

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY OF KITTITAS
STATE OF WASHINGTON**

Ordinance No. 2017- 002

**An Ordinance Enacting a Six Month Moratorium on Accepting Proposals for Solar
Projects That Qualify As Large Scale Alternative Energy Systems within the Kittitas
County**

- WHEREAS,** Strong interest has developed in the creation of solar projects within the Kittitas County and its agricultural areas; and
- WHEREAS,** Agricultural industry provides a large portion of the economic base within Kittitas County; and
- WHEREAS,** Major Alternative Energy Facilities include hydroelectric plant, solar farm, or wind farm as indicated within KCC 17.61.010(9)
- WHEREAS,** Concern has been expressed in public hearing and public comment that solar projects that would qualify as major alternative energy facilities are planned for lands used for agriculture; and
- WHEREAS,** Kittitas County is in the process of updating its current Comprehensive Plan and development regulations; and
- WHEREAS,** Advisory groups meeting on issues in the update of the Plan have expressed interest and concern over the rising number of major alternative energy facilities siting regarding solar power; and
- WHEREAS,** The update of the Comprehensive Plan and implementing regulations is expected to occur in 2017.
- WHEREAS,** RCW 36.70A.390 allows adoption of a moratorium on land use activities for sixty (60) days without holding a public hearing; and
- WHEREAS,** The Board of County Commissioners at a specific hearing to hear a conditional use permit request involving the establishment of a solar farm denied the request, and unanimously called for an immediate moratorium on all applications involving major alternative energy systems; and

- WHEREAS,** Public hearing must be held within sixty (60) days of the moratorium's enactment and findings of fact must be made to support the action. A moratorium may last six (6) months and be extended for up to one (1) year when accompanied by a work plan for moratorium research; and

- WHEREAS,** A resolution on the requested moratorium was passed and signed by the Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, February 7, 2017 requesting the moratorium for sixty (60) days from January 10, 2017; and

- WHEREAS,** Notice of public hearing was made in the official newspaper of the County on February 23, 2017 and March 2, 2017 and posted on the County website on February 23, 2017; and

- WHEREAS,** After due notice a public hearing was held on March 9, 2017 at 6 p.m. where public testimony was received by the Board in regards to the proposal; and

- WHEREAS,** After consideration of evidence presented, received public comment and the staff report, the Board can make a decision regarding the moratorium.

NOW THE BOARD FINDS:


1. The Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan is being updated and planned for adoption by August of 2017.
2. A potentially high number of proponents for solar farms have shown interest in the development of solar energy systems within the Kittitas County valley.
3. Large numbers of large solar energy systems may have an impact upon the agricultural activity within the valley, which is a prime industry within the County.
4. The Board desires standards and/or criteria for the placement of such facilities.
5. Such siting criteria will be placed within the Comprehensive Plan objectives and policies in several of its elements.
6. Deciding such criteria at this time supersedes and undermines the development of the Comprehensive Plan

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDERED, that all application for solar projects that would qualify as major alternative energy systems not be accepted for application for (6) months from January 10, 2017 or until the Comprehensive Plan and the implementing regulations for the County are adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.


ADOPTED this 13th day of March, 2017.

Ordinance 2017-002
March 10, 2017

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



Paul Jewell, Chairman



Laura Osiadacz, Vice-Chairman



Obie O'Brien, Commissioner



APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Julie A. Kjorsvik

Neil Caulkins,
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney