

Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government

*200 E. Main St
Lexington, KY 40507*



Docket

Tuesday, July 1, 2025

1:00 PM

Council Chamber

General Government and Planning Committee

Committee Agenda

- [0676-25](#) Approval of May 6, 2025 Committee Summary
- [1048-24](#) Solar Energy Systems (ZOTA-24-00003)
- [0675-25](#) Charter Review
- [0038-25](#) Lexington's Preservation & Growth Management Program (LPGMP)
- [0467-25](#) Items Referred to Committee

Adjournment



Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Master

200 E. Main St
Lexington, KY 40507

File Number: 0676-25

File ID: 0676-25

Type: Committee Item

Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 1

Contract #:

In Control: General
Government and
Planning
Committee

File Created: 06/26/2025

File Name: Approval of May 6, 2025 Committee Summary

Final Action:

Title: Approval of May 6, 2025 Committee Summary

Notes:

Sponsors:

Enactment Date:

Attachments: 5.6.25 GGP Summary

Enactment Number:

Deed #:

Hearing Date:

Drafter:

Effective Date:

History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
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Text of Legislative File 0676-25

Title

Approval of May 6, 2025 Committee Summary



General Government & Planning (GGP) Committee

May 6, 2025

Summary and Motions

Chair Liz Sheehan called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Committee members Liz Sheehan, Dan Wu, James Brown, Chuck Ellinger II, Shayla Lynch, Hannah LeGris, Emma Curtis, Whitey Elliott Baxter, Dave Sevigny, and Jennifer Reynolds were present. Council members Tyler Morton, Denise Gray, Joseph Hale, Hil Boone, and Amy Beasley were present as non-voting members.

I. APPROVAL OF MARCH 4, 2025 COMMITTEE SUMMARY (Sheehan)

Elloitt Baxter motioned to approve the March 4, 2025 General Government and Planning Committee Summary. Seconded by Ellinger. The motion passed unanimously.

II. EFFICIENCIES IN OUR DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES AND COMPLIANCE WITH HB 443 (Brown)

Daniel Crum, Planner Principal in the Division of Planning, presented on the item. Crum reminded the committee that the Kentucky Legislature introduced and approved this new section of KRS Chapter 100 during the 2024 legislative session. With an effective date of July 1, 2025, the new section requires that local laws governing subdivision plats and development plans be established by objective standards and applied in a ministerial manner, and to outline conditions for the application of discretion.

Defining key terms and phrases in this legislation is necessary. “Objective standards” are measurable, specific, unbiased, and equitable. “Applied ministerially” means an administrative act carried out in a prescribed manner, not allowing for personal discretion. “Set out conditions for application of discretion” means establishing parameters for when the Planning Commission would utilize discretion, like that of a waiver of the Land Subdivision Regulations.

Preliminary Development Plans with a Zone Change will not see any changes with this legislation. Final Development Plans will not see any changes with the Application, Staff Review, or Technical Review Committee steps. However, the Planning Commission Review would only occur for a waiver or deviation of the standards, or if a requirement would pose a specific threat to public health, safety, or welfare in the affected area.

Crum gave an overview of the proposed changes, which include updating zoning ordinance definitions for clarity, consistency, and to address process changes; removing subjective criteria and processes and replacing them with objective criteria; creating objective standards in the Zoning Ordinance for items that traditionally were part of other Divisions’ sign-off processes (DES, Traffic Engineering, etc.); reducing the number of items that require hearings; and implementing an updated Development Plan process. A mandatory shift to a ministerial process removes discretion, as well as the ability to consider public comment in the review of Final Development Plans/Plats. Review of the plans becomes a staff-

level item, unless the applicant requests waivers or a specific health, safety, or welfare concern is identified. The public is still able to provide feedback at the plan-making stage, the policy-making stage, with Preliminary Development Plans, and during the waiver review process, as well as the review of projects forwarded to the Planning Commission due to a specific Health, Safety, or Welfare concern raised by staff.

Planning Staff met in person with various stakeholder groups, mailed notices to the 280 active neighborhood associations, and received written submissions from community members through email. In response to public feedback, staff eliminated portions of the text that did not have a direct bearing on HB 443 and provisions that were not previously being applied or reviewed during the current sign-off process. They further streamlined the review process by eliminating unnecessary pre-application requirements and editing the text for consistency and clarity.

Crum let the committee know that the Planning Commission held public hearings on March 27, 2025, and on April 10, 2025. During both hearings, most speakers expressed concern with public input opportunities, as well as the portions of the text that codify the sign-off standards. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the Staff Alternative language with only minor revisions. Additionally, the commission issued a strong recommendation for the Council to consider opportunities for public comment and participation.

