

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA,
ADDING A NEW CHAPTER 16.22 TO PROVIDE A STREAMLINED
PERMITTING PROCESS FOR SMALL RESIDENTIAL ROOFTOP
SOLAR SYSTEMS AND UPDATING THE TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR
CHAPTER 16 OF THE RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL CODE.

WHEREAS, Subsection (a) of Section 65850.5 of the California Government Code provides
that it is the policy of the State to promote and encourage the installation and use of solar energy
systems by limiting obstacles to their use and by minimizing the permitting costs of such systems;
and

WHEREAS, Subdivision (g)(1) of Section 65850.5 of the California Government Code
provides that, on or before September 30, 2015, every city, county, or city and county shall adopt an
ordinance, consistent with the goals and intent of subdivision (a) of Section 65850.5, that creates an
expedited, streamlined permitting process for small residential rooftop solar energy systems.

NOW, THEREFORE, The City Council of the City of Riverside does ordain as follows:

Section 1: The Table of Contents for Title 16, Building and Construction, is amended to
include Chapter 16.22

“Title 16 - Buildings and Construction

Chapter 16.04	Administration
Chapter 16.06	Residential Code
...	
Chapter 16.20	Building Moving Regulations
<u>Chapter 16.22</u>	<u>Solar Streamlined Permitting Process</u>
Chapter 16.24	House Numbering”

...

Section 2: Chapter 16.22 of the Riverside Municipal Code entitled Chapter 16.22 Solar
Streamlined Permitting Process is added as follows:

“Chapter 16.22

SOLAR STREAMLINED PERMITTING PROCESS

Sections:

16.22.010	Purpose.
16.22.020	Applicability.

1 **16.22.030 Definitions.**

2 **16.22.040 Solar Energy System Requirements.**

3 **16.22.050 Duties of the Building and Safety Division.**

4 **16.22.060 Permit Review and Inspection Requirements.**

5 **Section 16.22.010 Purpose.**

6 The purpose of this ordinance is to create an expedited, streamlined solar permitting process
7 that complies with the Solar Rights Act and AB 2188 (Chapter 521, Statutes 2014) to achieve timely
8 and cost-effective installations of small residential rooftop solar energy systems.

9 **Section 16.22.020 Applicability.**

10 a. This chapter applies to the permitting of all small residential rooftop solar energy
11 systems in the City.

12 b. Small residential rooftop solar energy systems legally established or permitted prior
13 to the effective date of this ordinance are not subject to the requirements of this ordinance unless
14 physical modifications or alterations are undertaken that materially change the size, type, or
15 components of a small rooftop energy system in such a way as to require a new permit.

16 **Section 16.22.030 Definitions.**

17 a. For the purpose of this Chapter, words and terms shall be defined as set forth in this
18 Section. Where terms are not defined in this Code and are defined in other codes, such terms shall
19 have the meanings ascribed to them as in those codes. Where terms are not defined through the
20 methods authorized by this Section, such terms shall have ordinary accepted meanings such as the
21 context implies.

22 b. A “**Solar Energy System**” means either of the following:

23 i. Any solar collector or other solar energy device whose primary purpose is to
24 provide for the collection, storage, and distribution of solar energy for space heating, space
25 cooling, electric generation, or water heating.

26 ii. Any structural design feature of a building, whose primary purpose is to
27 provide for the collection, storage, and distribution of solar energy for electricity generation,
28 space heating or cooling, or for water heating.

 c. A “**Small Residential Rooftop Solar Energy System**” means all of the following:

1 i. A solar energy system that is no larger than 10 kilowatts alternating
2 current nameplate rating or 30 kilowatts thermal.

3 ii. A solar energy system that conforms to all applicable state fire,
4 structural, electrical, and other building codes as adopted or amended by the City of
5 Riverside and all state and City of Riverside health and safety standards.

6 iii. A solar energy system that is installed on the roof of a single or duplex
7 family dwelling.

8 iv. A solar panel or module array that does not exceed the maximum legal
9 building height as defined by the City of Riverside.

10 d. A “**Kilowatt Thermal**” shall mean:

11 i. A unit of measurement to approximate the amount of energy produced
12 by solar thermal collector. Each square meter of collector space equals 0.7 kilowatt-thermal.

13 e. “**Electronic Submittal**” means the utilization of the following:

14 i. Any computer based electronic plan review software program
15 maintained, operated, and utilized by the City.

