Mayors Caucus Cohort
SolSmart Consultation Call

Agenda

Introductions

SolSmart 101

Baseline Assessments

Next Steps

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Introductions

What is SolSmart?

SolSmart is a national designation and technical assistance program that helps local governments make it faster, easier, and more affordable for residents and businesses to go solar

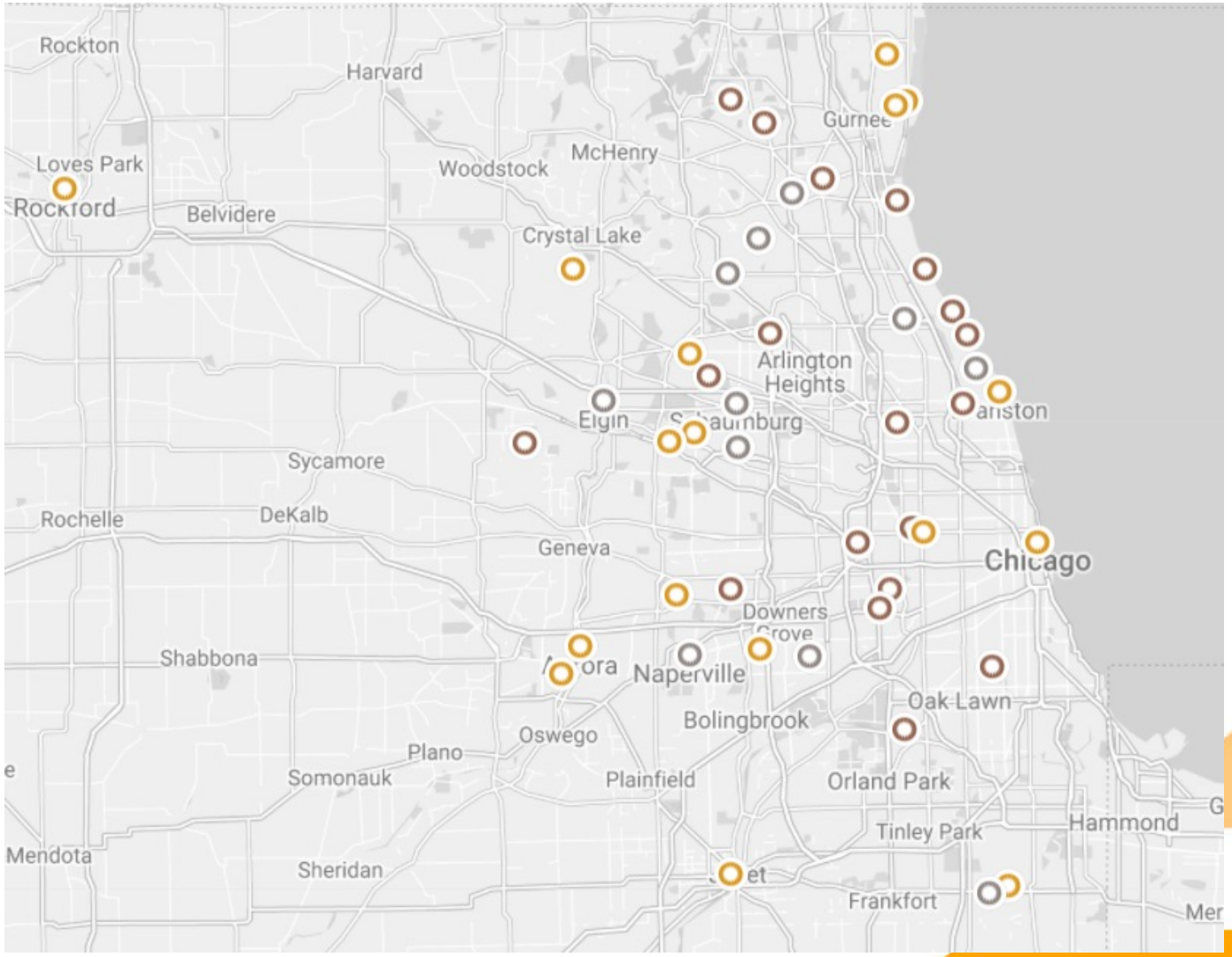
Recognizes communities that have…

- Addressed local barriers to solar energy
- Fostered the growth of mature solar markets

Demonstrates that a community is **“open for solar business”**

SolSmart provides **no-cost technical assistance** to help communities meet their solar goals and earn SolSmart designation

Illinois Communities



Program Design and Execution

SOLSMART
NATIONALLY DISTINGUISHED. LOCALLY POWERED.

Technical Assistance Program

IREC

CADMUS

NLC NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES
CITIES STRONG TOGETHER

NREL
NATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY LABORATORY

NADO
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

NARC

BROOKS ENGINEERING

EPRI ELECTRIC POWER RESEARCH INSTITUTE

SEIA Solar Energy Industries Association®

GREAT PLAINS INSTITUTE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of COUNTIES NACo

Designation Program Administrator

ICMA
Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

National Civic League

IREC

Home Innovation RESEARCH LABS™

CADMUS

IREC ICMA

Designation Structure

To receive designation, communities must complete the following:

Bronze Designation	Silver Designation	Gold Designation
❑ Complete 3 prerequisites	❑ SolSmart Bronze Requirements	❑ SolSmart Silver Requirements
❑ 20 points in Permitting & Inspection	❑ Complete 3 prerequisites	❑ Complete 2 prerequisites
❑ 20 points in Planning and Zoning	❑ **100 total points**	❑ **200 total points**
❑ **60 total points**		