Committee members raised several questions and concerns, and some plan to make motions to amend. CM Brown said he would like to review at the 6-month and 1-year mark. Discussion of ZOTA-25-00001: Ministerial Review of Development Plans will occur at today's Work Session. Amendments and further discussion will be made at that time.

The committee took no action.

III. LEXINGTON'S PRESERVATION & GROWTH MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (LPGMP) (Wu)

VM Wu, item sponsor, informed the committee and the public that the LPGMP presentation will now be heard on Thursday, May 8, at the Council's Quarterly Committee of the Whole meeting, which will be held in the Council Chamber. An official meeting notice will be sent.

The committee took no action.

IV. SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS (ZOTA-23-00004) (Sheehan/Sevigny)

Chair Sheehan informed the committee and the public that the Solar Energy Systems (ZOTA-24-00003) presentation will be first on the meeting agenda for the Tuesday, July 1 committee meeting.

The committee took no action.

V. ITEMS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE (Sheehan)

The committee took no action.

Chair Sheehan adjourned the meeting at 2:48 p.m.



Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Master

200 E. Main St
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File Number: 1048-24

File ID: 1048-24

Type: Committee Item

Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 2

Contract #:

In Control: General
Government and
Planning
Committee

File Created: 10/11/2024

File Name: Solar Energy Systems (ZOTA-23-00004)

Final Action:

Title: Solar Energy Systems (ZOTA-24-00003)

Notes:

Sponsors:

Enactment Date:

Attachments: Presentation Solar Energy Systems
(ZOTA-24-00003), Council Draft Solar Energy
System Revisions

Enactment Number:

Deed #:

Hearing Date: 10/24/2024

Drafter:

Effective Date:

History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
1	Urban County Council Work Session	10/22/2024	Removed From Docket				Pass
1	Urban County Council Work Session	10/22/2024	Refer	General Government and Planning Committee	11/19/2024		Pass

Text of Legislative File 1048-24

Title

Solar Energy Systems (ZOTA-24-00003)



ZOTA-24-00003: SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

Daniel Crum, Planner Principal

Division of Planning

General Government and Planning Committee

July 1, 2025





Silicon Ranch Proposal:

- Creation of Article 31: Solar Energy Systems
 - Intent
 - Definitions
 - Applicability
 - Permitted Uses
 - Siting requirements
 - Decommissioning
 - Board of Adjustment
- Intent of the applicant is to provide a pathway for large-scale solar development within an agricultural zone as a conditional use





Current framework for Solar Energy Systems

- Article 15 of the Zoning Ordinance sets limits for heights of roof-mounted panels
- Board of Adjustment determined that ground mounted Solar Energy System uses are an Industrial Use
- Public Utility solar is regulated by the Kentucky Public Service Commission (PSC), not the Zoning Ordinance
- Merchant electric subject to Kentucky State Board on Electric Generation and Transmission Siting requirements
 - Applicable to private solar providers operating at a capacity of 10 megawatts (MW) or more





Types of Solar Energy Systems



Integrated SES



Roof-mounted SES





Types of Solar Energy Systems



Small Scale Ground Mounted
Up to 2,500 square feet



Intermediate Ground Mounted
From 2,501 square feet
up to 5 acres



Large Scale Ground Mounted:
Greater than 5 acres





Summary of Planning Commission Recommended Text

- Creates categories for Solar Energy System uses based on the type of system, and the scope at which they are proposed.
- Reduces barriers for integrated and rooftop solar uses.
- Small and intermediate scale ground mounted solar allowed as an accessory use in residential and business zones
 - Scaled to the size of the building on the lot
- Standalone ground mounted solar allowed as permitted/conditional use in the Industrial Zone, based on the size of the system.
- Creates standards for the uses, including location, screening, signage, and decommissioning plan requirements.
- All agricultural ground mounted solar excluded from the recommended text
 - Unclear what long term impacts the systems have on agricultural land
 - Recommended a separate, more in-depth process to examine use in agricultural contexts





Solar Energy Systems by Zone

Zones	R-1A, R-1B, R-1C, R-1D, R-1E, R-1T, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, EAR-1, EAR-2, EAR-3, M-1P	B-1, B-2, B-2A, B-2B, B-3, B-5P, B-6P, P-1, P-2, CC	B-4, I-1, I-2, E-D	A-R, A-B, A-N, A-U
Intergrated SES	A	A	A	A
Rooftop	A	A	A	A
Ground Mounted SES				
Small Scale	A	A	P	X
Intermediate Scale	X	A	P	X
Large Scale	X	X	CUP	X

