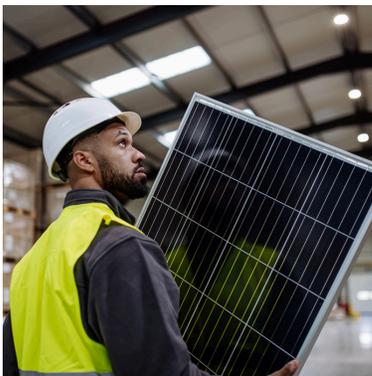
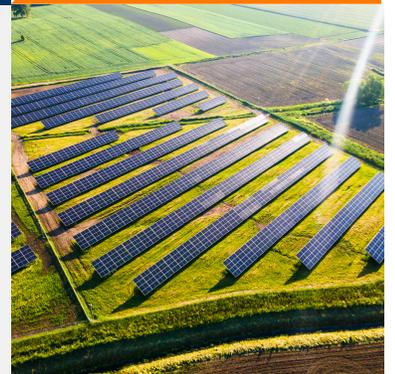
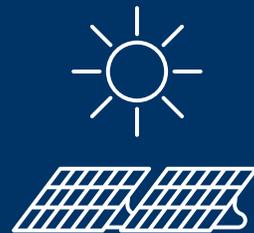


Opportunities for Washington Businesses with **Commercial Solar**

A Practical Guide to Reducing Operating Costs and Increasing Long-Term Asset Value

Solora Solar
*Washington State
Commercial Solar Experts*





Smart companies
are just waking up
to commercial
solar as a **strategic
investment**, not
just clean energy

Why Commercial Solar?

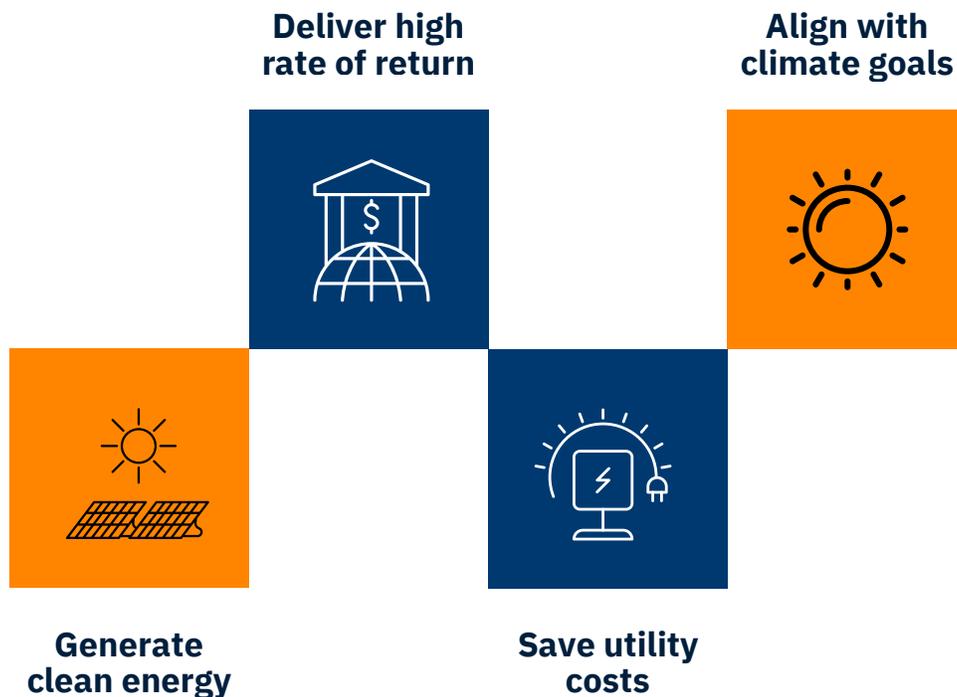
A CORE FINANCIAL STRATEGY FOR PROPERTY OWNERS, BUSINESSES & NONPROFITS

By generating power on-site, organizations can lock in long-term energy costs, reduce exposure to utility rate increases, and turn unused roof or land space into a productive asset.

Commercial solar is best understood as a capital investment rather than a sustainability expense.

Most projects deliver predictable cash flow, attractive internal rates of return, and payback periods that outperform many traditional capital improvements.

In this way, commercial solar has become a core financial strategy for property owners, business operators, and nonprofits.





WHY THE TIME IS NOW IN WASHINGTON STATE

Washington businesses are facing rising electricity costs, increasing sustainability expectations, and competitive pressures to operate more efficiently. State clean energy policies make now a strong time to explore commercial solar.

THE ECONOMICS OF COMMERCIAL SOLAR

Commercial solar is best understood as a capital investment rather than a sustainability expense. Projects deliver predictable cash flow, attractive internal rates of return, and payback periods that outperform other capital improvements.



WHAT DETERMINES SOLAR ROI

Solar project performance depends on several factors including utility rates, system design quality, available incentives, financing structure, and long-term operations and maintenance planning.



STRATEGY

Take advantage of
several ways to
lower costs and
Maximize ROI

USDA REAP Grant **Funding:**

✓ **FEDERAL FUNDING OPTION**

USDA REAP grants help rural businesses and agricultural producers reduce upfront solar costs by covering a meaningful portion of eligible expenses, improving project payback.

✓ **SOLAR FOR RURAL FARMS**

REAP funding supports right-sized solar systems that offset on-farm energy use, from irrigation pumps to processing equipment. These projects lower operating expenses, improve energy independence, and create more predictable long-term utility costs.

