



**Planning and Zoning Commission
February 7, 2024 - Regular Meeting**

To: Dillon Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Ned West, AICP, Sr. Town Planner
Jon Blank, Planner 1
Subject: Integrating Solar into the Code
Agenda Item: 8

Discussion Item:

Potential Dillon Municipal Code (“DMC” or “Code”) amendments related to requirements and permitting for solar energy systems.

Background/Time Frame:

- 2016: Town staff first considered the SolSmart program
- 2019: Town staff again considered the SolSmart program
- November 9, 2023: The Town officially joined the SolSmart program (**Exhibit ‘A’**)
- February 7, 2024: Planning Commission study of potential Code amendments

Supporting Information:

Solar panels, or Photovoltaic systems (PV), are increasingly desirable by residents and businesses in Summit County. The County annually supports a residential bulk purchase and installation program (HC3 is a community resource for the program:

<https://highcountryconservation.org/>)

The Dillon Municipal Code provides a Level I and Level II Development Permit process for issuing permits for PV systems and an increasing number of systems are being installed. Town staff is focused on streamlining the process and to link residents with resources, incentives, funding sources.

SolSmart:

- Create an Energy Action Plan – Working with Xcel Energy and their Partners in Energy program
 - Will be included in the Town’s Comprehensive Plan update (Coming soon).
- Free technical assistance and guidance to implement national solar best practices in Dillon.
 - Expand the use of solar energy in Dillon.

- Consider increasing PV on public facilities.
- Apply strategies that make solar more affordable and accessible to all Dillon residents.
- Attaining Dillon’s clean energy and sustainability goals.
 - Outlined in Comprehensive Plan update
- Encourage growth in renewable energy businesses.
- Seek ‘Silver’ Designation

Potential Code Amendments for Solar:

- Local Policies are Important to Reducing Cost
- Remove Administrative Barriers
 - “Soft Costs” represent 65% of the total solar system cost.
- Streamlined Permitting Processes for Solar PV
 - Dedicated PV application online
 - 1 day or Instant permit issuance
 - Summit County Building Department has an over the counter permit process to issue permits for rooftop PV systems.
- Consider classifying PV as an accessory use allowed by-right in all zone districts.
- Considerations for Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) in all zone districts.
- BABA
 - Build America Buy America
- Decommissioning solar panels

Exhibit 'A'
SoISmart Commitment Letter



Thursday, November 9, 2023

Scott Annis
International City/County Management
Association
777 North Capitol St. NE, Ste. 500
Washington, DC 20002

Theresa Perry
Interstate Renewable Energy Council
125 Wolf Road, Suite 207
Albany, NY 12205

Dear Scott Annis and Theresa Perry:

On behalf of the Town of Dillon, I am proud to announce our commitment to become a SolSmart-designated community. In partnership with the SolSmart team, our dedicated staff members will work to improve solar market conditions, making it faster, easier, and more affordable for our residents and businesses to install solar energy systems. These efforts will also increase the efficiency of local processes related to solar development, which may save our local government time and money.

We will leverage SolSmart to achieve the following solar goals:

- **Accelerate the growth and accessibility of solar energy in the Town of Dillon.**
- **Expand and communicate solar finance options for residential and commercial properties.**
- **Add an energy section to the comprehensive plan and create an energy action plan.**
- **Develop a streamlined process for solar permitting and inspections.**
- **To achieve the Town's sustainability goals.**

These goals demonstrate that our community is committed to making continual improvement in our solar market. This includes ensuring solar development is inclusive and equitable. We're looking forward to learning more from the SolSmart program about how to expand access to solar for all our residents and support solar energy adoptions for those that are under resourced or underserved.

The SolSmart program will build on our solar efforts, such as:

- Roof top solar panels on Dillon Town Hall.
- The Town's planning staff regularly attends Summit Climate Action Collaborative meetings.
- The Town Council adopted the "Summit Community Climate Action Plan" on May 7, 2019.
- Sustainable building codes were adopted by the Dillon Town Council on July 21, 2020.
- The Town continues to plan for new solar installations on Town owned buildings.
- Participation in the Summit County-wide residential bulk solar installation program.
- Partnership with the High Country Conservation Center (HC3) for County-wide and Town of Dillon sustainability planning, ordinances, and programs.

To measure progress along the way, we will track key metrics related to solar energy deployment, such as installed solar, permitting processing time, and growth in residential installations.

We understand that the SolSmart program has criteria and point requirements as outlined in the SolSmart Program Guide needed to achieve each tier of designation. We're excited to submit this solar statement to complete the first requirement of the program.

Inquiries related to our SolSmart participation can be directed to Jon Blank, Planner I, at jblank@townofdillon.com.

Sincerely,
Town of Dillon

DocuSigned by:

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Nathan Johnson, ICMA-CM
Town Manager
njohnson@townofdillon.com

Cc: Ned West, AICP Sr. Town Planner, NWest@townofdillon.com