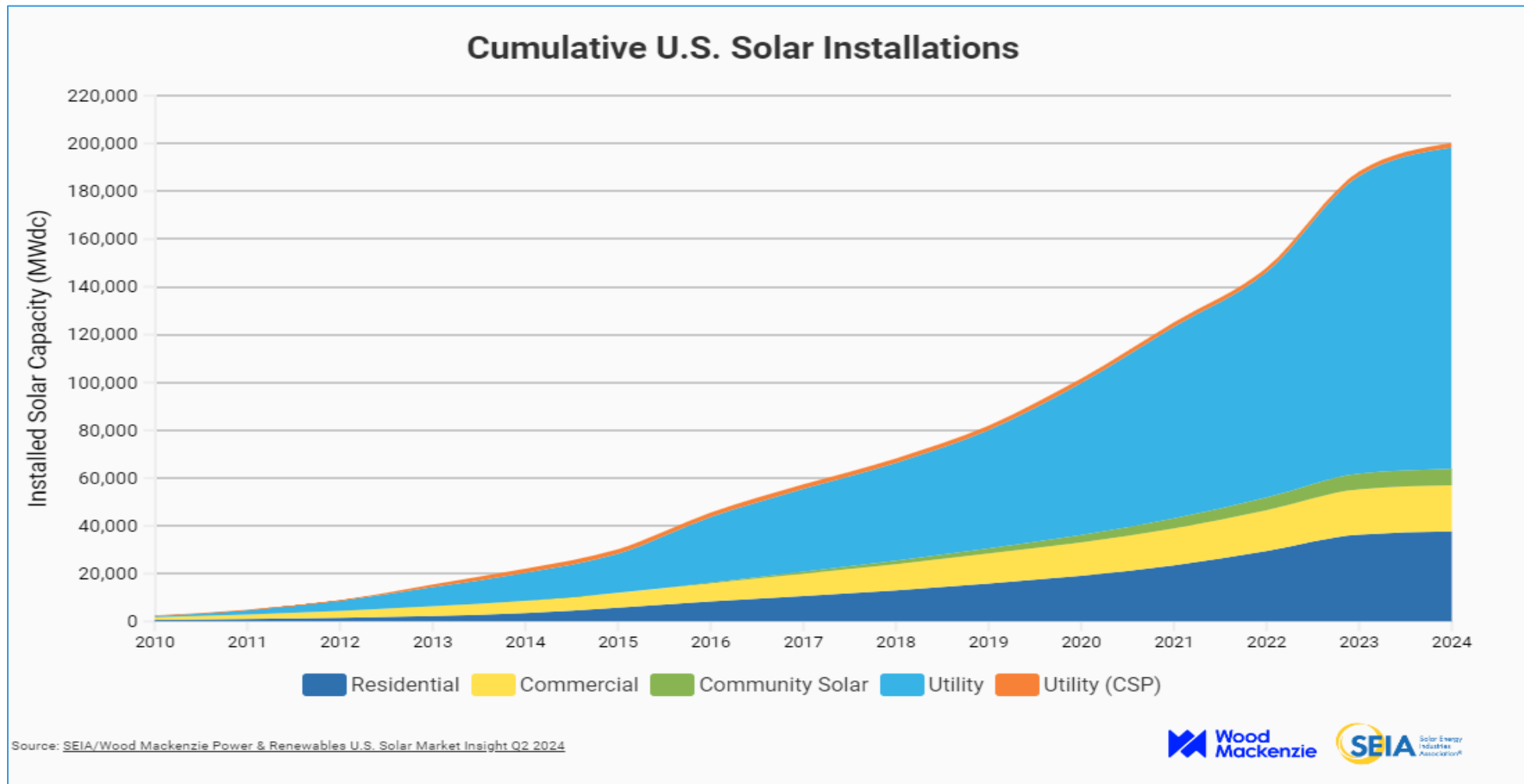
A - Accessory

P - Permitted

CUP - Conditional Use Permit

X - Prohibited







Planning Commission

- Public hearing on September 26, 2024
- Applicant provided operational information regarding their proposal
- Public comment primarily concerned with the potential impact of allowing large-scale solar within the Rural Service Area
- Unanimously approved staff recommended text



Questions?



LEXINGTON



ARTICLE 31: SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

Sec. 31-1. Intent

The intent of this Article is to facilitate the siting, development, construction, installation, and decommissioning of solar energy systems in a predictable manner that promotes and protects the safety, health, and welfare of the community. This Article encourages the appropriate siting of solar energy systems to bolster local economic development and job creation, diversify the state's energy portfolio, strengthen energy and grid security, and reduce other environmental impacts. The appropriate siting of solar energy systems considers, avoids to the extent possible, and mitigates any adverse impacts to wildlife, productive and nationally important agricultural lands, forests, endangered species habitat, and historic, natural, and other sensitive lands. The appropriate siting of solar energy systems also establishes standards and requirements to assure that the use and enjoyment of lands located adjacent to and in the proximity of solar energy systems are fully protected.