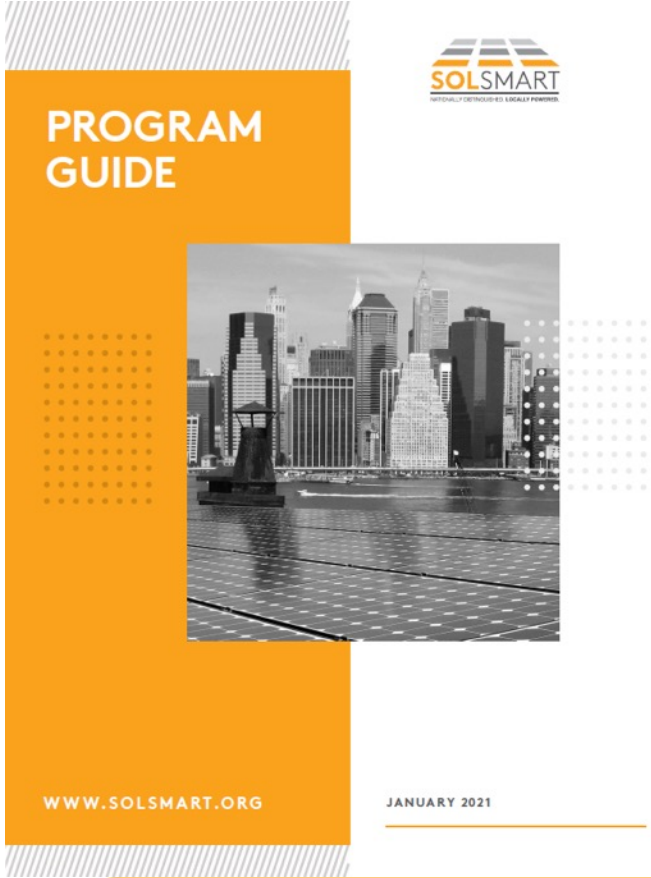
SolSmart Criteria

75 unique actions, also know as credits, across 5 categories

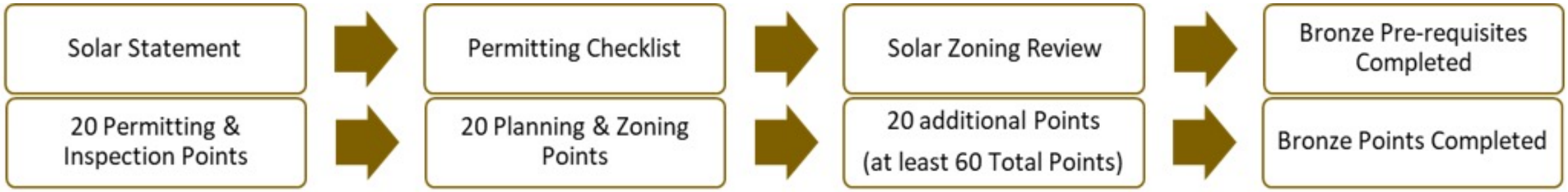
Each credit has a corresponding point value ranging from 5 to 20

SolSmart Categories:

- Permitting & Inspection
- Planning & Zoning
- Government Operations
- Community Engagement
- Market Development



Bronze Requirements



Pre-requisites

1. **Solar Statement:** Provide a document that demonstrates your local government's commitment to pursue SolSmart designation (PR-1)
2. **Permitting Checklist:** Post an online checklist detailing the required permit(s), submittals, and steps of your community's permitting process for small rooftop solar PV (PI-1)
3. **Solar Zoning Review:** Review zoning requirements and identify restrictions that intentionally or unintentionally prohibit solar PV development. Compile findings in a memo. (PZ-1)

Point requirements

- 20 points in Permitting and Inspection
- 20 points in Planning and Zoning
- 20 points across Government Operations, Community Engagement, and Market Development

Silver Requirements

Pre-requisites

1. ***Solar Zoning Determination Memo:** Post an online document from the Planning/Zoning Department that states accessory use solar PV is allowed by-right in all major zones (e.g. via a zoning determination letter) (PZ-4)
2. **Permit Staff Training:** Train permitting staff on best practices for permitting solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred in the past five years (PI-2)
3. **Inspection Staff Training:** Train inspection staff on best practices for inspection solar PV and/or and storage systems. Training must have occurred in the past five years (PI-3)

Point requirement

- 100 Points Total

* **Codifying in the zoning ordinance that accessory use solar PV is explicitly allowed by-right in all major zones would also meet this pre-requisite.** (PZ-5)

Gold Requirements

Pre-requisites

1. **Permit Turnaround Time:** Post an online statement confirming a three-business day turnaround time for small rooftop solar PV (PI-4)
2. **Solar Codified in Zoning:** Codify in the zoning ordinance that accessory use solar PV is explicitly allowed by-right in all major zones. Zoning ordinance language should not include intentional or unintentional barriers to accessory use solar, such as limits to visibility from public right-of-way, subjective design reviews…(PZ-5)

Point Requirements

- 200 Points Total

SolSmart Categories

Permitting & Inspection

- **Use an online process for solar permit approval and submission** (20 points)
- Post solar field inspection requirements or checklist online (10 points)
- Require no more than one permit application form for a small rooftop solar PV system (5 points)

Planning & Zoning

- Exempt rooftop solar PV from certain restrictions like height limits or screening requirements (5 points)
- **Establish specific solar PV goals, metrics, and/or strategies in the most current local government plans** (10 points)
- Train planning and zoning staff on solar best practices (10 points)

Government Operations

- **Install solar on local government facility or land** (20 points)
- Conduct feasibility analysis for solar PV on local government facilities and/or local government-controlled land (10 points)
- Coordinate with regional organizations and/or local governments to engage utilities on advancing solar policies (10 points)

Community Engagement

- Support a solar information session and/or solar tour (10 points)
- **Post a solar landing page on local government's website** (10 points)
- Demonstrate local government support for local solar projects through speeches, press releases, opinion articles, etc. (10 points)

Market Development

- **Support a solarize or solar co-op campaign** (20 points)
- Support a community solar program (20 points)
- Provide local incentives or locally-enabled finance (20 points)

The SolSmart Designation Process

Technical Assistance

SolSmart technical assistance providers work with elected officials, local government staff, and community members to help communities update their processes regarding solar

The technical assistance is of no cost to the community

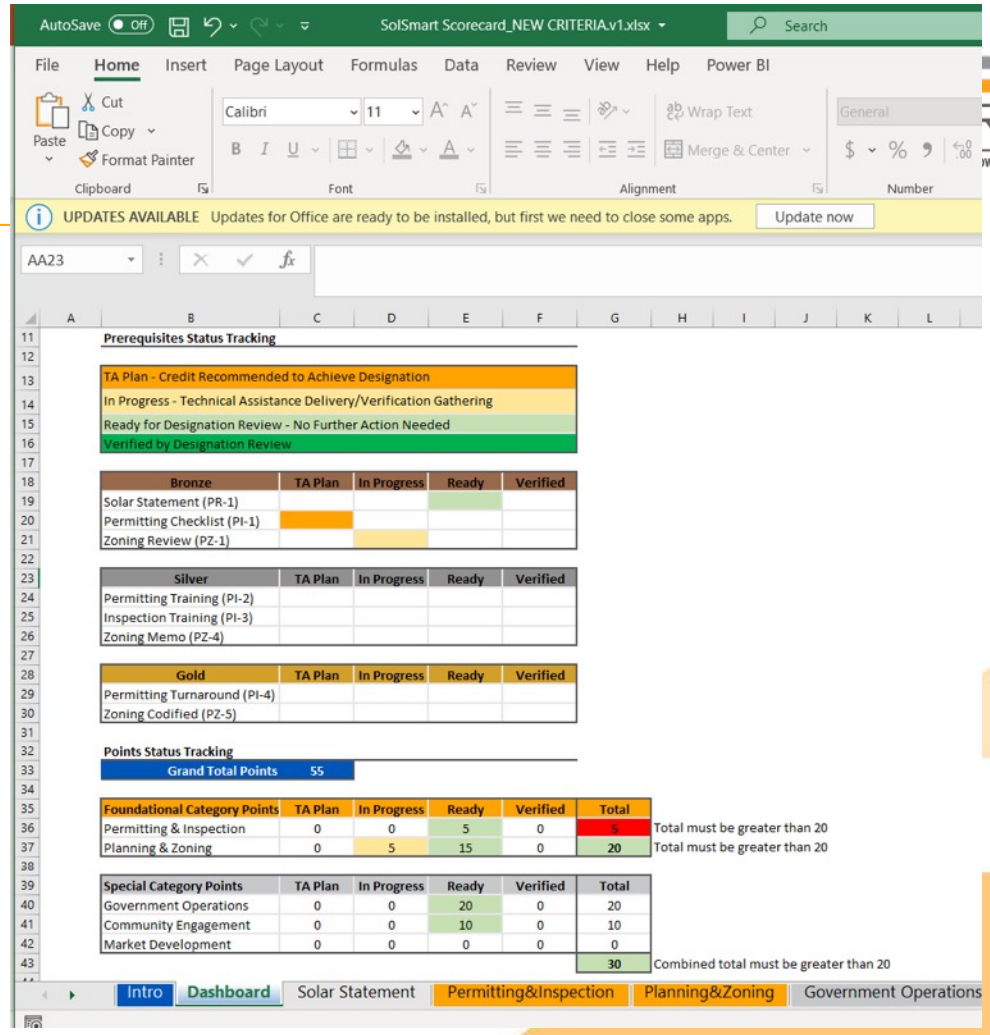
- Communities must commit staff time
- Communities must demonstrate a commitment to achieving designation

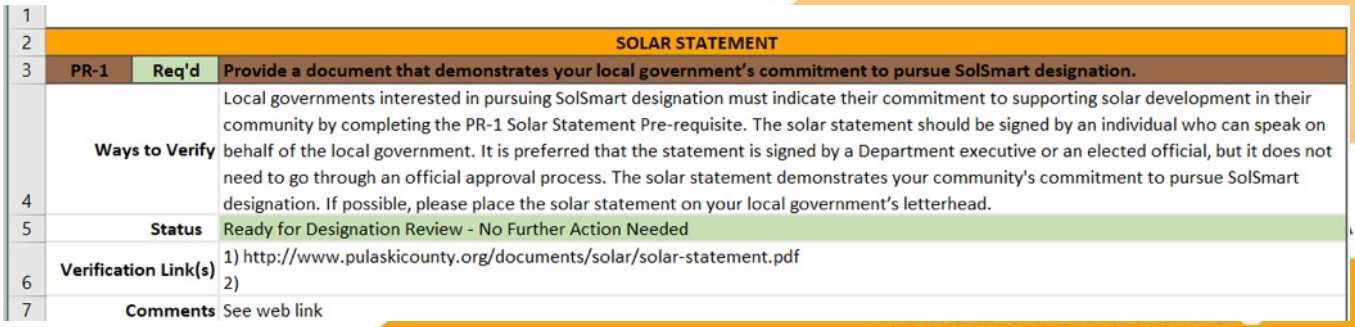
Delivery of technical assistance can be tailored to fit the community needs

- Email/Online
- Phone
- In person

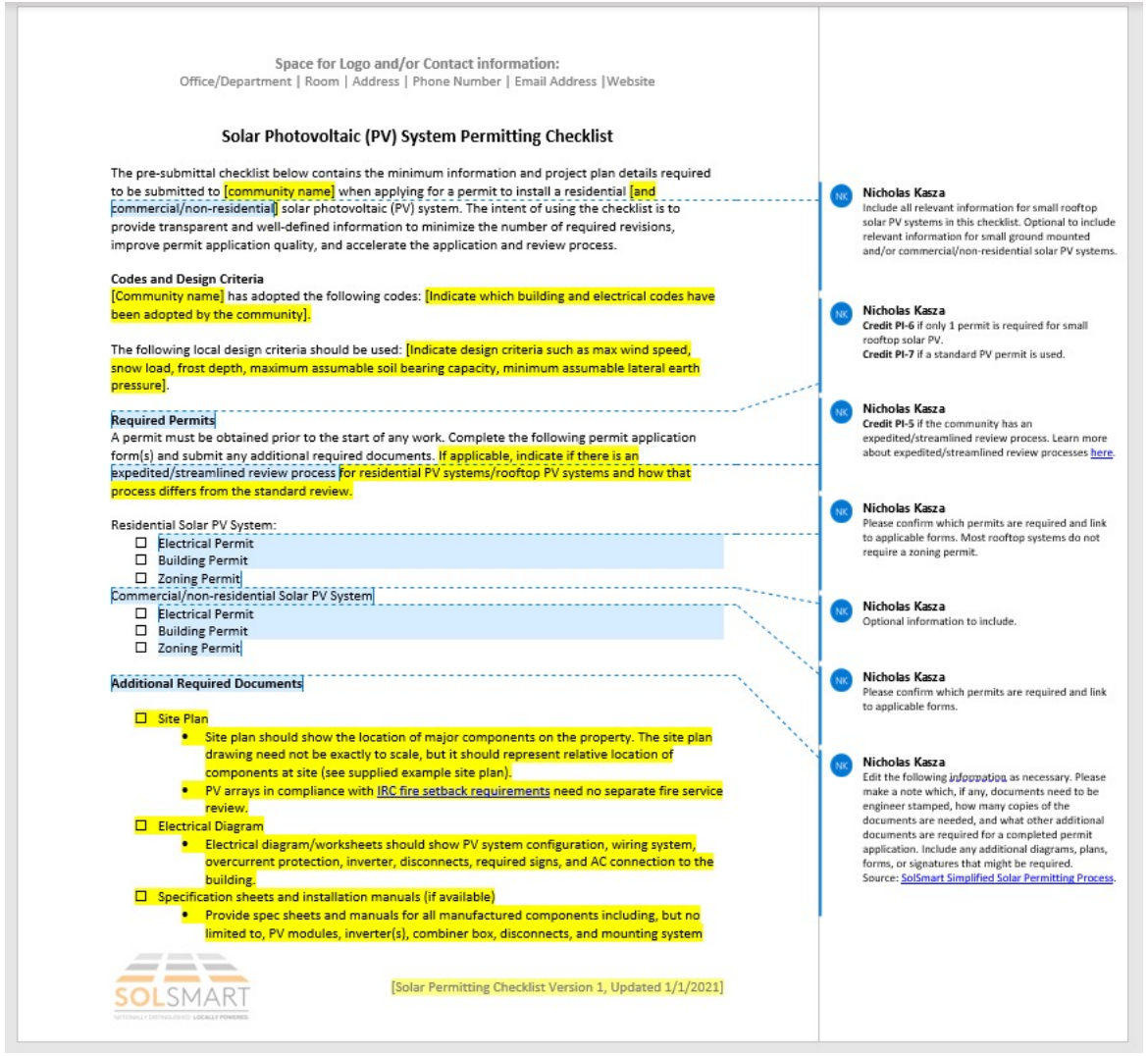
Technical Assistance

- Establish your community's solar baseline by using the SolSmart Scorecard Excel
- Develop a plan to achieve goals and reach designation
- Work with technical assistance providers to complete necessary actions
- Gather proper documentation to verify a credit has been achieved:
  - Web Link
  - PDF (E.G. Memo, meeting minutes)





Technical Assistance Resources



Space for Logo and/or Contact information:
Office/Department | Room | Address | Phone Number | Email Address |Website

Solar Photovoltaic (PV) System Permitting Checklist

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

Codes and Design Criteria
[Community name] has adopted the following codes: [Indicate which building and electrical codes have been adopted by the community].

The following local design criteria should be used: [Indicate design criteria such as max wind speed, snow load, frost depth, maximum assumable soil bearing capacity, minimum assumable lateral earth pressure].

Required Permits
A permit must be obtained prior to the start of any work. Complete the following permit application form(s) and submit any additional required documents. If applicable, indicate if there is an expedited/streamlined review process for residential PV systems/rooftop PV systems and how that process differs from the standard review.

