

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Planning Commission Ordinance Revisions Committee

FROM: Matt Kowalski, City Planner

SUBJECT: Amendment to UDC re: Solar Installations on Carports

DATE: For the January 28, 2020 ORC Meeting

On November 26, 2019, Planning staff requested feedback for a potential amendment to the Solar Energy System section of the Unified Development Code (UDC). At that meeting, Planning Commission directed Planning staff to research and draft an amendment to Section 5.16.6.N (Solar Energy Systems) in order to permit freestanding accessory Solar Energy Systems without requiring a site plan.

As background, the UDC currently designates a freestanding solar panel installation as an accessory structure. As such, the total size is limited to 240 square feet without the requirement for a site plan. Recently, a site has proposed a larger structure for covering existing parking while providing a larger surface for solar collection. Under current code, this proposal would trigger a full site plan review for the site making the installation of the solar structure possible, but cost prohibitive. Staff anticipates other possible sites in the City to have similar considerations making larger ground-mounted solar installations challenging to install.

Attached is a draft ordinance amendment that would permit construction of a freestanding SES without a site plan and subject to certain standards. Staff would like feedback on the draft ordinance before proceeding to a final draft for Planning Commission consideration.