Sec. 31-2. Definitions

- a) *Solar Energy System (SES)* means a device, including its components and subsystems that collects solar energy for electricity generation, consumption, or transmission, or for thermal applications. SESs are categorized as three types depending on how the system is incorporated into the existing land use:
- (1.) *Integrated Solar Energy System* means an SES where the solar materials are incorporated into the building materials, such that the building and solar system are reasonably indistinguishable, or where the solar materials are used in place of traditional building components, such that the SES is structurally an integral part of the house, building, or other structure. An Integrated SES may be incorporated into, among other things, a building façade, skylight, shingles, canopy, light, or parking meter.
 - (2.) *Rooftop Solar Energy System* means an SES that is structurally mounted to the roof of a house, building, or other structure and does not qualify as an Integrated SES.
 - (3.) *Ground Mounted Solar Energy System* means an SES that is structurally mounted to the ground and does not qualify as an Integrated SES. Ground Mounted SESs are subcategorized as follows:
 - *Small Scale Ground Mounted Energy System (Small Scale SES)* which is a Ground Mounted SES with a footprint of less than two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet.
 - *Intermediate Scale Ground Mounted Energy System (Intermediate Scale SES)* which is a Ground Mounted SES with a footprint of between two thousand five hundred one (2,501) square feet and ~~five-ten (\$ 10)~~ acres.
 - *Large Scale Ground Mounted Solar Energy System (Large Scale SES)* means a Ground Mounted SES with a footprint of more than ~~five-(5) ten (10)~~ acres.

- b) *Exempt Solar Energy System (Exempt SES)* means a SES that is a facility of a municipally owned electric system or public utility regulated by the Kentucky Public Service Commission or Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, which is exempt from planning and zoning requirements under KRS 100 and otherwise in conformance with then existing law or regulation.
- c) *Footprint* of the SES is calculated by drawing a perimeter around the outermost SES panels and any equipment necessary for the equipment to function, such as transformers and inverters. The footprint does not include perimeter fencing or visual buffers, nor transmission lines or portions thereof that are required to connect the SES to a utility or customer outside the SES perimeter.
- d) *Siting Board Regulated SES* means a SES that constitutes a “merchant electric siting facility” under KRS 278, the construction and siting of which is subject to review and approval of the Kentucky State Board on Electric Generation and Transmission Siting. A merchant electric siting facility is an electricity generating facility or facilities that, together with all associated structures and facilities are capable of operating at an aggregate capacity of ten megawatts (10 MW) or more and sell the electricity produced in the wholesale market, at rates and charges not regulated by the Kentucky Public Service Commission.
- e) *Prime Farmland means a map unit identified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture as having the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses.*

Sec. 31-3. Applicability

- a) This Article applies to the siting, construction, installation, and decommissioning of any new SES within the jurisdiction of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government after the effective date.
- b) An SES in operation, or which has begun physical construction prior to adoption of this Article, shall be considered to have legal nonconforming status in accordance with KRS 100 and Article Four.
- c) Any Exempt SES shall provide the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Planning Commission ("Planning Commission"), Lexington-Fayette Urban County Board of Adjustment ("Board of Adjustment"), or other Lexington-Fayette Urban County authority having jurisdiction, with information concerning service facilities which have been located on and relocated on private property in accordance with KRS 100.

Sec. 31-4. Permitted Uses, Accessory Uses, and Conditional Uses

P: Principal Use. The SES is a use that is permitted as a principal use in a specified zone, subject to the requirements contained herein.

CUP: Conditional Use Permit required. The SES is permitted as a conditional use in a specified zone subject to the review of the Board of Adjustment and the requirements contained herein.

A: Accessory Use. Within the urban zones, ground mounted SES may only qualify as accessory if the total area of the system is less than fifty (50) percent of the floor area of the principal structures on the lot. Within the Agricultural Zones, accessory Ground Mounted SES shall only be allowed if the total area of the system is less than fifty (50) percent of the area of the property.

X: Prohibited

Zones	R-1A, R-1B, R-1C, R-1D, R-1E, R-1T, R-2, EAR-1, EAR-2	R-3, R-4, R-5, EAR-3,	B-1, B-2, B-2A, B-2B, B-3, B-5P, B-6P, P-1, P-2, CC	B-4, I-1, I-2, E-D	A-R, A-B, A-N, A-U
Integrated SES	A	A	A	A	A
Rooftop	A	A	A	A	A
Ground Mounted SES					
Small Scale	A	A	A	P	X A
Intermediate Scale	X	X CUP	A	P	X A
Large Scale	X	X	X	CUP	X CUP

Note: Solar Energy System uses may also be subject to other restrictions or agreements that may impact whether they can be placed on a particular property.

