

Solar Study Group Questions

Land Use & Agricultural Impact

1. How does large-scale solar development align with Fountain County's commitment to protecting farmland and maintaining its agricultural heritage?
2. What percentage of prime farmland will be impacted by proposed solar projects, and is this loss justifiable?
3. Could solar energy development reduce land available for future agricultural expansion or food production?

Economic Considerations

4. What are the long-term economic impacts of solar farms on local property values and tax revenue?
5. How does the temporary nature of solar leases (typically 30 years) compare to the generational stability of agricultural land use?
6. Are there documented cases of solar farms leading to economic benefits for local residents, beyond short-term construction jobs?

Environmental & Aesthetic Concerns

7. How will large-scale solar farms affect natural drainage patterns, local water quality, and soil health?
8. What measures are in place to prevent contamination from solar panels, particularly regarding hazardous materials such as heavy metals?
9. How will the county ensure that solar installations do not create visual blight or diminish the rural character of Fountain County?

Grid Infrastructure & Energy Distribution

10. What are the potential costs and risks associated with integrating large-scale solar into the existing power grid?
11. Who bears the responsibility for infrastructure upgrades required to support solar energy facilities?
12. Can the county ensure that solar energy produced locally will benefit local residents rather than being sold to out-of-state buyers?

Regulatory & Compliance Issues

13. How will the county enforce decommissioning requirements to prevent abandoned solar farms from becoming liabilities?

14. What financial assurances are in place to guarantee proper decommissioning and land restoration at the end of a solar farm's lifecycle?
15. Are the county's setback and zoning requirements sufficient to mitigate potential negative impacts on adjacent landowners?

Community & Resident Impact

16. Have residents near proposed solar projects been adequately informed and consulted on potential impacts?
17. What are the potential health risks, if any, associated with prolonged exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF) from solar farms?
18. How will emergency services be impacted by large-scale solar developments, particularly regarding fire hazards and response access?