



NYSERDA

Unified Solar Permit

A High-Impact Action for the Clean Energy Communities Program

Communities and Local Government Team at NYSERDA

Clean Energy Communities Program

Provides **rewards and recognition** to city, town, village, and county governments that demonstrate clean energy leadership

STEP 1: Earn the **Clean Energy Communities** designation by completing **4 out of 10 high-impact actions**

STEP 2: Access **grant funding**, up to \$250K with no local cost share, to support additional clean energy projects

Dedicated and knowledgeable local coordinators are available to assist communities as they implement high-impact actions i.e. free on-demand technical support, decision support, step-by-step guidance, case studies, model ordinances, RFPs, etc.

10 High-Impact Actions

1. Benchmarking
2. Clean Energy Upgrades
3. LED Street Lights
4. Clean Fleets
5. Solarize
6. Unified Solar Permit
7. Energy Code Enforcement Training
8. Climate Smart Communities Certification
9. Community Choice Aggregation
10. Energize NY Finance



Unified Solar Permit

- The Unified Solar Permit is a standardized permit application designed to streamline the approval process for installing solar in the community.
- The standardized permit is expected to cut costs by creating a uniform permitting process in municipalities across the State.
- As municipalities adopt the permit, installers and municipalities alike will save time and resources permitting solar electric systems.
- An expedited process will allow these standard systems to pass quickly through the jurisdictional review process, freeing up time for all involved parties, decreasing the overall installation time for customers, and allowing non-standard systems the necessary time for detailed review.

Requirements

Demonstrate completion of the Unified Solar Permit action by submitting the following documentation:

- Submit a copy of an executed local law, ordinance, or resolution adopting the New York State Unified Solar Permit (the permit can be accessed in the Unified Solar Permit toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec)
- Submit a copy of the Unified Solar Permit being used by the applying jurisdiction.
- Please note that an updated version of the New York State Unified Solar Permit was released in October 2016. NYSEDA will only accept the new version of the permit.

Unified Solar Permit

- For simple small-scale installations 25kW or smaller
- Based on industry standards

Appendix A. Unified Residential Solar PV Permit Application

PERMIT APPLICATION

NY State Unified Solar Permit

Unified solar permitting is available statewide for eligible solar photovoltaic (PV) installations. Municipal authorities that adopt the unified permit streamline their process while providing consistent and thorough review of solar PV permitting applications and installations. Upon approval of this application and supporting documentation, the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) will issue a building and/or electrical permit for the solar PV installation described herein.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY FOR UNIFIED PERMITTING PROCESS

By submitting this application, the applicant attests that the proposed project meets the established eligibility criteria for the unified permitting process (subject to verification by the AHJ). The proposed solar PV system installation:

Yes No 1. Has a rated DC capacity of 25 kW or less.

Yes No 2. Is not subject to review by an Architectural or Historical Review Board. (If review has already been issued answer YES and attach a copy)

Yes No 3. Does not need a zoning variance or special use permit.
If variance or permit has already been issued answer YES and attach a copy)

Yes No 4. Is mounted on a permitted roof structure, on a legal accessory structure, or ground mounted on the applicant's property, if on a legal accessory structure, a diagram showing existing electrical connection to structure is attached.

Yes No 5. The Solar Installation Contractor complies with all licensing and other requirements of the jurisdiction and the State.

Yes No 6. If the structure is a sloped roof, solar panels are mounted parallel to the roof surface.

For solar PV systems not meeting these eligibility criteria, the applicant is not eligible for the Unified Solar Permit and must submit conventional permit applications. Permit applications may be downloaded here [BUILDING DEPARTMENT WEBSITE] or obtained in person at [BUILDING DEPARTMENT ADDRESS] during business hours [INDICATE BUSINESS HOURS].

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

For projects meeting the eligibility criteria, this application and the following attachments will constitute the Unified Solar Permitting package.

- This application form, with all fields completed and bearing relevant signatures.
- Permitting fee of \$[ENTER FEE HERE], payable by [ENTER VALID PAYMENT METHODS, if checks are allowed INCLUDING WHO CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE PAYABLE TO]
- Required Construction Documents for the solar PV system type being installed, including required attachments.

Completed permit applications can be submitted electronically to [EMAIL ADDRESS] or in person at [BUILDING DEPARTMENT ADDRESS] during business hours [INDICATE BUSINESS HOURS].