Sec. 31-5. General Requirements Applicable to Integrated and Rooftop Solar Energy Systems

- a) *Height Restrictions.* A rooftop SES shall ~~conform to the height restrictions provided in Article 15-1(e)4~~ be subject to the following regulations
1. No solar energy system shall be mounted or affixed to any freestanding wall or fence
 2. A rooftop solar energy system shall not extend beyond the edge of a roof
 3. Solar panels installed on a building with a sloped roof shall not project vertically more than four (4) feet above the roof surface, ridge line, or highest point of the roof.
 4. Solar panels installed on a building with a flat roof shall not extend more than ten (10) feet above the highest point of the roofline.
- b) *Lighting.* Integrated and Rooftop SESs shall not be illuminated ~~and shall be designed and installed to prevent off-site glare.~~

Sec. 31-6. General Requirements Applicable to Ground Mounted SESs

- a) *Lot Coverage.* Solar Energy Systems shall not be included within calculations of minimum lot coverage, or floor area ratio. Solar energy systems utilizing vegetative ground cover shall not be included in calculations of maximum lot coverage.
- b) *Height Requirements for Ground Mounted SES.* A Ground Mounted SES shall not exceed twenty (20) feet in height as measured from the highest natural grade below each solar panel. The height restriction excludes utility poles, storage batteries, substation structures, and antennas constructed for the project.
- c) *Siting Restrictions for Ground Mounted SES.*
- (1.) An Intermediate or Large Scale Ground Mounted SES, measured from the closer of the outer edge of the nearest panel or perimeter fencing, shall be located at least fifty (50) feet from the property line of any property located within an agricultural or residential zone, at least thirty (30)

feet from the property line of any property zoned for commercial, business, industrial, office, or mixed use, and at least fifty (50) feet from the centerline of any public road.

(2.) An Intermediate or Large Scale Ground Mounted SES, measured from the closer of the outer edge of the nearest panel or perimeter fencing, shall be located no closer than one hundred (100) feet from a residence located on a property other than that on which the Ground Mounted SES is to be installed.

(3.) These setback provisions above can be waived in writing by the adjacent property owner to whom the property line or residence setback is applicable.

d) *Signage.* A Ground Mounted SES may include such signage as is required by law.

e) Ground Cover within the Agricultural Zones: Ground Mounted Solar Energy Systems within the Agricultural Zones shall utilize vegetative ground cover underneath the panels, and the project area must contain a minimum of eighty-five percent (85%) vegetative coverage.

f) *Decommissioning.* Whenever an application for an intermediate or large scale ground mounted SES is submitted for review, such application shall include a decommissioning plan that shall describe how the use will be decommissioned and dismantled following the discontinuance of the use. A SES shall be considered discontinued after one year of no energy production. Such a plan shall be reviewed and updated every five (5) years and contain the following:

1. The anticipated life of the project and defined conditions upon which decommissioning will be initiated;
2. The estimated decommissioning cost, including removal of the SES and related foundations, pads, underground collector lines and roads, and the salvage value of any equipment in current dollars and the calculations supporting the decommissioning estimate. The estimated salvage value of the material using current, publicly available material indices and/or firm quotes from a decommissioning or recycling company experienced in the decommissioning of SES, shall be provided. The Board of Adjustment or other authority having jurisdiction shall consider the salvage value identified in computing the amount, if any, of financial assurance required under subsection 5 below.
3. The manner in which the project will be decommissioned, including provision and a timetable for the removal of all structures, equipment, and foundations up to a depth of 36 inches, and for the revegetation and restoration of the property to its original condition;
4. The party responsible for decommissioning;
5. A performance bond, letter of credit, or other financial assurance sufficient to cover the net costs identified in subsection G.2 and to assure that decommissioning of the site can be achieved by a third party in the event that a permittee defaults in that obligation, which financial assurance shall be provided prior to commencement of construction. The amount of the proposed bond or similar security shall be determined by an independent, licensed engineer. The proposed amount of the bond or similar security shall be the net present value of the total estimated cost of completing the decommissioning plan, less the current net salvage value of the SES's components.

g) No more than 2% of land outside the Urban Services area can be used for Conditionally Permitted or Exempt Ground Mounted SES's

Section 31-7. Conditional Use Permit Application Requirements

(a) Applications for an SES requiring a conditional use permit shall include the following information:

1. Name, address, telephone number, and email address (if available) of the applicant, the project owner, and the project operator.
2. The address of the property on which the SES will be located and the property owner's name, address, telephone number, and email address if available.
3. Documentation, such as a deed, lease, or other agreement with the landowner, demonstrating the applicant's right to use and control the property.
4. A topographic map that depicts vegetative cover, watersheds, floodplains, and other geographic information about the property and surrounding area.
5. A conceptual description of the project, including the maximum number of modules, mounting type (fixed-tilt or tracking), system height, system capacity, installation method, total land area covered by the system, and information about all associated structures or facilities such as transformers, substations, feeder lines, and battery storage.
6. A conceptual site plan including property lines, zoning classification of the property and all adjacent properties, existing buildings and proposed structures, the proposed location of the solar equipment, transmission lines, any associated structures and facilities, and substations. The conceptual site plan shall also identify proposed roads, drives, and parking, fencing or other methods to ensure public safety
7. A screening plan demonstrating how the use is proposed to be visually buffered. The plan shall include renderings of the proposal from all adjoining rights-of-way, as well as any adjoining residential uses. Additional buffering may be required by the Board of Adjustment to ensure the development does not negatively impact adjoining uses.
8. A map from the Natural Resources Conservation Service identifying prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance (if in a district zoned as agricultural), documentation from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the presence any identified critical habitat for rare or endangered federal or state species. The application shall also contain a Federal Emergency Management Agency map delineating floodplains, shall include evidence of any water quality or stormwater permit needed for the project,¹ and shall contain a letter from the State Historic Preservation Office regarding known archaeological or cultural resources listed or eligible for listing on the National Register.
9. Proof of adequate casualty and liability insurance covering installation and operation of the SES;
10. For Conditional Use Permits for SES within an Agricultural zone, the Board shall consider the impact of the proposal on the existing soils and topography. Developments should work with the existing topography, with grading, compaction, and tree removal minimized to extent possible.

When grading is approved, topsoil shall be retained on-site and re-established as a part of the decommissioning plan.

11. Where the applicant for a Conditional Use Permit is also seeking a construction certification pursuant to KRS 278.700 – 278.716, the applicant may submit a copy of a complete state siting board application and site assessment report meeting the requirements of KRS 278.706 and 278.7008 in lieu of the above requirements of Section 7(a)1-7.



Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government

Master

200 E. Main St
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File Number: 0675-25

File ID: 0675-25

Type: Committee Item

Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 1

Contract #:

In Control: General
Government and
Planning
Committee

File Created: 06/26/2025

File Name: CivicLex Presentation - Civic Assembly + Charter
Review

Final Action:

Title: Charter Review

Notes:

Sponsors:

Enactment Date:

Attachments: CivicLex Presentation - Civic Assembly + Charter
Review

Enactment Number:

Deed #:

Hearing Date:

Drafter:

Effective Date:

History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
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Text of Legislative File 0675-25

Title

Charter Review



Civic Assembly + Charter Review: Bringing Residents into the Process

July 1, 2025 | GGP Committee

Richard Young, Executive Director, CivicLex

Kit Anderson, Deputy Director, CivicLex



CivicLex



What is the Charter?

The Urban County Charter is essentially Lexington's local constitution. It's the rulebook that outlines how our local government is set up, what it's allowed to do, and the rules it has to follow.





Why Charter review?

It's been nearly 30 years since Lexington last took a broad look at the Charter. It's common for other cities to review their Charter regularly.

- **1972** – Public adopts new Charter merging city + county governments
- **1987** – LFUCG Charter Review Commission
- **1998** – Last Charter Review, led by Commerce Lexington
- **2021** – Redistricting raises concerns about the charter





Past Charter review challenges

In a review of past Charter processes we found many issues, including:

- **Council's proximity to charter review**
 - *"The council badly needs distance from the issue. It's impossible for us to be objective."* – Councilmember Pam Miller, 1987, Lexington Herald-Leader
- **Little public engagement**
 - *"We are completely destroying the charter when we don't have more public input."* – Councilmember Debra Hensley, 1987, Lexington Herald-Leader





2023 - present

- In 2023, CivicLex was approached about co-leading a public review process with Commerce Lexington
- Held initial meetings with Commerce Lexington, who was interested in being in an advisory role
- CivicLex decided to lead a review process only if it meaningfully involved the community in decision making and was independent
- Settled on a *Citizen's Assembly* model and secured non-LFUCG funding
- Formed an Advisory Group to guide strategy and process





Advisory Group

- **Catherine Annis** , Assistant Professor, University of Kentucky Martin School
- **Joshua Douglas** , Acting Associate Dean for Research & University Research Professor; Ashland, Inc-Spears Distinguished Research Professor of Law, University of Kentucky; CivicLex Board Member
- **Andi Johnson** , Chief Policy Officer & Director of Regional Engagement, Commerce Lexington
- **Susan Lamb** , Fayette County Clerk
- **David Lowe** , Fayette County Commission, Parks Advisory Board Member
- **Christian Motley** , Vice President, Partnerships and Community Impact, Results for America
- **Abby Piper** , Founder & Managing Partner, Piper Smith
- **Martin Rivers** , Senior Services Commission Member





What is a Civic Assembly?