Residential Solar PV System:
- ☐ Electrical Permit
- ☐ Building Permit
- ☐ Zoning Permit

Commercial/non-residential Solar PV System
- ☐ Electrical Permit
- ☐ Building Permit
- ☐ Zoning Permit

Additional Required Documents

- ☐ Site Plan
  - Site plan should show the location of major components on the property. The site plan drawing need not be exactly to scale, but it should represent relative location of components at site (see supplied example site plan).
  - PV arrays in compliance with IRC fire setback requirements need no separate fire service review.
- ☐ Electrical Diagram
  - Electrical diagram/worksheets should show PV system configuration, wiring system, overcurrent protection, inverter, disconnects, required signs, and AC connection to the building.
- ☐ Specification sheets and installation manuals (if available)
  - Provide spec sheets and manuals for all manufactured components including, but no limited to, PV modules, inverter(s), combiner box, disconnects, and mounting system

SOLSMART

[Solar Permitting Checklist Version 1, Updated 1/1/2021]

Nicholas Kasza
Include all relevant information for small rooftop solar PV systems in this checklist. Optional to include relevant information for small ground mounted and/or commercial/non-residential solar PV systems.

Nicholas Kasza
Credit PI-6 if only 1 permit is required for small rooftop solar PV.
Credit PI-7 if a standard PV permit is used.

Nicholas Kasza
Credit PI-5 if the community has an expedited/streamlined review process. Learn more about expedited/streamlined review processes here.

Nicholas Kasza
Please confirm which permits are required and link to applicable forms. Most rooftop systems do not require a zoning permit.

Nicholas Kasza
Optional information to include.

Nicholas Kasza
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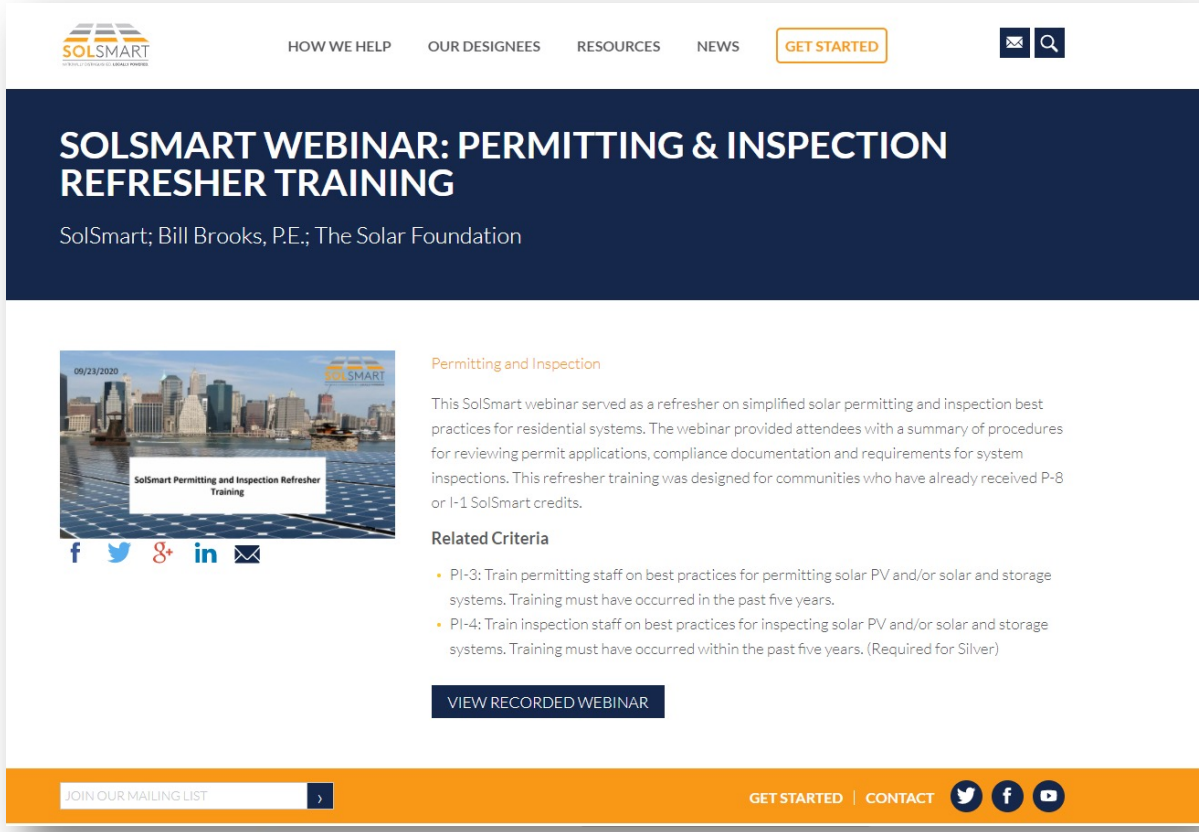
Edit the following information as necessary. Please make a note which, if any, documents need to be engineer stamped, how many copies of the documents are needed, and what other additional documents are required for a completed permit application. Include any additional diagrams, plans, forms, or signatures that might be required.
Source: SolSmart Simplified Solar Permitting Process.



