



Department of Planning & Zoning Staff Report – Text Amendment Case No. 2026-1-ORD

**Introduced by Walter Pilié, Councilman, District III &
Michelle O’Daniels, Councilwoman, District V**

An ordinance to amend the St. Charles Parish Zoning Ordinance of 1981, Section VII. – Supplemental use and performance regulations, Large Solar Energy Systems (LSES).

BACKGROUND

In 2023, the Planning and Zoning Department, in coordination with the Parish Council, recognized the need to provide regulations for the emergent Solar Panel industry. A series of development standards were introduced and adopted for Section VII, Supplemental use and performance regulations.

Act 279 of the 2025 Regular Legislative Session, codified at La. Rev. Stat. 30:1144 and effective January 1, 2026, addresses the facility siting for large scale solar uses. The Parish, by resolution of the Council, exercised its right to opt out of those requirements and to maintain self-governance of these facilities. In doing so, the Council recognized the potential need to amend the current regulations and to strengthen them with regard to site design aspects.

The attached ordinance is the product of the Administration and Council members working together to review options and local examples. A request to forward this to the Planning Commission was made through the Legislative Committee of the Council after reviewing other local ordinances and proposed changes to the current established Parish ordinance.

POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

- Increased development standards for large scale solar facilities, including:
 - Established minimum acreage for the use
 - Increased setbacks
 - Development standards for the planting of a landscaped buffer area
- A requirement for evaluation of glare and communication with local aviation authorities regarding potential risks.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Approval