

Guidelines for Installing Solar in the DRO District

This guide explains the requirements for installing solar energy systems inside the Downtown Revitalization Overlay District. The Town of Altavista would like to applaud property owners for taking steps to reduce their energy costs while also helping to reduce their impact on the environment.

What is the DRO district?

The DRO is a zoning overlay district in the heart of downtown, which includes the Town's Main Street district. It is designed to fulfill the Comprehensive Plan's goal of recognizing Altavista's unique character and promoting the revitalization of the Town's downtown strategy. In addition, it seeks to promote tourism as a viable economic development strategy. Several of the streets within the district (Main Street, Bedford Avenue, and Broad Street) serve as key access routes by tourists traveling to area attractions such as English Park, Avoca Museum, Leesville Lake, and the Staunton River.

What are the boundaries of the DRO?



Am I allowed to install solar energy systems within the DRO?

Yes, provided that all requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and Building Code are met.

What are the requirements for rooftop-mounted systems?

Rooftop-mounted solar energy systems are considered part of the principal building or structure and are allowed. The maximum height of a structure shall not exceed 45 feet or 4 stories. Systems that are hidden from public view are encouraged.

What are the requirements for ground-mounted systems?

Rooftop-mounted systems are preferred; however, ground-mounted solar energy systems are allowed if the system meets all requirements:

- Must meet the DRO's screening requirement that all mechanical equipment be placed in inconspicuous locations or shielded from the view of motorists traveling on the street. This screening can be accomplished using a fence, row of shrubs, or a combination of the two.

What applications or permits are required to install solar in the DRO?

Any solar installation, whether rooftop or ground mounted, requires a Building Permit and Electrical Permit from the Campbell County Building Inspections Office.

A ground-mounted system also requires a completed Altavista Zoning Permit.

Who should I contact for more information?

For additional assistance regarding zoning requirements in the DRO please contact Community Development at 434-369-5001.

For additional assistance regarding the permitting and inspections, please contact the Campbell County Building Inspections Office at 434-332-9608.