

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Subject

- Request - Maumee Riverfront Overlay Review of standalone solar field
- Location - 627 Lotus Avenue
- Applicant - Historic South Initiative  
P.O. Box 1008  
Toledo, OH 43697
- Developer - Elevated Energy Solutions  
27100 Oakmead Dr., #157  
Perrysburg, OH 43551
- Property Owner - City of Toledo  
One Government Center, Suite 2250  
Toledo, OH 43604
- Engineer - Verdantas  
219 S. Erie Street  
Toledo, OH 43604

Site Description

- Zoning - IG / General Industrial
- Overlay District - Maumee Riverfront Overlay District
- Area - ± 15.4 acres
- Frontage - No street frontage
- Existing Use - Pump station
- Proposed Use - Pump station and solar energy facility

Area Description

- North - Norfolk Southern Railroad, Lotus Avenue, single-family homes and duplexes with multi-family scattered throughout / IG, RD6
- South - Maumee River, manufacturing, casino / IG, CM & CR
- East - Undeveloped land, warehouse, Edwin Drive, marina / IG
- West - Maumee River, wooded/undeveloped land / IG

**GENERAL INFORMATION (cont'd)**Parcel History

Z.1(J) 41-77	-	Establishment of the Maumee Riverfront Overlay District (PC rec approval 1/12/1978; CC approved 2/14/1978 via Ord. 99-78).
MRO-4-94	-	Maumee Riverfront Overlay District review for filling/grading (Administratively approved 12/20/1994).
M-1-17	-	Review and adoption of Old South End Master Plan (PC rec approval 4/13/2017; CC approved 5/30/2017 via Ord. 226-17).
SUP26-0003	-	Special Use Permit for standalone solar field at 627 Lotus Street ( <i>companion case</i> ).

Applicable Plans and Regulations

- Toledo Municipal Code (TMC), Part Eleven: Planning and Zoning
- Forward Toledo Comprehensive Land Use Plan
- Old South End Master Plan
- Maumee Riverfront Plan

**STAFF ANALYSIS**

The applicant is requesting a Maumee Riverfront Overlay District Review for a standalone solar energy facility at 627 Lotus Street. The subject site, consisting of five (5) parcels totaling 15.4 acres, is situated south of Lotus Street between the Norfolk Southern Railroad and the Maumee River. The property is owned by the City of Toledo and the applicant will be entering into a lease agreement with the city to utilize approximately 4.6 acres of the site for a standalone solar field. Currently there is a City pump station on the site. Surrounding land uses include undeveloped land, a warehouse and a marina to the east; the Maumee River to the south; the Maumee River and wooded/undeveloped land to the west; and railroad tracks, Lotus Street and a mix of single-family homes and duplexes with multi-family units scattered throughout to the north.

The Historic South Initiative (HSI) is the applicant for the project. The mission of HSI is to develop bold, long-term, measurable strategies and facilitate partnerships to promote the ongoing development of a vibrant, thriving Old South End neighborhood. HSI has received grant funding to construct the solar field. The solar field is projected to generate 1.5 megawatts (MW) of power. It is the intent of HSI to partner with other nonprofits and service providers in the neighborhood to sell them the generated power at a reduced rate. One such example is Marshall STEMM Academy on Colburn Street. HSI will then utilize the collected funds to complete improvement projects in the Old South End neighborhood. The solar field will be operated and maintained by Elevated Energy Solutions.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS (cont'd)**

A Maumee Riverfront Overlay District Review is required per TMC§1111.1400 as the subject property is located within the Maumee Riverfront Overlay District (MRO). In addition, a Special Use Permit is required per the Use Table in TMC§1104.0100 for a primary solar energy system in the IG zoning district for which the property is zoned. This review is being completed in companion case SUP26-0003.

At the March 12, 2026 Plan Commission Meeting, the Plan Commission voted to defer the case to the April 9, 2026 Plan Commission Meeting so that the applicant could hold a neighborhood meeting to discuss the proposal and receive feedback/input from the neighborhood. A neighborhood meeting is scheduled for April 6, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the South Branch Library, 1736 Broadway Street, Toledo, OH.

