



PMG Associates, Inc.

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SOLAR PERMIT REVIEW

CITY OF POMPANO BEACH

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SOLAR PERMITS POMPANO BEACH

PURPOSE

There is a trend in the United States for renewable energy and LEED certification. Solar energy is one of the important methods to satisfy this trend. This is especially true in Florida, due to the abundance of sunshine. The purpose of this study is to determine if there is reason to give an incentive for installation of solar systems.

METHOD OF STUDY

1. Research Other Jurisdictions
2. Review Procedures for Solar Permits
3. Cost Considerations
4. Establish Fees
5. Review Policy Decisions

RESEARCH OF OTHER JURISDICTIONS

For most communities researched, no incentive at all is offered. However, a few communities offer expedited permitting, a flat or reduced fee and a few offers a rebate on either the permit or specifically for energy efficiency.

This research provides a summary of information obtained regarding incentives for installation of solar panels. To obtain this information searches were conducted of local county and municipal web sites, staff members and building officials contacted. In addition, SunPeak Solar was contacted to see if they were aware of any jurisdictions in Florida offer incentives for solar panels. SunPeak is a company specializing in solar panel installations throughout the country including Florida but they were unaware of any jurisdiction in Florida that offers any incentives.

Other Jurisdictions

Broward County

- Broward County does not offer any permit expediting or fee reduction for the installation of solar panels. “PACE Broward” is the “Property Assessed Clean Energy” program that allows repayment of solar through a property assessment.

City of Parkland

- Parkland does not offer any permit expediting or fee reduction for the installation of solar panels.

City of Deerfield Beach

- Deerfield Beach does not offer any permit expediting or fee reduction for the installation of solar panels, although their checklist states that if all information is provided a permit can be issued in 7-10 days.

City of Coral Springs

- Coral Springs does not offer any permit expediting or fee reduction for the installation of solar panels.

City of Plantation

- Plantation does not offer any permit expediting or fee reduction for the installation of solar panels, although has a flat fee for permitting of \$410.

City of Fort Lauderdale

- Fort Lauderdale does not offer any permit expediting or fee reduction for the installation of solar panels, although has a flat fee for permitting of \$552.

Palm Beach County

- Palm Beach County offers expedited permitting but no fee reduction.

City of Boca Raton

- Boca Raton does not offer any permit expediting or fee reduction for the installation of solar panels.

City of Delray Beach

- Delray does not offer any permit expediting or fee reduction for the installation of solar panels.

Town of Lantana

- Lantana does not offer any permit expediting or fee reduction for the installation of solar panels, although has a flat fee for permitting of \$410.

City of Boynton Beach

- The City of Boynton Beach offers rebates for a wide range of energy efficient improvements through their “Energy Edge Rebate Program” although it is not specifically related to permitting. They do not offer permit expediting or permit fee reduction.

Town of Ocean Ridge

- The Town of Ocean Ridge offers Permit Fee Reduction Incentive with proof of installation per item, including energy efficient products such as solar panels and water heaters. They do not offer permit expediting.

Review Procedures for Solar Permits

The Building Department provides a checklist of the procedures to obtain a Solar Permit. This checklist includes the requirements from the City of Pompano Beach and Broward County.

The checklist is found in Appendix A.

Cost Considerations

The cost of providing service for Solar Permits includes the direct salary cost of the employees that perform the service as well as the Overhead Cost for Fringes and Administrative Overhead. The cost was taken from the recent Permit Fee Study, updated for current conditions.

Table 1
COST TO PROVIDE SOLAR PERMITS (Building and Electrical)

Solar / Photovoltaic System			
PROCESS	RATE	HOURS	COST
Front Counter Submittal	\$24.5040	0.25	\$6.13
Scanning	\$24.5040	0.25	\$6.13
Plans Routed for Review	\$27.0155	1	\$27.02
Plans Examination	\$44.0853	1	\$44.09
Permit Issuance	\$27.0155	0.25	\$6.75
Inspections	\$36.4641	3.5	\$127.62
Sub-Total		6.25	\$217.74
Fringe		57.76%	\$125.76
Indirect & Admin		80.57%	\$175.43
Total			\$518.93

Permit Activity

Review of the Solar Permits for the past two years reveals that there were 106 permits issued by Pompano Beach. A summary of the permits follows.

**TABLE 2
BUILDING PROJECT VALUE BASED ON PERMITS**

Range	Count
\$1 to \$5,000	20
\$5,001 to \$10,000	21
\$10,001 to \$20,000	13
\$20,001 to \$30,000	20
\$30,001 to \$40,000	20
\$40,001 to \$70,000	14
Over \$1 million	2
Average	\$41,840
Average less than \$1 million	\$21,150
Median	\$19,400
Average Fee	\$1,024
Percentage	2.44%

Source: City of Pompano Beach Building Department

**TABLE 3
ELECTRICAL PROJECT VALUE BASED ON PERMITS**

Range	Count
\$0	17
\$1 to \$5,000	21
\$5,001 to \$10,000	6
\$10,001 to \$20,000	29
\$20,001 to \$30,000	12
\$30,001 to \$40,000	13
\$40,001 to \$70,000	6
\$250,000 to \$500,000	2
Average	\$22,600
Average less than \$250,000	\$15,900
Median	\$13,700
Average Fee	\$616
Percentage	2.73%

Source: City of Pompano Beach Building Department

**TABLE 4
KW BASED ON PERMITS**

Range	Count
3 to 5	12
5.1 to 10	38
11 & 12	31
13 to 15	4
15.1 to 20	15
20.1 to 30	3
122	1
Over 500	2
Average	24.1
Average less than the largest	10.7
Median	10.1

Source: City of Pompano Beach Building Department

Fees

The fee structure will incentivize installation of solar panels. The most typical systems are less than 12 KW, there are very few system than are significant in size. The fee structure will allow for a Base Fee for the most typical projects. The Fee Structure will charge additional fees for the larger systems.

Base Fee (up to 10 KW systems)	\$260.00 per trade for a total of \$520.00
Over 10 KW (or part of each KW)	\$10/KW per trade for a total of \$20/KW

Summary

Loss of Revenue will result from this policy. It is estimated that under the current conditions the loss will be between \$35,000 and \$40,000 annually.

Advantages of the Policy:

- The City will encourage Solar Systems
- The City will be on the forefront of renewable energy

Disadvantages of the Policy:

- There will be less costly permits than the regular Building permits
- There will be a loss of revenue