APPLICATION REVIEW TIMELINE

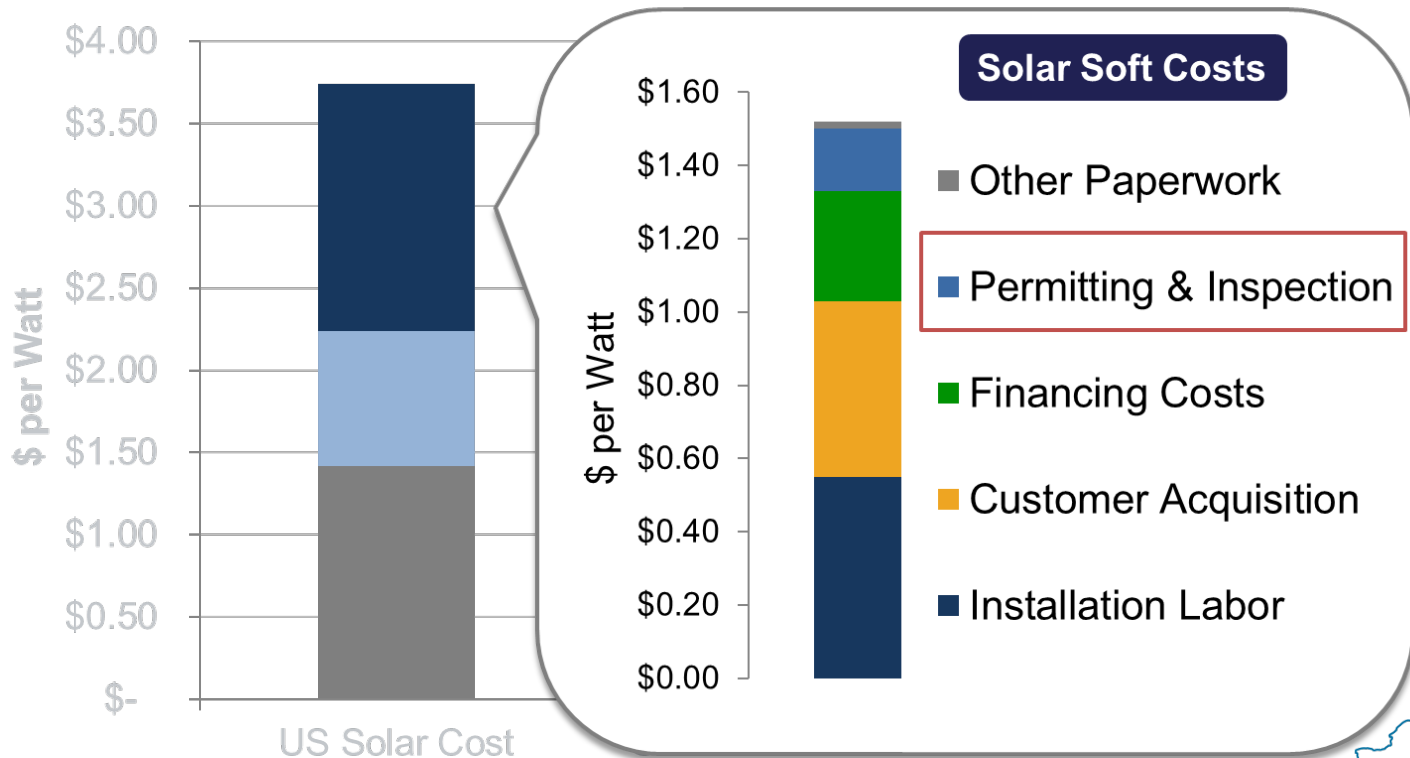
Permit determinations will be issued within [TIMELINE] calendar days upon receipt of complete and accurate applications. The municipality will provide feedback within [TIMELINE] calendar days of receiving incomplete or inaccurate applications.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Questions about this permitting process may be directed to [MUNICIPAL CONTACT INFORMATION].

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Permitting Costs



Tools and Resources

PV Trainers Network

The PV Trainers Network provides a number of on-site training courses and one-on-one technical assistance to communities. <https://training.ny-sun.ny.gov/>

NYSERDA's Solar Guidebook for Local Governments

The guidebook includes a wealth of resources for becoming a solar-friendly community including the New York State Unified Solar Permit Application and Field Inspection Checklist. It includes topics such as rooftop solar access requirements for firefighters and first responders, information on the Real Property Tax Law 487 exempting solar PV systems, a fact sheet for Agricultural Districts, a fact sheet for landowners considering solar leases, Information on land use planning and a model solar energy law.

CEC Technical Assistance

Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Coordinators are available to help municipal officials implement the Unified Solar Permit. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov

The Bottom Line

Local government officials that adopt the Unified Solar Permit can expect to:

- ✓ Efficiently handle large numbers of solar permits
- ✓ Help applicants get in and out quickly
- ✓ Support the local solar industry

Contact

Communities and Local Government

New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)

Email: cec@nyserda.ny.gov

www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec