement may not explicitly reference solar energy. However, a core purpose of local planning is facilitating the development or protection of community resources. Sunlight can be considered one of these resources as it can be harvested for heat or electricity. Pointing out that most locally used energy is neither local nor renewable is an effective way to help the community view solar</p>		

	energy as a local resource.		
Existing Conditions	Should identify the community's existing solar resources, solar capacity, energy usage, and/or economic impact from solar (i.e. solar jobs)		Tucson, AZ
Goals	Plan should contain a general statement about a desirable future condition for solar in the community.		Pinal County, AZ
Objectives	The plan's objectives should work to further the stated goals. These objectives should be attainable and measurable. Objectives may fit multiple goals and goals may have multiple objectives.		Pinal County, AZ
Policies	Policy statements should clearly point to a course of action and imply responsibility for implementation.		Fort Collins, CO Chico, CA
Actions	Actions should explicitly state which agency is responsible for each policy item and how to achieve that policy.		Fort Collins, CO Chico, CA
Evaluation	Any evaluation statements should provide ways to track progress towards goals and objectives on a regular basis. This can be done through annual reports or on a rolling basis in online formats.		

Examples of Solar Goals by Plan Element

1. Economic Goal – Increase use of local energy resources to capture job creation opportunities and diversify local economic base.
2. Housing Goal – By 2030, all new housing has solar generation or is built to “solar-ready” standards.
3. Land Use Goal – Encourage solar garden development on closed landfills and brownfields.
4. Resilience Goal – Encourage Investment in electric grid infrastructure and solar development that makes electric service more reliable and resilient to weather-related disruptions.

I, Christopher Lewing, as Assistant Director Planning of Lowell Metro. Planning, PA.  
(Name) (Title) (Community) (State)

have received the plan review and read its findings.

Signature Christopher Lewing

Date 8/24/17