✓ **RURAL ENERGY INVESTMENT**

Through USDA REAP, rural solar installations reduce exposure to rising power prices while strengthening the economic resilience of farms and rural small businesses.



USDA REAP grants are awarded competitively, evaluating technical merit, environmental compliance, and project readiness.

Applicants must document energy use, provide detailed cost estimates, and meet eligibility requirements. Because funding windows and cost-share levels can shift, early preparation and coordination with your state's USDA Rural Development office is key.

Lock it in with **Safe Harbor:**

✓ **WHAT IS SAFE HARBOR?**

Safe harbor lets businesses lock in today's solar tax credits and regulations before changes take effect. Projects secured by July 4, 2026 preserve current benefits and allow four years for completion.

✓ **WHY SAFE HARBOR MATTERS**

Recent federal legislation changed how commercial solar projects qualify for incentives. Projects placed in service by December 31, 2027 can receive 30–50% tax credits, while credits are eliminated beginning January 1, 2028 without safe harbor protection.

✓ **PROTECTING PROJECT VALUE**

Safe harboring before regulations take effect in 2026 simplifies compliance and helps maximize tax credits. Projects secured early must be operating by 2029. Later projects face added complexity and costs.



You must either start building or spend at least 5% of project costs before July 4, 2026 to lock in tax and regulatory benefits.

Proper documentation is essential to demonstrate compliance and preserve eligibility. Because timelines, supply chains, and regulatory interpretations can shift, early coordination with your tax advisor, solar developer, and legal counsel helps ensure your project qualifies.

Exploring **Community Solar**:

✓ **PUT YOUR ASSETS TO USE**

Use your facility roof, parking lot, or land to host a shared solar array. You can take a portion of the output for your own operations and dedicate the rest to tenants, neighbors, or community partners.

✓ **OBTAIN GRANTS & FUNDING**

Community solar projects can combine federal tax incentives, Washington Department of Commerce grants, and WSU Community Solar Expansion Program incentives for a powerful funding stack that reduces net cost.

✓ **CHOOSE THE RIGHT FIT**

You can participate as a host site, subscriber, co-developer, or program partner. That flexibility makes community solar a fit for organizations of many sizes and sectors.



Community solar isn't just a feel-good initiative — it's a strategic tool for managing energy costs and serving your community.

In Washington state, community solar is especially powerful because it can be paired with a number of available incentives and grants. Businesses and nonprofits can play a central role by hosting the project, co-developing it, or serving as an anchor subscriber.

A close-up photograph of a worker wearing a white hard hat and a high-visibility vest, focused on working on a solar panel. The worker's hands are visible, and the grid lines of the solar panel are clearly seen. The image is overlaid with a dark blue diamond-shaped graphic.

CASE STUDIES

Real Examples of Companies Seizing the Opportunity to **Leverage Solar**



112KW SYSTEM WILL SAVE \$500K OVER LIFE

Green Acres Farms installed a 112kW solar system in Wapato, WA, offsetting 90% of energy use, leveraging tax incentives and depreciation, saving \$500,000 over its lifespan, and reducing 2,484 tons of CO₂.

1MW DAIRY FARM WITH USDA REAP GRANT

A 1MW dairy farm solar project in Mabton, WA overcame land, aggregation, and environmental challenges using USDA REAP and IRA incentives, delivering 1.4 GWh annually and completing installation in 4 months after years of planning.



NEW 32KW EXPANSION MEETS ENERGY DEMAND

Kinter Electric expanded its original 27kW system with a new 32kW solar installation to meet growing energy demand, leveraging federal tax credits, incentives, and accelerated depreciation for strong returns.



SOLAR CARPORT SYSTEM NETS 5-YEAR PAYBACK

An Olympia senior living complex installed a 15kW solar carport system to meet city renewable standards, offsetting energy use and qualifying for incentives. The monitored system is expected to achieve payback in under five years.



450-PLUS SOLAR PANELS POWER THIS COMPANY

Mountain State Construction installed over 450 solar modules across three Sunnyside buildings, connected to six Fronius inverters. The system offsets more than 90% of energy use and is projected to achieve payback in six years.



LOOKING AHEAD, PANELS PRODUCE A SURPLUS

This Grandview facility installed over 400 rooftop solar panels, exceeding current power needs by 50%. Surplus energy will supply other sites while it grows into an expected increase in energy demand.



Here's How to Get Started:

Once you have decided to look more closely into commercial solar as an investment, take these next steps:

STEP 01

Collect recent utility bills and basic site details so you can understand your current energy use, costs, and whether your facility is a good candidate for solar.

STEP 02

Decide what matters most – lower operating expenses, long-term ROI, sustainability goals, or resilience – so your solar project can be evaluated properly.

STEP 03

Engage a commercial solar provider to assess system options, feasibility, and incentives, and receive a clear customized plan with costs, savings, and next steps.

HOW TO EVALUATE COMMERCIAL SOLAR PROPOSALS FROM MULTIPLE CONTRACTOR BIDS

Not all solar proposals are created equal, and surface-level pricing rarely tells the full story. Commercial decision-makers should look beyond upfront cost and understand how each proposal is structured.

Key assumptions around energy production, utility rates, and system degradation directly impact projected savings and should be reviewed. Equipment selection also matters. Module, inverter, and racking quality influence reliability, maintenance needs, and long-term performance.

Installer experience is critical. Projects of a commercial scale require proven expertise to deliver reliable outcomes.

Get In Touch

solorasolar.com
contactus@solorasolar.com
Issaquah, WA | Yakima, WA

 **509-388-0239**



Author: Chad Turner
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