

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

SITE SUITABILITY REPORT

FOR CONSOLIDATED PERMITS PURSUANT TO 225 CMR 29.00, 980
CMR 13.00, and 980 CMR 15.00

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



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SITE SUITABILITY REPORT CHECKLIST OVERVIEW:

This document includes the Site Suitability Report Checklist and instructions to guide project submission of Site Suitability Reports to Local Governments pursuant to 225 CMR 29.00 and the Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB) pursuant to 980 CMR 13.00 and 980 CMR 15.00. In accordance with Chapter 239 of the Acts of 2024 (2024 Climate Act), Site Suitability Reports are a part of the new consolidated permitting process for Small Clean Energy Infrastructure Facilities and Large Clean Energy Infrastructure Facilities, as governed by the [Site Suitability Guidance](#) developed by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA). All Applicable Facilities, as that term is defined in EEA's Site Suitability Guidance, are required to use the Site Suitability Guidance to help determine the suitability of sites for Small and Large Clean Energy Infrastructure Facilities, and avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts on the environment and people to the greatest extent practicable. Capitalized terms in this document are defined in [225 CMR 29.00](#) and [the Site Suitability Guidance](#).

This checklist allows Applicants to record any additional information and/or potential Site Suitability Score Modifiers to one or more Criteria-specific Site Suitability Scores calculated by [the Site Suitability Mapping Tool](#) and [the Climate Resilience Design Standards Tool](#). If an Applicant proposes more than one site or route, a Site Suitability Report shall be required for each site or route.

Once completed and submitted, this document and any required attachments together serve as the Site Suitability Report required by 225 CMR 29.00 and/or 980 CMR 13.00 and 980 CMR 15.00. **The report checklist and all attachments should be uploaded to the relevant fields in the application portal. All attachments have separate fields for submission. The field for this document is labeled the "Site Suitability Report Checklist."**

You may email EnergyPermitting@mass.gov with questions about this document.

(I) PROJECT DETAILS

PROJECT NAME:

DOCKET NUMBER:

APPLICANT:

(II) FACILITY TYPE(S)

Which type of applicable clean energy infrastructure is this project? Facility types are further defined in section “III. DEFINITIONS” of [the Site Suitability Guidance](#). Please select all types that apply.

Large Clean Energy Generation Facility (Greater than or equal to 25 MW)

Solar

Wind

Anaerobic Digestion

Small Clean Energy Generation Facility (Less than 25 MW)

Solar

Wind

Anaerobic Digestion

Large Clean Energy Storage Facility (Greater than or equal to 100 MWh)

Small Clean Energy Storage Facility (Less than 100 MWh)

Large Clean Transmission and Distribution Infrastructure Facility

Small Clean Transmission and Distribution Infrastructure Facility

(III) SITE SUITABILITY MAPPING TOOL REPORT

Please attach the complete report provided by the [Site Suitability Mapping Tool](#) to the "Site Suitability Map Report" field in the application portal.

(IV) CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE

a. Climate Change Resilience Score

Exposure ratings to climate hazards can be obtained using the ResilientMass [Climate Resilience Design Standards \(CRDS\) Tool](#), which is grounded in scientific methodology using available climate data for Massachusetts. This currently includes site exposure to: (1) riverine flooding; and (2) coastal flooding from sea level rise and storm surge. The highest exposure rating for a

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Site Footprint derived from the tool for either of the two hazards will be used to determine the overall climate change resilience Criteria-Specific Suitability Score pursuant to the table below.

First time users will have to register for an account. If you have comments or questions about the Tool, please reach out to rmat@mass.gov.

Table 1.

Highest Exposure Rating for riverine flooding and/or coastal flooding hazards	Suitability Score for Climate Change Resilience	Check Applicable Category
Not Exposed	0.0	
Low Exposure	1.0	
Moderate Exposure	2.0	
High Exposure	3.0	

b. Additional Climate Change Resilience Information

Fill in the following information from the “Scoring Rationale - Project Exposure Score” section of the CRDS Tool Project Report:

Table 2.

Climate Hazard	Exposure Rating (Not Exposed, Low Exposure, Moderate Exposure, High Exposure)	Scoring Rationale Include all reasons listed for each hazard, using text from the CRDS report
Sea Level Rise/Storm Surge		
Riverine Flooding		

List the Project Number from the CRDS Tool. The project number can either be found in the link (<https://resilient.mass.gov/climateresiliencestandardstool/Pages/Home/Projects#XXXX> where XXXX is the Project Number) or at the top of the CRDS Tool project page.

PROJECT NUMBER:

(V) DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Solar Canopies and Applicable Facilities that are located on a Brownfield, Eligible Landfill, or Previously Developed Lands will automatically receive a zero (0) for their Carbon Sequestration, Biodiversity, Agricultural, and Social and Environmental Burdens Criteria-specific Suitability Scores. Applicable Facilities should consult with the Department of Energy Resources (DOER)¹ regarding obtaining an advisory pre-determination of likely eligibility as a Solar Canopy or an Applicable Facility proposed to be located on a Brownfield, Eligible Landfill, or Previously Developed Lands.

Applicable Facilities with a Site Footprint that overlaps with Protected Open Space shall automatically receive a five (5) for each Criteria-specific Suitability Score other than the climate change resilience score, which shall be scored as a three (3). The accuracy of claimed Development Potential Modifiers will be reviewed prior to the final score determination. Applicants are encouraged to confirm the site's protected status as shown on the Site Suitability Mapping Tool with the local assessor and/or Registry of Deeds.