Think of a Civic Assembly as “jury duty for public policy”

- **Lottery system** builds a random, representative group of people
- Assembly **learns** about an issue, hears **testimony**, and **deliberates** over multiple weeks
- Assembly makes a **recommendation** to legislative body / policymakers
- Between 1973 - 2023, there have been **700+ Assemblies** worldwide
- Great tool for engaging public on **complex issues** when **trust is low**
- Deschutes County, Oregon Assembly on Youth Homelessness





<https://youtu.be/Aph2upOavV4?si=HtHNEXz-3obLo1nS>



Lexington's first Civic Assembly

- We will host Lexington's first Civic Assembly in spring 2026 focused on the following question:
 - *What changes should be made to the Charter to improve representation, trust, and participation in local government?*
- 30-person Assembly with 7-8 sessions in February and March 2026





Timeline ahead

- **Public engagement + topic prioritization** – Fall 2025
- **Recruitment & selection** – Winter 2025
- **Assembly convenes** – February and March 2026
- **Recommendations delivered to Council** – Spring 2026
- **Response requested from Council** – May and June 2026





Public engagement & topics

- **August - October:** Public engagement to narrow in on what 2-3 topics could most improve representation, trust, & participation. Could include:
 - **Council:** Council Redistricting Process & Rules, Term Limits, Term Lengths and Elections, Compensation, Number of Council Districts
 - **Other:** Public engagement, future charter review processes, publicly-suggested topics
- Engagement similar to scaled-down On the Table, community events, surveys, etc.





Recruitment & selection

- 6,000+ letters sent to randomly selected Fayette County addresses
 - Expect a 3-8% response rate to a demographic survey
- From responses, we will randomly build multiple 30 person panels that are representative across age, race, district, political party, and more
 - One 30-person panel will be selected, again at random
 - Panel will include two representatives from each Council District, and six at Large





Assembly convening

- Assembly will take place across **7-8 sessions** in February and March
 - Participants will be **compensated** , provided childcare, transportation stipends, and accessibility accommodations
- Members will receive **education** on topics, take **testimony** from experts and people with opposing perspectives, and **deliberate** together
- Assembly will be **publicly viewable**, via livestream or in person
- Assembly will produce an **opinion + recommendations**
 - Consensus or majority/minority





Council's role

- Assembly makes recommendations to Council
- Council has decision-making power over recommendations
- We're asking Council to **commit to publicly and formally responding** to recommendations **as they are presented** (e.g. ballot referral, formal consideration)





Important disclaimers

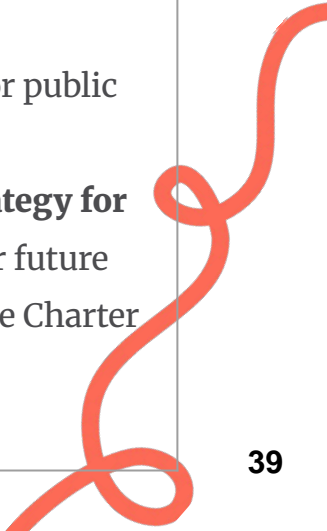
- We **do not yet know what Charter topics** the Assembly will consider
- We will only know what the recommendations are (if any) **after** the Assembly has concluded
- CivicLex **will not advocate** on behalf the recommendations
- CivicLex **will** provide educational information about the process and recommendations after the Assembly
- **Reminder:** this is an experiment in public engagement & decision making!





Why this matters...

... as a process	... for Charter review	... for the future
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates space for everyday people to engage deeply with public issues• Builds trust through transparency, learning, and fair representation• Compensates and removes barriers to civic participation• Honors expertise of all kinds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brings public scrutiny to potential charter reforms• Allows community members to wrestle with complexity• Builds shared understanding of what representation should mean in Lexington	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sets a precedent for resident-led input on big decisions• Creates new expectations for public involvement• Tests a new strategy for engagement for future topics beyond the Charter





Thank you!

