

County Planning Connection October 2022 News

Livingston County Solar Farm Tour



After attending an outstanding solar farm bus tour organized by Michigan Association of Planning (MAP), with visits to facilities in Shiawassee and Isabella Counties, Livingston County Planning Department staff member Rob Stanford, felt inspired to organize a similar solar farm bus tour for Livingston County agricultural communities.

The Livingston County solar farm tour took place on August 26, 2022 with bus transportation provided by Livingston Essential Transportation Service (LETS). The tour was directed towards assisting the Livingston County townships that are currently preparing planning and zoning language to regulate the near-term anticipated growth of renewable energy alternatives; a couple of Livingston County townships have already been approached with solar leases by a variety of large-scale commercial solar companies.



Livingston County government leaders from Conway, Cohoctah, Howell, Handy, Unadilla, Putnam and Marion Townships, visited the Assembly Solar Park in Shiawassee County, which is managed by Ranger Power. Ranger Power and their team, led the ground tour of the solar facility while Dr. Sarah Mills, professor and senior project manager at the University of Michigan's Graham Sustainability Institute, narrated and facilitated discussion on the bus and during lunch. Participants agreed that the experience was very educational and that the speakers and their expertise and passion for alternative energy, really advanced their knowledge of renewable energy alternatives!

Solar Energy Resources:

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| <p>Solar Powerpoint Slides From Tour</p> <p>https://www.livgov.com/plan/Documents/Solar%20Powerpoint%20Slides%20From%20Tour.pdf</p> | <p>Planning and Zoning for Solar Energy Systems</p> <p>https://www.canr.msu.edu/planning/uploads/files/SES-Sample-Ordinance-final-20211011-single.pdf</p> |
| <p>"Here Come the 1200 Acre Solar Farms. Should We Celebrate or Worry?" Dr. Sarah Mills</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tsjvvUPoUTk&list=PLY-HA3-cbCGe3iLQ4v2bF1ZOWIhyOarLz&index=5</p> | <p>MTA - Township Focus – "Renewable Energy on the Horizon"</p> <p>https://www.michigantownships.org/members/media/topics/media/202092_april_may_2022_lo_res.pdf</p> |

**Note: Web links are not live in this publication. Please copy and paste them into your web browser or use links in attached PDF version.

It's LIVE!

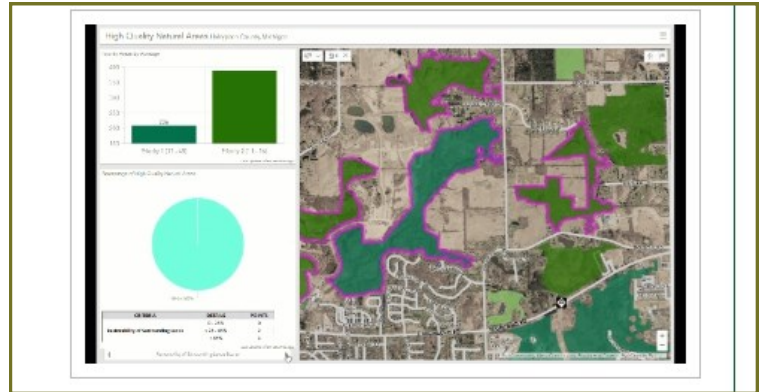
Livingston County High Quality Natural Areas Assessment Maps

When the Livingston County Planning Department's High Quality Natural Areas Assessment was released in February 2022, our Livingston County IT partners were busy developing a new mapping application for high-quality natural areas that would complete the project.

We are happy to say that the mapping application "IS LIVE" and it has been added to the Livingston County GIS Map Gallery.

<https://livgov.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>

We are hopeful that this site map and ranking data will be used by local municipalities, land trusts, and other agencies to prioritize conservation efforts and assist in finding opportunities to establish an open space system of linked natural areas and habitats in the region.



Registration Deadline Approaching For *Livingston County Citizen Planner Program*

Don't miss the **October 11, 2022** registration deadline for this excellent educational opportunity for your government leaders! It is extremely beneficial for planning commissioners to have a consistent level of understanding about planning & zoning issues for their decision-making as a government body.

Citizen Planner instructors include MSU Faculty, MSU Extension educators, planners and attorneys. The core classroom program consists of six sessions on the following Thursday dates at the Livingston County Public Safety Complex, 1911 Tooley Road:

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| October 27 | Understanding the Planning and Zoning Context: Learn the legal sources and limitations of planning and zoning authority, and explore your understanding of ethical decision-making. |
| November 3 | Planning for the Future of Your Community: Recognize the function and importance of a master plan, know the process for developing one and its relationship to zoning. |
| November 10 | Implementing the Plan with Zoning: Discover the importance of zoning, learn how zoning is administered and gain confidence in your zoning reviews, including site plans. |
| December 1 | Making Zoning Decisions: Learn how to adopt and amend a zoning ordinance, understand the role of the zoning board of appeals and obtain skills in basic property development methods. |
| December 8 | Using Innovative Planning and Zoning: Strategize with placemaking and design-based solutions for local and regional success in the New Economy. |
| December 15 | Successfully Fulfilling Your Role: Strengthen your ethical decision-making skills, apply standards to your decision-making. |

The course fee is \$250 per participant for the complete core program. The fee covers registration and course materials. A group discount is available (for a group of 4 or more). Grants and scholarships may also be available from your community's liability insurance provider.

For further information visit <http://citizenplanner.msu.edu>, or contact Kara Kelly, Citizen Planner Coordinator at cplanner@msu.edu. Online registration is available at: <https://events.anr.msu.edu/CPLivingston22/>. The registration deadline is **October 11, 2022**.