

# Elkhart County

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COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, May 29, 2018

International City/County Management Association  
777 North Capitol St. NE, Ste. 500  
Washington, DC 20002

The Solar Foundation  
1717 Pennsylvania AVE NW, Ste. 750  
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Andrea Fox and Zach Greene:

On behalf of Elkhart County, I am announcing our commitment to become a SolSmart-designated community with support from the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG).

Over the last several years as the cost of solar has dropped, an increasing number of farmers, businesses, residents, and others within Elkhart County have supplemented their electricity use by generating solar power. In 2017, at least 67 homes and 15 businesses, institutions, and churches transitioned to solar. Further, Elkhart County ranked #4 in the state for solar jobs according to the 2017 National Solar Jobs Census and local solar installers are actively hiring.

In partnership with MACOG, County staff members will work to review zoning and permitting processes and communicate that information to make it easier, faster, and cheaper to go solar. This work will also prepare our region for the increase in this technology by cross-training inspectors and sharing information with local fire departments.

The County is also undertaking this review of internal processes now recognizing that solar development may increase over the next 4 years due to state legislation in 2017 that phases out net metering by July 1, 2022 for NIPSCO and Indiana Michigan Power customers.

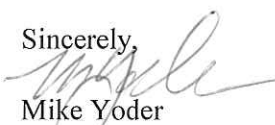
Elkhart County will leverage SolSmart to achieve the following goals:

- Review opportunities to reduce barriers to local solar energy development, such as Special Use Permit thresholds
- Empower residents to reduce their energy costs by providing access to information and resources
- Support local economic development through the growing local solar industry

To track solar development, the County will work with installers and local solar owners to collect information such as the number and location of residential, commercial, and institutional solar projects and installed solar capacity.

Inquiries related to Elkhart County's SolSmart participation can be directed to Elkhart County Plan Director Chris Godlewski at (574) 971-4579 or [CGodlewski@elkhartcounty.com](mailto:CGodlewski@elkhartcounty.com).

Sincerely,



Mike Yoder

President, Elkhart County Commissioners