



City of Dallas

Evaluation of a Web-Based Solar Permitting Platform-SolarAPP+ for the City of Dallas

Parks, Trails, and Environment Committee
May 5, 2025

Emily Liu, FAICP
Director
Planning and Development
City of Dallas

Background



- Slower than the municipal average review times for solar in the City were reported
- We had not reassessed our solar permitting process as we had our other processes
- We were asked to review SolarAPP+ as an alternative review process



Purpose



Compare our current processes to the SolarAPP+ processes and review our own internal processes for possible improvements.



Solar App Findings



Positives

- Promises instant plan review approval
- When integrated properly also handles all financial transactions
- Works with all currently adopted codes
- Can be altered to meet local and state amendments
- Would lower staff workload



Solar App Findings



Negatives

- No plans are submitted
- It is only a checklist
- Challenging for our City's Complex Zoning Code
- Multiple common issues in a plan review would not be able to be reviewed prior to permit issuance
- Integration costs would be on the City
- Additional field inspections may be required



- Adopted at the request of their council members
- Have done solar only
- Roughly half of their solar permits go through SolarAPP+
- Working on a pilot program for solar+storage
- An electrical contractor is the primary there, whereas ours is a building contractor
- Have had issues with contractors faking submissions to gain instant approval
- They have almost no zoning requirements

City of San Antonio



- Adopted on a pilot due to staff workload
- Workload is shrinking and they are looking to back away from it
- Found that it adds more work for the field staff
- Have had the same issues with contractors faking submissions
- They do have more complex zoning, but not as detailed as Dallas



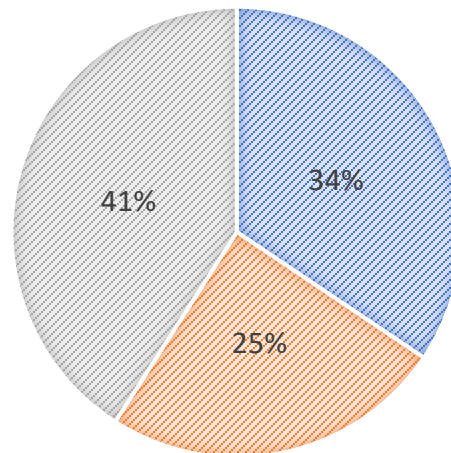
Internal Findings



Review of our own turnaround times from the last fiscal year netted these results:

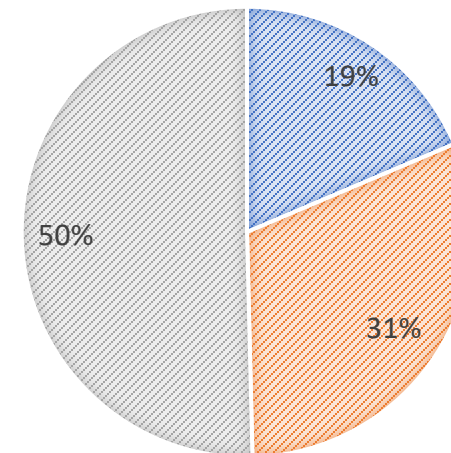
AVERAGE TO ISSUE
20.7 DAYS

■ Applicant ■ Plan Review ■ Facilitator



MEDIAN TO ISSUE
14.5 DAYS

■ Applicant ■ Plan Review ■ Facilitator



Internal Findings



- These times are too long for a standard solar only permit on dwellings
- We feel we can drastically reduce the solar only processing times



Corrective Actions



- Applicant time can be reduced by cutting the number of cycles they have
- Intake staff are now performing intake at the same time as the building/zoning reviews
- 24-hour clocks are being placed on the electrical reviews



Internal Conclusion



After customer payment, we feel we can lower review times well under three days and possibly within 24 hours.



Future Proposals



- DallasNow: May 5th
- We are too late into its implementation
- SolarAPP+ may be able to be integrated
- Proposed legislation at the state level may make any discussions moot
- We would not look to adopt solar+storage approvals on SolarAPP+



Staff Recommendation



- Staff recommends the newly implemented changes as we move into our new land management program
- Reevaluation can occur once the first phase of Dallas now has concluded





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