Table 3.

Facility Type	Check if Applicable	Instructions and Required Documentation
Facility is a Solar Canopy and/or other type of Applicable Facility located on a Brownfield, Eligible Landfill, or Previously Developed Lands		Pre-determination letter(s) obtained from DOER of likely eligibility as a Solar Canopy or an Applicable Facility.
Site Footprint of facility overlaps with Protected Open Space , as shown in the Site Suitability Mapping Tool		If a waiver pursuant to Site Suitability Guidance Section IV.D.i. was issued by the EFSB (Large Clean Energy Infrastructure Facilities only), attach the waiver.

¹ DOER.Siting.Permitting@mass.gov

If applicable, please attach any relevant materials in the **“Development Potential Documentation”** field of the Application Portal.

(VI) SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

a. Background

Applicable Facilities that wish to apply for a Social and Environment Benefit Criteria Site Suitability Score Modifier must coordinate with the host municipality. Examples of potential agreements that may be applicable Social and Environmental Benefits and their associated documentation are listed in section IV.D.ii of [the Site Suitability Guidance](#). One half of a point (0.5) may be subtracted from the Social and Environmental Burdens Criteria-specific Suitability Score, per benefit demonstrated, up to a total of three (3) points.

If the Applicant is willing to provide benefits to modify the Social and Environmental Burdens Criteria-specific Suitability Score, please check applicable benefit categories and specify proposed benefits in *Table 4*. Benefits will be finalized through a negotiation process between the Applicant and host municipality, and therefore the description of benefits does not need to be an exhaustive list of what the applicant is willing to consider. Applicants may list more than one type of proposed benefit per category.

If the host municipality and Applicable Facility agree upon one or more benefits, they may sign an agreement, which shall result in a modification of the Applicable Facility’s Social and Environmental Burdens Criteria-specific Suitability Score and may result in binding conditions included as part of a Consolidated Local Permit issued to the Applicable Facility

b. Proposed Social and Environmental Benefits

If any documentation, design plans, or agreements that may assist in satisfying one of the categories on the next page have already been obtained, attach them in the **“Proposed Social and Environmental Benefits Documentation”** field of the application portal. Please specify the type of benefit in the attachment name.

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Table 4.

Benefit	Check if Applicable	Proposed Benefits (50 words or less)	# of Attachments
Environmental Justice and Equity			
Economic Development and Workforce Development			
Infrastructure and Community Support			
Environmental and Public Health Protections			
Other Benefits			

(VII) AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION

As applicable, please briefly summarize the proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures for the project's impacts in the table below page. These measures are meant to address Criteria-specific Suitability Scores greater than 1.0. Significant minimization and/or mitigation may be required for scores greater than 4.0. These measures are separate from any benefits proposed above. Further guidance can be found in Section VI.C.i. of the Site Suitability Guide and in the Guideline on Avoidance, Minimization, and mitigation Measures.

If the space below is insufficient or supplementary materials may provide additional information, please attach any documentation or a more detailed summaries of any measures that have been or will be taken to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts. This should be submitted in the **“Proposed Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation”** field of the application portal.

If document is attached for any particular category, please check the corresponding checkbox. The EFSB or Local Government may request additional measures be taken **as a condition of project approval**.

Table 5.

Criteria	Score	Summary of Proposal to Avoid, Minimize, and/or Mitigate (50 words or less)	Supporting Documents Attached
Climate Resilience			
Carbon Storage			

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Criteria	Score	Summary of Proposal to Avoid, Minimize, and/or Mitigate (50 words or less)	Supporting Documents Attached
Biodiversity			
Agricultural Resources			
Social and Environmental Burdens			

(VIII) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

(Optional) Explanatory Comments Instruction: Comment on any of the above sections that merit further explanation or qualification. (100 words or less)

(IX) REQUEST FOR SCORE REVISION

I, the Applicant, have sent or am planning to send a Request for Score Revision to the Department of Energy Resources as outlined in [225 CMR 29.07\(2\)\(c\)](#). To the best of my knowledge, I believe that one or more Criteria-specific Suitability Scores were calculated based on materially erroneous, incomplete, or otherwise faulty data.

Please specify what Criteria-specific score(s) you are seeking review for and why.

The completion of this report does not constitute a Request for Score Revision.

(X) SCORING SUMMARY

Please fill out the table below to reflect the Criteria-specific Suitability Scores as modified by the development potential criteria **only**, even if the score remains unchanged.

Table 6.

Site Suitability Criteria	Modified Score (Must be 0.0-5.0)
Carbon Storage	
Biodiversity	
Agricultural Resources	
Climate Change Resilience	
Social and Environmental Burdens	

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By how many total points do you seek to reduce the Applicable Facility's Social and Environmental Burdens Criteria-specific Suitability Score through the application of benefits described in *Table 4*? The box checked below is a preliminary proposal and the point reduction should NOT be calculated into the initial score in *Table 6*.

0.0 point

- ☐ 0.5 point
- ☐ 1.0 point
- ☐ 1.5 points
- ☐ 2.0 points
- ☐ 2.5 points
- ☐ 3.0 points

(XI) AFFIRMATION AND SIGNATURE

I, the Applicant, declare that the information submitted with this Site Suitability Report is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant Name:

Applicant Signature:

Date:

This report and all attachments should be uploaded to the relevant fields in the application portal. All attachments have separate fields for submission. You may email EnergyPermitting@mass.gov with questions about this document.