

# The City of Lafayette Solar Photovoltaic (PV) System Permitting Checklist

The City of Lafayette is a vibrant, forward-thinking, and welcoming community that promotes personal and economic growth for residents, businesses, and visitors while fostering economic sustainability, environmental stewardship, and social equity.

The pre-submittal checklist below contains the minimum information and project plan details required to be submitted to The City of Lafayette when applying for a permit to install a residential or commercial/non-residential solar photovoltaic (PV) system. The intent of using the checklist is to provide transparent and well-defined information to improve permit application quality, minimize the number of required revisions, and accelerate the application and review process.

## **Codes and Design Criteria**

The City of Lafayette has adopted the following codes: the 2020 International Residential Code (IRC), the 2012 International Building Code (IBC) with 2014 Indiana Amendments, the 2008 National Electric Code with 2009 Indiana Amendments, and the 2010 Model Energy Code.

Regarding residential rooftop solar PV systems, the following local design criteria should be used:

- Building-mounted solar energy collectors installed in residential zoning districts shall be: Installed in the plane of the roof (flush mounted); or Made part of the roof design (capping or framing compatible with the color of the roof or structure); or Building-integrated system.
- Mounting brackets shall be permitted to be placed parallel on the slope of a rear facing roof if the applicant can demonstrate that the existing pitch of the roof would render the solar energy equipment ineffective or incapable of reasonable operation.
- Solar energy collectors may be located on any roof face.
- Solar energy collectors located on a front-facing sloped roof shall be installed parallel to the roof slope and in a manner that respects the architectural features of the structure including roof lines, colors, and materials.
- Solar energy systems shall not project vertically above the peak of a sloped roof to which it is attached.
- When located on a sloped roof, solar energy collectors shall be set back from any outside edge, ridge, or valley of the roof as required by the Building and Fire Code as adopted by the City.
- Solar energy collectors installed on a flat roof must be screened using a parapet or other architectural feature to screen the view from the street or from ground level on adjoining properties.
- All exterior electrical or plumbing lines must be painted in a color scheme that matches as closely as possible the color of the structure and the materials adjacent to the lines when visible from the street.
- Depending on the circumstance, an engineer or design professional may be required to sign off on plans.

## **Required Permits**

A permit must be obtained prior to the start of any work. Complete the following online permit application form(s) and submit any additional required documents.

**City of Lafayette (Building Permit):** City of Lafayette residents interested in installing a residential or commercial/non-residential rooftop or ground mounted solar PV system must first complete the building permit. Please visit the [Building Permits page](#) to access the online residential and/or commercial/non-residential permit application(s). If the property is located within a Local Historic District, then an application for approval in the form of a Certificate of Appropriateness, or COA, is required. For more information, please visit the [FAQ page](#). Electrical is included under the Building Permit.

## **Additional Required Documents**

The following documents are required files for solar PV permits. Plans shall be submitted electronically with the associated permit application.

- Site Plan (only needed for ground mounted)
  - Site plan should show the location of major components on the property. The site plan drawing needs to include dimensions of all structures (existing and proposed) and setbacks of all structures (existing and proposed).
  - For examples, click here: [Sample Site Plan](#).
  - PV arrays and energy storage systems in compliance with IFC fire setback requirements need no separate fire service review.
- Set of Plans
  - A set of plans is required for all solar systems. If this is roof mounted, it should include documentation from a structural engineer that the structure's roof can support the system. It should include a side view drawing (bottom of footer to top of roof) and/or a scope of work including a materials list. For roof mounted solar panels we will need a drawing of the mounting
  - For an example of a side view drawing, please click here: [Example Side View Drawing](#).
- List of Contractors: General Contractor and Electrician
- Owners Authorization
  - The property owner must sign the application or complete the owner's authorization form. Click here to check the listed owner of your property: [Beacon](#).
- Electrical Diagram
  - Electrical diagram/worksheets should show PV and energy storage system configuration, wiring system, overcurrent protection, inverter, disconnects, required signs, and AC connection to the building.
- Specification sheets and installation manuals (if available)
  - Specification sheets and manuals should show all manufactured components including, but not limited to, PV modules, inverter(s), combiner box, disconnects, and mounting system.

## **Contractor Requirements**

Any work requiring a permit in the City of Lafayette requires a bond and/or insurance. Electrical contractors are also required to obtain a City of Lafayette License. For more information regarding contractor's license and insurance requirements, please visit the [Licensing, Bonding, and Insurance Information page](#).

### **Permit Fees**

In the City of Lafayette, general building permit fees (which include residential and commercial/non-residential solar PV permits) depends on the square footage of the project if it is roof mounted. If it is ground mounted, it is an accessory structure. A link to a breakdown of the City of Lafayette's building permit fees can be found here: [Permit Fee Summary](#).

### **Review Process Timeline**

The City of Lafayette Engineering Department is committed to providing a timely review of solar PV permit applications. Residential rooftop solar PV permits are classified under building permits; best efforts are made to review completed residential and commercial/non-residential building permit applications within 10 business days after all required information is received. These turnaround times are typical, not guaranteed, and large projects may extend the time for plan review. The City of Lafayette has a staff of dedicated individuals, but certain circumstances can impact permit turnaround time, including unforeseen delays caused by workloads, vacations, and sick leave. For more information about the City of Lafayette's building permit review timeline, please visit the following link: [Building Permits](#).

Circumstances that can prolong the permit turnaround time include, but are not limited to:

- Applicant does not submit all required information
- The general contractor is not a bonded contractor and/or the electrician is not licensed
- Equipment is not listed
- Separate documentation and review are required by neighborhood covenants

### **Permit Status**

To check your permit status, please call the City of Lafayette Engineer's Office at (765) 807-1050, ext. 7. Once the permit is approved you will receive notification via email with the invoice and instructions on how to pay for the permit.

### **Scheduling an Inspection and the Inspection Process**

When a Building Permit and/or Electric Permit is issued, the permit document will list the required inspections for the project. A residential solar PV system typically requires two (2) inspections. However, the number of required inspections may vary based on the type of solar photovoltaic (PV) system desired.

To schedule an inspection, please call the City of Lafayette Engineer's Office at (765) 807-1050 ext. 6 at least 48 hours (2 business days) before the desired inspection time. Inspections are conducted Mon-Fri, 7:30 am – 3:30 pm, excluding City Holidays.

### **Contact Information**

If you have any questions, please contact the City of Lafayette Engineer's Office.

- Office Phone Number: (765) 807-1050 x 7
- Office Hours: Mon-Fri, 8:00 am – 4:30 pm
- Address: City of Lafayette Municipal Building, 20 N. 6<sup>th</sup> St, Lafayette, IN 47901

For information regarding the county zoning ordinance please go to [ORD-2021-05-CM-UZO-Amendment-No-99-Solar-Energy-Systems-2121](#)