

**PZD-1: Review zoning requirements and remove restrictions that intentionally or unintentionally prohibit PV development. Compile findings in a memo, and commit to reducing barriers to PV during next zoning review.**

This SolSmart prerequisite requires communities to (a) conduct a review of zoning requirements, (b) identify restrictions that prohibit PV development, and (c) commit to addressing these barriers during the next community zoning review. To assist your community, the national solar experts at SolSmart have conducted an initial review of your community’s code to assess possible obstacles (i.e. height restrictions, set-back requirements, etc.) and gaps. Below, please find the outcome of their review. By reading the narrative, reviewing the example code language provided, and signing the statement at the bottom of the page, your community will satisfy PZD-1 and be one step closer to achieving SolSmart designation.

## Potential barriers in current code language

Section(s)	Element	Reviewer Comments	Example(s) from other codes	Priority level
<b>Sec. 122-263.</b> Schedule of Regulations (c)	<b>Impervious cover</b>	“Non-residential Uses” have a 50% maximum impervious cover standard in MD districts. There does not appear to be an exemption for solar farms. Many municipalities explicitly exclude solar from this calculation so long as the ground beneath the panel is pervious, or they limit the impervious surface calculation to the system’s footings.	<b>Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission – <a href="#">Renewable Energy Ordinance Framework</a> (p. 18)</b>  <b>Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs – <a href="#">Model Zoning for the Regulation of Solar Energy Systems</a> (p. 9)</b>	<b>Low</b>
-	<b>Lot coverage</b>	It is unclear whether ground-mounted residential/commercial systems (if allowed) count toward lot coverage. A best practice would be to provide guidance regarding how these systems are treated.	<b>CUNY - <a href="#">New York State Model Solar Energy Law</a> (p. 18)</b>  <b>Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs – <a href="#">Model Zoning for the Regulation of Solar Energy Systems</a> (p. 9)</b>	<b>Low</b>

## Potential gaps in current code language

Element	Reviewer Comments	Example(s) from other codes	Priority level
<b>Sec. 122-788. Alternative Energy (1)(b).</b> Detached accessory photovoltaic structures	It is unclear whether this section permits ground-mounted systems that generate energy primarily for the principal use, or if it just refers to solar-powered outdoor lighting. Does Ypsilanti allow small-scale ground-mounted arrays and, if they are allowed, are they permitted by right or do	-	<b>Low</b>

	they require a conditional/special use permit? If the city does allow residents and businesses to install ground-mounted solar arrays to generate electricity for the principal use, the current code language may require adjustments to ensure clarity.		
<b>Definitions</b> (Sec. 122-3. Definitions & Sec. 122-788. Alternative Energy)	Ypsilanti defines Solar Collector and Solar Roof Paneling in the “Definitions” section. Yet the “Alternative Energy” section uses the term “photovoltaic structures” when referring to systems. This disconnect could be confusing, and it may help to either define “photovoltaic structure” or use the same terms from “Definitions”.	-	<b>Low</b>

## Additional notes

- Does “Solar Roof Paneling” refer to PV panels, building-integrated PV (e.g. solar shingles), or both? (Sec. 122-3. Definitions)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, as \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

[Name] [Title] [Community] [State]

have read the review above and commit to discussing these barriers at the next community zoning review, scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_, with the goal of removing them from the code.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