16 **Section 16.22.040 Solar Energy System Requirements.**

17 a. All solar energy systems shall meet all applicable health and safety standards
18 and the requirements imposed by the state and the City, local fire department, and utility director.

19 b. Solar energy systems for heating water in single-family residences and for heating
20 water in commercial or swimming pool applications shall be certified by an accredited listing agency
21 as defined by the California Plumbing and Mechanical Code.

22 c. Solar energy systems for producing electricity shall meet all applicable safety
23 and performance standards established by the California Electrical Code, the Institute of Electrical
24 and Electronics Engineers, and accredited testing laboratories such as Underwriters Laboratories
25 and, where applicable, rules of the Public Utilities Commission regarding safety and reliability.

26 **Section 16.22.050 Duties of the Building and Safety Division.**

27 a. All documents required for the submission of an expedited solar energy
28 system application shall be made available on the publicly accessible City website.

1 b. Electronic submittal of the required permit application and documents through
2 City utilized computer based software shall be made available to all small residential rooftop solar
3 energy system permit applicants.

4 c. An applicant's electronic signature shall be accepted on all forms,
5 applications, and other documents in lieu of a wet signature.

6 d. The Building and Safety Division shall adopt a standard plan and checklist of
7 all requirements with which small residential rooftop solar energy systems shall comply to be
8 eligible for expedited review.

9 e. The small residential rooftop solar system permit process, standard plan(s),
10 and checklist shall substantially conform to recommendations for expedited permitting, including the
11 checklist and standard plans contained in the most current version of the California Solar Permitting
12 Guidebook adopted by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.

13 **Section 16.22.060 Permit Review and Inspection Requirements.**

14 a. Prior to submitting a permit application, the Applicant shall:

15 i. Verify, through the use of standard engineering evaluation techniques,
16 that the support structure for the small residential rooftop solar energy system is stable and adequate
17 to transfer all wind, seismic, and dead and live loads associated with the installation and the
18 maintenance thereof; and

19 ii. Verify, using standard electrical inspection techniques, that the
20 existing electrical system including existing line, load, ground and bonding wiring as well as main
21 panel and subpanel sizes are adequately sized, based on the existing electrical system's current use,
22 to carry all new photovoltaic electrical loads.

23 iii. If a permit application is deemed incomplete, a written correction
24 notice detailing all deficiencies in the permit application and any additional information or
25 documentation required to be eligible for expedited permit issuance shall be sent to the applicant for
26 resubmission.

b. Only one inspection shall be required and performed by the Building and Safety Division for small residential rooftop solar energy systems eligible for expedited permit review. The inspection shall be done in a timely manner.

c. If a small residential rooftop solar energy system fails inspection, a subsequent inspection is authorized but need not conform to the requirements of this ordinance.”

Section 3: The City Council has reviewed the matter and, based upon the facts and information contained in the staff reports, administrative record, and written and oral testimony, hereby finds that this ordinance is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, in that it will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment; or, 15060(c)(3) in that it is not a “project”; and Public Resources Code section 21080.35, which generally excludes from CEQA the installation of a solar energy system on the roof of an existing building or at an existing parking lot.

Section 4: The City Clerk shall certify to the adoption of this ordinance and cause publication once in a newspaper of general circulation in accordance with Section 414 of the Charter of the City of Riverside. This ordinance shall become effective on the 30th day after the date of its adoption.

ADOPTED by the City Council this _____ day of _____, 20____.

WILLIAM R. BAILEY, III
Mayor of the City of Riverside

Attest:

COLLEEN J. NICOL
City Clerk of the City of Riverside

1 I, Colleen J. Nicol, City Clerk of the City of Riverside, California, hereby certify that the
2 foregoing ordinance was duly and regularly introduced at a meeting of the City Council on the
3 _____ day of _____, 20____, and that thereafter the said ordinance was duly and
4 regularly adopted at a meeting of the City Council on the _____ day of _____, 20____,
5 by the following vote, to wit:

6 Ayes:

7 Noes:

8 Absent:

9 Abstain:

10
11 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the
12 City of Riverside, California, this _____ day of _____, 20____.
13

14
15
16 _____
COLLEEN J. NICOL
City Clerk of the City of Riverside
17

18 O:\Cycom\Wpdocs\D001\P019\00245153.Docx
19 CA: 15-0131
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28