



## Frequently Asked Questions | Solar in Van Zandt County

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Who is Pattern Development?

Pattern Development, based out of Houston, is a leader in the development of renewable energy and transmission assets. With a long history in wind and solar energy, the team at Pattern Development has developed, financed and placed into operation more than 5,500 MW of renewable energy projects, including more than 1,500 MW in Texas. The company has a strong commitment to promoting environmental stewardship and a dedication to working closely with landowners and communities.

## What is Pattern Development's role in the Project?

Pattern Development recently acquired the project and is the owner. We plan to develop, finance, construct, and possibly operate the project. We have experience at all stages of project management: resource analysis, development, finance, construction, operations and asset management.

## What are the benefits of the project?

This project will create many benefits for Van Zandt County, including:

- » Up to 250 construction jobs during the approximate 1-year construction period
- » Millions of dollars in tax revenue for the County and Canton Independent School District
- » Community benefits for the broader area through increased economic activity during the construction period and sponsorships of local causes
- » Clean and renewable energy with zero emissions
- » Solar power has become one of the cheapest forms of electricity in recent years

## What are the benefits of solar power?

This solar project will generate new jobs and a dramatic increase in the overall tax base for Van Zandt County. During the past 5 years, solar power has become one of the cheapest forms of electricity; it is a great source of power for Texas because it generates the most electricity during the times of the day and times of the year of peak demand. Therefore, solar power helps reduce price spikes for Texas energy consumers. According to the state's main electric grid operator, Texas has installed 1,484 MW of solar and there are plans to install an additional 3,700 MW of solar capacity by 2021

## How many jobs will the project create?

During construction, the solar project is expected to need up to 250 workers on-site. During operation, approximately 2-4 full time employees will be needed, with a potential for more seasonal employment as well. There are additional indirect economic benefits created from demand for service industries, such as lodging, food services, etc.

**How big is the project?**

The project is expected to be about 127.5 megawatts and will generate clean and renewable electricity equal to the needs of approximately 27,000 homes each year.

**How long will construction take?**

Construction of the project is expected to take approximately 12 months.

**Who will be responsible for building the project?**

Pattern Development will oversee the construction of the project via contracting with a reputable and experienced construction firm. There are a number of major solar Engineering Procurement and Construction contractors (EPC) who already work in Texas. Our team has managed construction firms on nearly 1,000 MW's of wind projects in Texas.

**What is your team's experience?**

Pattern Development has a long history in wind and solar energy, bringing over 5,500 MW to market worldwide. In recent years, we have been growing our solar development team and focusing on building a pipeline of solar projects in the U.S. The solar team members working on this project have a combined 60+ years of experience in the U.S. solar industry.

**Will locals have the opportunity to supply goods and services to the project or for the long term management of the facility?**

Of course! Pattern Development and our contractors take our commitments to the local communities where we build our projects very seriously. We will actively seek out local vendors and job seekers during development and hold a job fair prior to construction to engage interested companies and workers. We will keep a list of interested applicants and vendors during project development to share with the EPC company that is selected to hire subcontractors for construction. We will also establish a vendor and worker application portal.

**Will Pattern Development or the Project Company support the community in any way?**

Pattern Development will encourage our contractors to hire locally to the greatest extent possible. We will also support the community through sponsorships of local causes. Please reach out to us if you have suggestions on how we can better engage with community members and support local initiatives.

**Will Pattern Development or the Project Company pay taxes?**

The project will provide millions of dollars of tax revenue to Van Zandt County and Canton ISD over the life of the project.

**What is the lifespan of a typical solar project?**

Solar projects typically operate for 35 to 40 years.

**Will the project be visible? Will it cause glare?**

The project will be visible from certain portions of adjacent roads; however, the solar panels utilize non-reflecting glass and will be placed on tracking systems which are designed to follow the sun as it crosses the sky, absorbing as much light as possible rather than reflecting light.

**What will be the impact of the project to Van Zandt biodiversity and the natural environment in the area?**

Field studies by biologists have indicated the site does not include critical habitat for threatened or endangered species, including bald eagles, whooping crane, American or Arctic peregrine falcons, black bear, or wood stork.

Project construction will avoid streams and forested wetlands and therefore avoid impacts to aquatic species. In addition, the project will maintain the top soil of the existing pastures to the maximum extent. Many species of pasture plants will be allowed to repropagate after construction; however, large brushy plants that will grow in absence of cattle grazing will need to be managed.

Finally, prior to project construction and operations of the facility, all personnel will receive Environmental Awareness Training to make them aware of any potential environmental issues that might arise during the construction and operation of the facility.

**What are the impacts to the land during construction?**

The project site will be graded as little as possible. Therefore, the major impact to the land is the actual installation of the racking for the solar modules.

The EPC contractor will utilize a special technology where steel piles are driven into the ground without any concrete foundation and with minimal force or impact — similar to piles that are used for building a steel fence. Upon expiration of the lease term, the piles are pulled out and Pattern Development is required to restore the land to its original condition. Depending on the weather during construction, timber mats might be needed to avoid vehicles getting stuck in the mud or otherwise rutting the soil after a rain event. After construction, the timber mats, if needed, will be removed and areas impacted will be smoothed and reseeded.

**Will a solar project in my community decrease the value of private property?**

NREL has conducted and cited numerous studies that find wind projects do not impact neighboring property values. While solar projects are different in size and nature, these studies anticipate that solar projects have an even lower impact on property values.



**Will the solar panels or the project impact the soil or groundwater?**

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No. Solar projects do not produce any harmful byproducts or runoff. Solar modules and inverters properly maintained do not discharge chemicals or toxic materials into the soil, air, or water. Properly maintaining the onsite equipment is standard and an important aspect of the long-term management of a solar facility. Any defective equipment would be quickly replaced and taken off site.

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**What are the risks to birds from solar generation?**

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The solar project poses very low risk to birds. Recent media attention has focused on heat-related bird deaths at some generating facilities, but these are typically related to other types of solar technologies such as concentrating solar, and not the solar photovoltaic (PV) technology proposed for this site.

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**How much water is needed, what for, and what is the potential source?**

One of the great things about north Texas is the ample amount of rainfall that the area receives. Rain is a wonderful solar panel cleaner, and therefore, this the project does not anticipate needing to wash the solar panels very often, if ever.

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