SOLSMART

HOW WE HELP | OUR DESIGNEES | RESOURCES | NEWS | GET STARTED

SOLSMART WEBINAR: PERMITTING & INSPECTION REFRESHER TRAINING

SolSmart; Bill Brooks, P.E.; The Solar Foundation

Permitting and Inspection

This SolSmart webinar served as a refresher on simplified solar permitting and inspection best practices for residential systems. The webinar provided attendees with a summary of procedures for reviewing permit applications, compliance documentation and requirements for system inspections. This refresher training was designed for communities who have already received P-8 or I-1 SolSmart credits.

Related Criteria

- PI-3: Train permitting staff on best practices for permitting solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred in the past five years.
- PI-4: Train inspection staff on best practices for inspecting solar PV and/or solar and storage systems. Training must have occurred within the past five years. (Required for Silver)

VIEW RECORDED WEBINAR

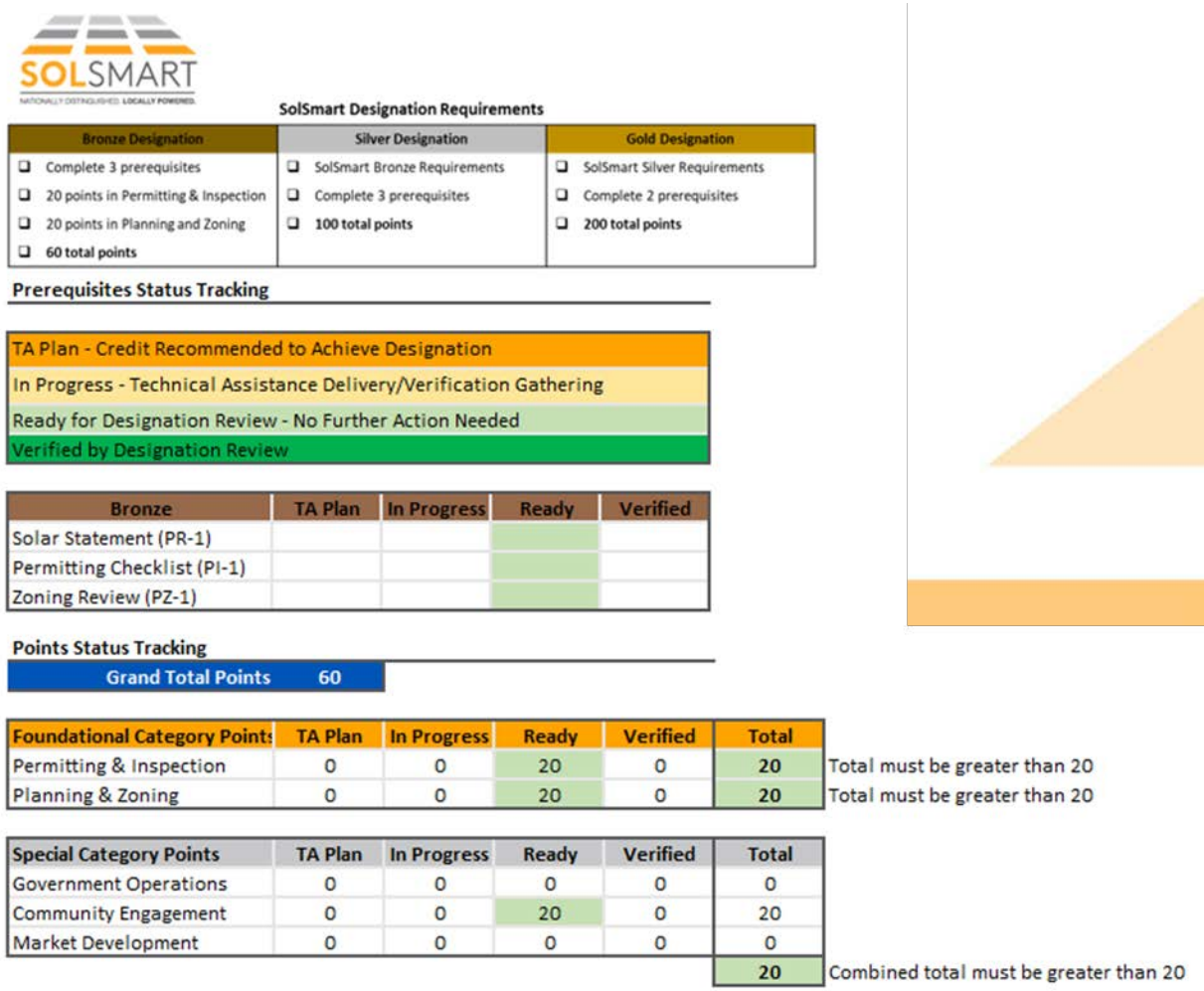
JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

GET STARTED | CONTACT

www.solsmart.org

Designation Review Process Objectives

- Ensure that applicants are **evaluated fairly**
- Ensure that the SolSmart designation is **meaningful, robust, and highly valued**
- Provide input regarding **possible improvement** to solar policies
- Discover particularly **noteworthy accomplishments** to highlight for press releases



SolSmart Designation Requirements

Bronze Designation	Silver Designation	Gold Designation
❑ Complete 3 prerequisites	❑ SolSmart Bronze Requirements	❑ SolSmart Silver Requirements
❑ 20 points in Permitting & Inspection	❑ Complete 3 prerequisites	❑ Complete 2 prerequisites
❑ 20 points in Planning and Zoning	❑ 100 total points	❑ 200 total points
❑ 60 total points		