### Proposed Use and Site Development

The proposed solar field is projected to generate 1.5 MW of power. For perspective, the Solar Energy Industries Association has calculated that the average number of homes powered by 1 MW of power created by photovoltaic panels in Ohio is just over 140 homes. The solar energy system for the site is not fully designed, thus specifics such as type, number, height, etc. for the solar array have not been determined at this time. The system will consist of a driven steel pile mounting system that holds the solar panels at a fixed angle, and the solar array layout will be similar to that illustrated on the attached site plan. The height is noted as low-profile and is approximated to be three feet (3') in height at the low end and six to nine feet (6'-9') in height at the high end. Additional equipment to facilitate solar power collection and distribution will also be installed as required, as well as a chain link fence as required by the applicant's lease agreement. Limited site improvements such as minimal grading and stormwater management is noted for the solar array installation. Based on the site plan, the location of the proposed solar array is situated on a portion of the site that was previously cleared for use. The surrounding portions of the property are wooded with the exception of the area where the existing pump station is located.

### Maumee Riverfront Overlay District (MRO)

The Maumee Riverfront Overlay District (MRO) enhances the requirements, regulations and procedures that apply in the underlying zoning district(s). The river is a visual, environmental and transportation resource affecting substantial portions of Downtown and surrounding areas. The general intent and purpose of the MRO is to provide for maximum public benefit through the opportunity for enjoyment of river vistas and access by the maximum number of citizens. Among others, it is also the intent of the MRO to eliminate or minimize negative environmental impacts and to provide for improved scenic and aesthetic controls. A Maumee Riverfront Overlay (MRO) review is required to ensure compliance with the vision and standards of the MRO.

**STAFF ANALYSIS (cont'd)**

This site is located within the Residential, Park & Water-Oriented Recreation Subdistrict which is intended to promote a superior level of public access, convenience, comfort, and amenity; to encourage safe and efficient pedestrian and vehicular access; to provide adequate parking; to preserve and enhance principal vistas and visual relationships; and to promote a beneficial relationship between the waterfront area and adjoining areas. While the standalone solar field does not specifically support the intent of this district, the project will develop an underutilized area with a use that will not only ultimately benefit the area through revenue generated, but also develop the site with a utility that is listed in the Maumee River Overlay Approval Procedures as a use which is appropriate in the MRO. Per TMC§1111.1400(C), the following uses are set out as examples of development meeting the general purpose and intent of the MRO: (9) public service facilities having a peculiar locational need. The proposal is therefore consistent with the Maumee Riverfront Overlay District.

Maumee Riverfront Plan

The Maumee Riverfront Plan was developed in response to an increasing public awareness of the Maumee Riverfront and the possibilities of redevelopment of large sections of the riverfront. The Maumee Riverfront Plan recommends the arrangement of land uses into three (3) segments along the River and establishes a review for any redevelopment. The site for the solar energy system is located in the section known as the “Upriver Segment”. The Upriver Segment includes the area from the Ohio Turnpike to Maumee Avenue. The segment is part of the South Side community dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century and is residential in character. The Plan indicates that land where the solar energy system is proposed should be acquired for park land. While the proposal does not involve acquiring property for park land or using the subject property for park land it does support the recommendation of retaining and strengthening residential areas noted for other areas in the Upriver Segment by providing revenue to improve the overall neighborhood. In addition, the proposed solar field will be ground mounted and removeable so that the site could be otherwise developed in the future. The proposal is therefore consistent with the Maumee Riverfront Plan.

Forward Toledo Comprehensive Land Use Plan

The Forward Toledo Comprehensive Land Use Plan designates the site for Utilities. The Utilities (UT) Land Use designation is intended to preserve key thoroughfares for connectivity of infrastructure such as rail lines, electrical lines, transformers, water treatment, and distribution. Solar fields are an identified land use for the UT designation. The proposed solar field is therefore consistent with the Forward Toledo land use designation. In addition, the proposal supports the Sustain theme of the plan. This theme identifies strategies for maintaining our natural environment, accessing healthy food and promoting efficient energy. The proposed solar energy facility is consistent with this theme in that it reduces impacts on the environment by providing an alternative green energy source.

Staff is supportive of the proposed solar energy facility as it is consistent with the Maumee Riverfront Overlay District, the Maumee Riverfront Plan, and the Forward Toledo Plan.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The staff recommends that the Toledo City Plan Commission approve MRO-1-26, a Maumee Riverfront Overlay Review of standalone solar field at 627 Lotus Street for the following **two (2) reasons**:

1. The proposed use is consistent with the Forward Toledo Comprehensive Land Use Plan; and
2. The proposed use conforms to the goals of the Maumee Riverfront Overlay District, as presented in the 1981 Maumee Riverfront Plan and Toledo Municipal Code as outlined in TMC§1103.0400 and TMC§1111.1400.

