

County-level ordinances governing utility-scale solar projects										
Color key:	✓	present, addressed in ordinance				✗	missing from ordinance			
County names with hyperlinks to ordinance>>	Augusta	Brunswick	Caroline	Charlotte	Culpeper	Dinwiddie	Madison	Nelson (draft)	Page (in discussion)	Southampton (draft)
Overall vision and guiding principles										
By Special/Conditional Use Permit (SUP/CUP) only	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	by rezoning	✓	✓	✓	✓
SUP granted only when project approved by PJM	✗	ID public utility that will interconnect	✗	no installation before PJM approval	proof of application to PJM only	✗	✓	✗	letter of commitment from utility company	✗
Maximum solar cap for county	✗	8,500 acres	600 MW	✗	✗	✗	50% of total county power usage	✗	✗	1% of county land area
Maximum size per project	✗	✗	✗	3% of land within a 5-mile radius	✗	✗	50% of total county power usage	✗	500 acres	100 MW
Maximum acreage coverage per facility (% solar panels to total land in project)	✗	65% coverage	✗	✗	✗	✗	based on county power usage	✗	65% coverage	✗
Deadline for building or permit after SUP approval	not specified	24 months	36 months	not specified	24 months	not specified	not specified	24 months	24 months	12 months
Energy storage systems considered separate use	not specified	no difference	not specified	not specified	not specified	not specified	not specified	not specified	✓	not specified
Set-back requirements and caps										
Minimum setback for on-site equipment & structures	200 feet	150-250 feet	50-150 feet	not specified	150 feet	not specified	300 ft	100 feet	200 feet	35-75 feet
Minimum setback to edge of rivers, creeks, state roads, and/or parcels with existing dwellings	✗	✗	✗	75-400 ft (exceptions granted)	not specified	✗	50 ft (streams); 150 ft (rivers)	✗	100-300 feet	250 feet
Setback from residential districts or subdivisions	1,000 feet	250 feet	✗	✗	✗	not specified	✗	200 feet	Prohibited	✗
Minimum distance to nearest solar facility	✗	✗	1 mile	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	2 miles	5 miles
Minimum distance to nearest town	✗	1 mile	✗	1 mile	✗	✗	✗	✗	1 mile	1 mile
Vegetated setback with planted screening	10-20 feet	100 feet	25-75 feet	25 feet	not specified	not specified	50 feet	20 feet	100 feet	35-75 feet
Maximum above grade height of panels	15 feet	15 feet	15 feet	25 feet	not specified	18 feet	not specified	15 feet	10 feet	18 feet
Maximum height of other structures	not specified	15 feet	over 15 feet as long as not visible from exterior	not specified	not specified	not specified	15 feet	not specified	15 feet	over 18 feet as long as not visible from exterior
Restrictions										
Zoning district restrictions	Only general ag or general business	✗	Solar Energy Overlay District only	✗	In A-1 (ag) and RA (rural area) only	Limits on Ag Use Value program lands	Only on M-1 (industrial)	SUP in A-1, C-1, M-1, B-1, B-2; by-right in M-2	✗	Only on M-1 (limited industrial)
Restrictions on Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or conservation easements	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	discouraged; max 50%	not specified
Required setback from historic and cultural areas	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	200 feet	100 feet
Prohibited on properties on the state or national historic registry or in a core battlefield area	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
Prohibited on forested areas, as identified by Virginia State certified forester	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Prohibited on properties clear-cut or heavily timbered within five years before submittal	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
Erosion & stormwater										
Surface water and floodplain inventory required	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
SUP specifies adherence to all federal, state, and local erosion, sediment control & stormwater requirements	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Qualified third-party inspections as required by VA Erosion & Sediment Control, & Stormwater Regulations	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Deadline for submitting required inspections to county	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	within 24 hrs	not specified
Basic grading plan required	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Grading plan reviewed by independent expert required	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Other grading restrictions	✗	✗	topsoil cannot be removed	✗	✗	✗	4" of topsoil to be removed & stored onsite	✗	✗	topsoil cannot be removed
Maximum site surface area that can be graded	✗	✗	limited to panel areas	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	50% max	limited to panel areas
Maximum amount of vegetation that can be cleared	✗	✗	limited to panel areas	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	limited to panel areas
Estimate required of % on-site acres that will be cleared	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Maximum slope of terrain that can be developed	✗	✗	15% slope	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	15% slope	15% slope
Vegetation and natural resources										