Prerequisites Status Tracking

TA Plan - Credit Recommended to Achieve Designation
In Progress - Technical Assistance Delivery/Verification Gathering
Ready for Designation Review - No Further Action Needed
Verified by Designation Review

Bronze	TA Plan	In Progress	Ready	Verified
Solar Statement (PR-1)				
Permitting Checklist (PI-1)				
Zoning Review (PZ-1)				

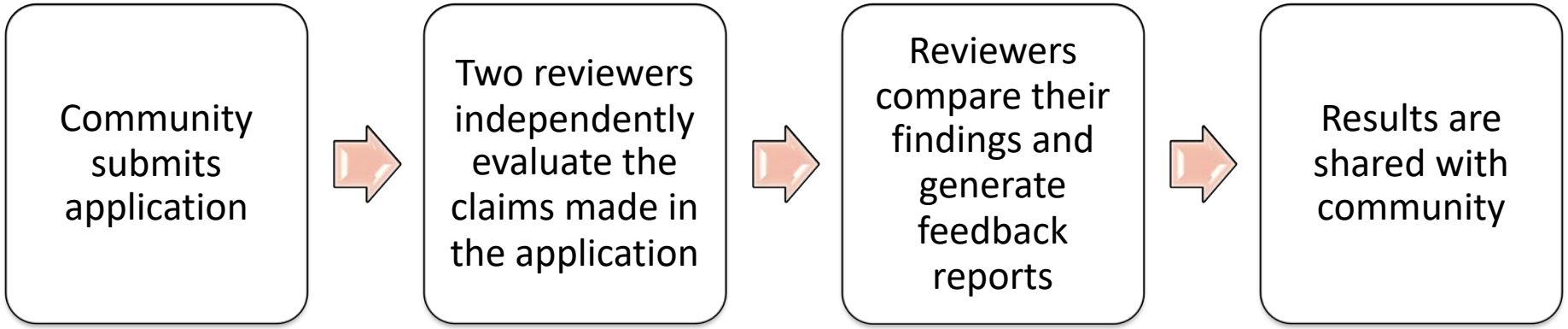
Points Status Tracking

Grand Total Points	60

Foundational Category Points	TA Plan	In Progress	Ready	Verified	Total	
Permitting & Inspection	0	0	20	0	20	Total must be greater than 20
Planning & Zoning	0	0	20	0	20	Total must be greater than 20

Special Category Points	TA Plan	In Progress	Ready	Verified	Total	
Government Operations	0	0	0	0	0	
Community Engagement	0	0	20	0	20	
Market Development	0	0	0	0	0	
					20	Combined total must be greater than 20

Designation Review Process Overview



Celebrate SolSmart Designation!

Baseline Assessments Results

☑ Solar Statement (PR-1) completed by all 11 communities!

- Bensenville
- Broadview
- Carol Stream
- Geneva
- Glenview
- Gurnee
- Hazel Crest
- Mount Prospect
- Northlake
- Oak Forest
- Westmont

Remaining Prerequisite Actions

Bronze	TA Plan	In Progress	Ready	Verified
Solar Statement (PR-1)				
Permitting Checklist (PI-1)				
Zoning Review (PZ-1)				

- **Permitting Checklists (PI-1): Next**
  - ☑ Westmont, Gurnee, and Carol Stream have completed PI-1
- **Zoning Reviews (PZ-1): In Progress**
- **60 points total**
  - 20 in Permitting & Inspection Category
  - 20 in Planning & Zoning Category
  - 20 across Govt Operations, Community Engagement, and Market Development Categories

Baseline Assessments Results

0 – 20 points

- Village of Hazel Crest
- City of Oak Forest
- Village of Westmont
- Village of Bensenville
- Village of Broadview
- Village of Glenview
- Village of Gurnee

25 – 60 points

- Village of Mount Prospect
- City of Northlake
- Village of Carol Stream
- City of Geneva

Mount Prospect: Pathway to Designation

Baseline Assessment Score: ~35 Points

- **Permitting & Inspection**: **5 points**
  - PI-10 – Residential permit fees for solar PV are $500 or less (5 points)
- **Planning & Zoning**: 0 points
- **Government Operations**: 0 points
- **Community Engagement**: **10 points**
  - CE-1 – Posted a solar landing page (10 points)
- **Market Development**: **20 points**
  - MD-4 – Support a community solar program (20 points)

What Remains?

Permitting Checklist: Needed
Zoning Review: **In Progress**
Permitting & Inspection: 15 points needed
Planning & Zoning: 20 points needed
"Special Focus" Categories: **Ready**

Permitting & Inspection: Pathways to Designation

PI-1	Req'd	Post an online checklist detailing the required permit(s), submittals, and steps of your community's permitting process for small rooftop solar PV. (Required for Bronze)

Pathway 1:

<u>In solar permitting checklist, indicate that:</u>

- Residential permit fees for solar PV are $500 or less **(5 points)**
- No more than one permit application form is needed for small rooftop solar PV **(5 points)**
- No more than two inspections are needed for small rooftop solar PV **(10 points)**
- Inspection appointment times are provided in lieu of appointment windows for solar PV **(10 points)**

Pathway 2:

- Train inspection staff on best practices for inspecting solar PV **(10 points)**
- Provide an online process for solar PV permit submission and approval **(20 points)**
- Post solar PV inspection requirements online, including the inspection process and what details inspectors will review **(10 points)**

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- ☐ Specification sheets and installation manuals (if available)
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SOLSMART

[Solar Permitting Checklist Version 1, Updated 1/1/2021]

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Source: SolSmart Simplified Solar Permitting Process.