The staff further recommends that the Toledo City Plan Commission recommend approval of MRO-1-26, a Maumee Riverfront Overlay Review of standalone solar field at 627 Lotus Street, subject to the following **three (3) conditions**:

Plan Commission

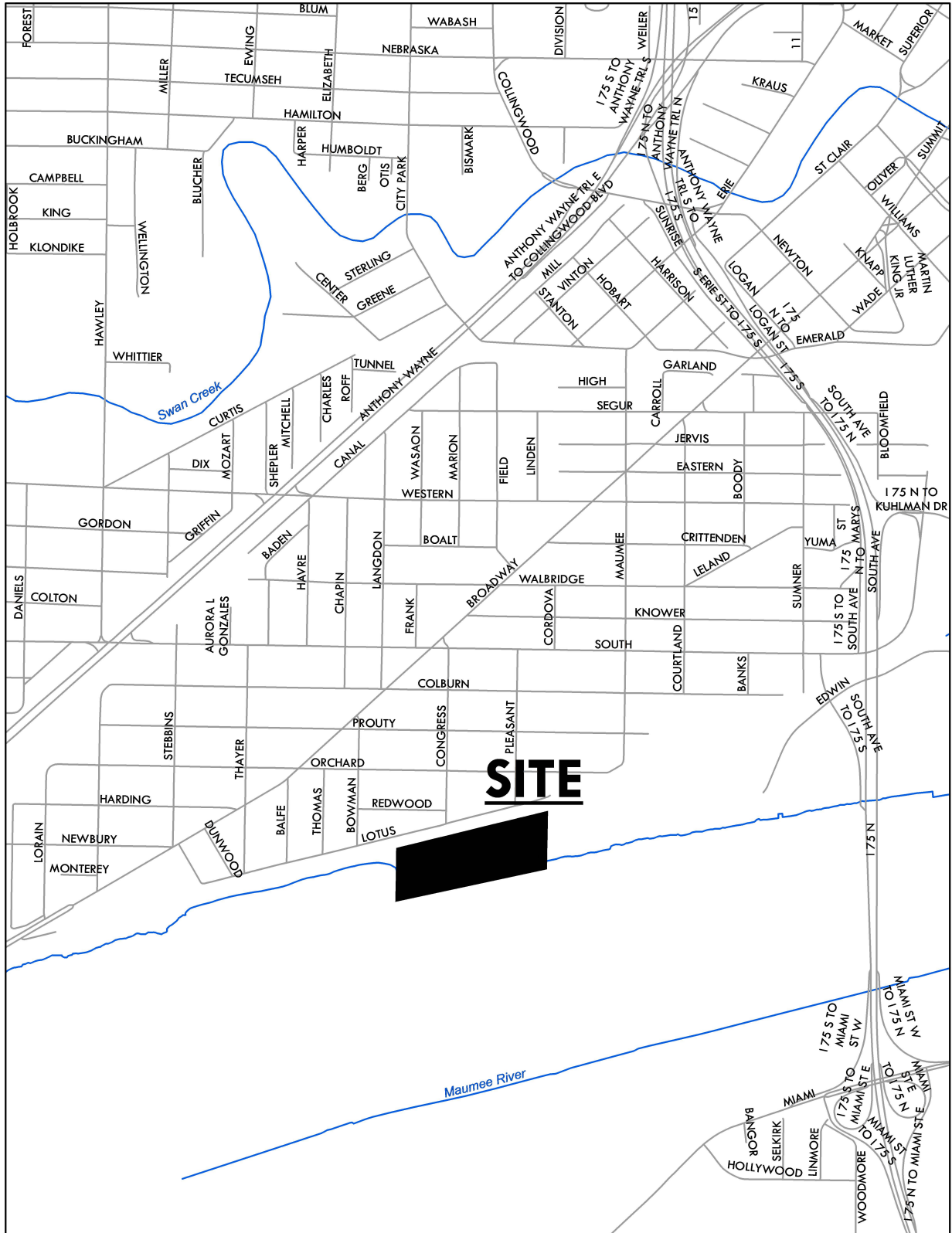
1. Approval of the companion case SUP26-0003, a Special Use Permit for standalone solar field at 627 Lotus Street.
2. Compliance with all the conditions of approval for SUP26-0003, a Special Use Permit for standalone solar array at 627 Lotus Street.
3. No permits shall be issued until arrangements satisfactory to the Director of the City of Toledo Plan Commission have been made for compliance with the conditions as set forth above.

MAUMEE RIVERFRONT OVERLAY REVIEW  
TOLEDO CITY PLAN COMMISSION  
REF: MRO-1-26  
DATE: April 9, 2026  
TIME: 2:00 P.M.

LK  
Three (3) sketches follow

# GENERAL LOCATION

# MRO-1-26



# ZONING & LAND USE

MRO-1-26