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[The New Yorker: What could Citizen Assemblies do for American politics?](#)

[1998 Charter Review Report](#)





Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Master

200 E. Main St
Lexington, KY 40507

File Number: 0038-25

File ID: 0038-25

Type: Committee Item

Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 1

Contract #:

In Control: General
Government and
Planning
Committee

File Created: 01/09/2025

File Name: Lexington's Preservation & Growth Management
Program (LPGMP)

Final Action:

Title: Lexington's Preservation & Growth Management Program (LPGMP)

Notes:

Sponsors:

Enactment Date:

Attachments:

Enactment Number:

Deed #:

Hearing Date:

Drafter:

Effective Date:

History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
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Text of Legislative File 0038-25

Title

Lexington's Preservation & Growth Management Program (LPGMP)



Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Master

200 E. Main St
Lexington, KY 40507

File Number: 0467-25

File ID: 0467-25

Type: Committee Item

Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 1

Contract #:

In Control: General
Government and
Planning
Committee

File Created: 05/01/2025

File Name: Items Referred to Committee

Final Action:

Title: Items Referred to Committee

Notes:

Sponsors:

Enactment Date:

Attachments: 7.1.25 Items Referred to Committee

Enactment Number:

Deed #:

Hearing Date:

Drafter:

Effective Date:

History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
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Text of Legislative File 0467-25

Title

Items Referred to Committee

GENERAL GOVERNMENT & PLANNING (GGP) COMMITTEE - ITEMS REFERRED

REFERRAL ITEM	SPONSOR	REFERRED	LAST PRESENTED	STATUS	LEGISTAR #
A Sense of Place (Assessment of Lexington's African American Hamlets and Historic Preservation of Their Heritage)	J. Brown	2022-04-26	2025-02-04		0902-24
Examine Opportunities to Relocate Programming & Initiatives from the Mayor's Office to Other Relevant Divisions within LFUCG.	L. Sheehan	2022-05-31			
Charter Review	D. Wu	2022-11-01	Current agenda		
Review of Boards and Commissions	S. Lynch	2025-03-04	2025-03-04		0804-23
Acquire Investor Owned or Other Properties	H. LeGris	2022-11-03			
Planning and Development Approval Process Study: Recommendation #8 Tighten Certification to Lock in Requirements	J. Reynolds	2023-06-27			
Planning and Development Approval Process Study: Recommendation #10 Establish a Development Liaison Position	J. Reynolds	2023-06-27			
Regulation of Digital Billboards (ZOTA-24-00008)	W. Baxter	2018-06-01			0863-24
Homelessness Need Assessment RFP (2025 Lexington Emergency Shelter Study)	C. Ellinger/D. Gray	2023-10-31	2025-06-03		0168-24
Continuing Education on Theme A, Pillar III Equity, Policy #1 and Policy #2 of the 2023 Comprehensive Plan	D. Wu	2024-01-16			
Bring Back the Bluegrass	D. Gray	2024-01-16	2024-09-10		0903-24
Absentee Landlords	D. Gray	2024-08-20			
Solar Energy Systems (ZOTA-24-00003)	L. Sheehan/D. Seigny	2024-10-22	Current agenda		1048-24
Rural Settlement Study	S. Lynch	2024-10-29		2025-09-09	
Efficiencies in our Development Processes and Compliance with HB 443	J. Brown	2024-12-03	2025-05-06		0047-25
Lexington's Preservation & Growth Management Program (LPGMP)	D. Wu	2025-01-14	Current agenda		0038-25
Youth Programming	T. Morton	2025-01-28			
Anti-Displacement and Vulnerable Neighborhood Preservation	T. Morton	2025-02-04			
Blue Sky Small Area Plan	L. Sheehan	2025-02-11	2025-02-04		0128-25
Downtown Area Master Plan	H. LeGris	2025-02-11	2025-03-04		0228-25
Review and Analysis of all LFUCG-Operated Community Centers	A. Beasley/T. Morton	2025-02-25			
Review of the Zone Change Public Engagement Process	W. Baxter	2025-03-04			
Planning Education Academy	D. Wu	2025-03-04			
Drive-Through Facilities and Drive-Up Windows (ZOTA-25-00001 Sec. 16-9)	W. Baxter	2025-05-13			
Waiver Notice Requirements (ZOTA-25-00001 Sec. 21-9b)	T. Morton	2025-05-13			
MAG Study Review	D. Gray	2025-05-27			
Review of the Artificial Intelligence Policy	E. Curtis	2025-05-27			
Annual / Periodic Updates					
Purchase of Development Rights Review	Chair/Ordinance		2024-04-16	2025-09-09	0402-24
Lexington History Museum	E. Curtis	2019-05-28	2024-10-15	Early 2026	1043-24
Landlord and Tenant Advisory Boards	S. Lynch	2024-06-11	2024-10-15		1044-24
Short-Term Rentals	J. Brown	2019-06-11	2025-03-04		0864-24
Subcommittees, Work Groups, Task Forces					
Public Input Subcommittee	H. LeGris (chair)	2023-01-17	2024-06-11		0605-24

Updated 6.24.25 AML