ZONING REVIEW – La Grange, IL

PZD-1a: Review zoning requirements and identify restrictions that intentionally or unintentionally prohibit solar PV development. Compile findings in a memo. (Required)

To assist your community, the national solar experts at SolSmart have conducted a review of your community's zoning code to assess possible barriers (i.e. height restrictions, set-back requirements, etc.) and gaps related to solar PV development. 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-1a 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
	Ex. Setbacks, Height Restrictions, Definition, etc.			
9-101(C)(13)(a)	**Glare/Reflection**	The zoning ordinance states that "each solar panel must be located so it does not reflect light onto abutting residential lots." Solar panels are designed to absorb, not reflect sunlight. Glare restrictions are considered to be inconsistent with solar best practices. The best practice is for glare regulations to only be applicable when the FAA regulations or rules kick in for projects on or around airports.	**Most permissive option:** N/A **Less permissive option:** "For solar farms located within 500 feet of an airport or within approach zones of an airport, the applicant must complete the provided results of the Solar Glare Hazard Analysis Tool (SGHAT) for the Airport Traffic Control Tower cab and final approach paths, consistent with the Interim Policy, FAA Review of Solar Energy Projects on Federally Obligated Airports, or most recent version adopted by the FAA." (Grow Solar Illinois Toolkit)	**Low** (Glare policies are considered restrictive. Not only is the causation of glare hard to prove, but PV systems are designed to absorb radiation, not reflect it.)
9-101(C)(13)(b)	**Height**	The zoning ordinance does not permit solar energy systems to be exceed the maximum roof height. It is a best practice to either exempt solar energy systems from height limits or permit	**Most permissive option:** "For a roof-mounted system installed on a flat roof, the highest point of the system shall be permitted to exceed the district's height limit of up to fifteen (15) feet above the rooftop to which it is attached." (Renewable Energy Ordinance	**Medium** (Allowing the solar energy system to exceed the district's maximum height limit is critical, especially to allow for solar

Planning & Zoning: Pathways to Designation

Pathway 1:

- Present zoning review memo (PZ-1) findings to planning commission or relevant body **(5 points)**
- Draft proposed language for changes to zoning code based on PZ-1 memo and commission meeting dialogue. Involve planners and/or local zoning experts **(5 points)**
- Ensure the zoning ordinance:
  - Exempts rooftop solar PV from certain restrictions on accessory uses (e.g. height limits, screening requirements) **(5 points)**
  - Permits small ground-mounted solar PV as an accessory use in at least one zoning district **(5 points)**

Pathway 2:

- Train planning and zoning staff on best practices in planning and zoning for solar PV **(10 points)**
- Post an online fact sheet that provides an overview of what zoning allows for solar PV under what conditions (e.g. types/sizes of solar systems permitted, the processes required) **(5 points)**
- Include specific solar PV goals, metrics, and/or strategies in the most current version of relevant local plans **(10 points)**

“Special Focus” Categories: Pathways to Designation

CE-1	10	Post a solar landing page on local government’s website with information that may include the community’s solar goals, educational materials and tools that promote solar, and resources for solar development (e.g. permitting checklist, application forms, zoning regulations, etc.).

Pathway 1:

<u>On solar landing page, include:</u>

- Solar PV consumer protection resources **(5 points)**
- Residential and commercial solar PV financing options and incentives **(5 points)**
- Resources about solar installers and/or solar quote platforms **(5 points)**
- A summary of the solar PV metrics in your community **(5 points)**
- A summary of state policies related to a property owner’s solar access and solar rights **(5 points)**

Pathway 2:

- Support a solar informational session and/or solar tour **(5 points)**
- Discuss solar PV goals and/or strategies for increasing solar PV development within an appropriate committee **(10 points)**
- Support a community solar program **(20 points)**

ELECTRICAL AGGREGATION
+ FAMILY COUNSELING CENTER
+ GARBAGE & RECYCLING
- GREEN CORNER
  + Beekeeping
  Environmental Fair
  Environmental Partnerships
  Recycling Events
  Green Recognition Program
  Green Team
  Home Energy Savings
  Rain Barrels
  Solar Energy Systems
  Take the ENERGY STAR Pledge
+ HEALTH AND WELLNESS
HOUSING
LANDSCAPING

Solar in Schaumburg

The Village of Schaumburg is participating in the SolSmart program funded by the U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative, which helps local governments reduce barriers to solar energy growth and make it easier for homes and businesses to go solar.

Schaumburg has achieved the Silver level designation in the SolSmart program indicating the village is "open for solar business". The village streamlined its permit and plan review process, and updated its Solar Energy Code to encourage the use of solar energy as a renewable energy resource. New solar energy systems reduce energy demand, reduce the use of fossil fuels, create jobs and will help Schaumburg achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Green Action Plan.

Refer to Schaumburg's Commercial and Residential Solar Energy Systems Resource Guides for information about permits and the application and inspection processes.

Solar Resources

- Helpful Hints for Residents
- Schaumburg's Solar Energy Systems Ordinance
- ComEd Green Connection Information
- ComEd Interconnect Information

Next Steps

Target Deadline for all Submissions: Friday, February 11th

- Cohort Designation Event in Mid-February or March

We will follow up with Baseline Assessments and Zoning Review Memos

Interest in Cohort Trainings?

- Planning & Zoning training
- Permitting training
- Inspection training
- Fire & Safety training

Questions?

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