



## ***UDC Amendment Request Application for Internal Parties***

### ***(City of San Antonio Departments)***

#### ***Part 1. Applicant Information***

Name: Douglas Melnick Organization (if applicable): CoSA - Office of Sustainability/SWMD  
Address: 100 W. Houston Street, 7th Floor, San Antonio 78205  
Phone: 210-207-1721 Email: douglas.melnick@sanantonio.gov  
Signature: Douglas Melnick Digitally signed by Douglas Melnick  
(Include title if representing a governmental agency or public/private organization) Date: 1/31/2022  
Date: 2022.01.31 14:43:42 -06'00'

#### ***Part 2. Basis for Update (check only one)***

- ☐ Clarification amendments to provide for ease of interpretation and understanding of the existing provisions of the UDC  
(Note: Clarification amendments should not change or alter the intent or meaning of existing UDC provisions)
- ☐ Editing change that does not alter the impact of the provisions being addressed including changes such as spelling, grammar correction, formatting, text selection, or addition of text in compliance with existing ordinance, statutes or case law
- ☐ Completed Rule Interpretation Determination (*RID*)
- ☐ Requested by the Zoning Commission, Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment, HDRC, City Council or other appropriate city board or council (CCR, resolution or signature of the chairperson is required)
- ☒ City of San Antonio Staff Amendment

#### ***Part 3. Reason(s) for Update (check all that apply)***

- ☐ Modify procedures and standards for workability and administrative efficiency
- ☐ Eliminate unnecessary development costs
- ☐ Update the procedures and standards to reflect changes in the law or the state of the art in land use planning and urban design
- ☒ See Part 4 (if none of the provided choices in this section apply, please discuss the reasons for the proposed update in Part 4)

#### ***Part 4. Summary of Proposed Update with Suggested Text (see application instructions)***

Clarified language in existing solar array language found in 35-398(b) and added new language for additional solar typologies: rooftop solar (35-398(c)) and solar canopies (35-398(d)).

## Part 5. Cost Impact Statement

*Section 35-11(a) of the UDC requires that all requests for amendments include a Cost Impact Statement. The Cost Impact Statement should be justified with substantiating information, such as cost estimates or studies.*

The requested change to the UDC (*please check appropriate box*):

By how much?

(Indicate either a dollar amount or percentage above or below current construction and/or development costs)

- A. ☒ Will not impact the cost of construction and/or development.
- B. ☐ Will increase the cost of construction and/or development.
- C. ☐ Will decrease the cost of construction and/or development.

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## ***Part 6. Cost Impact Narrative and Back-Up Information***

*Please fully quantify the Cost Impact Statement that was provided in Part 5. Attach all relevant data and associated costs that you wish to have considered as well as a narrative explaining how the Cost Impact Statement was developed. If you need additional space, please attach additional sheets.*

***Be sure to:***

- *Consider and indicate initial and long-term maintenance costs;*
- *Consider city cost (i.e. personnel costs and costs to enforce);*
- *Indicate and be able to rationalize the baseline (current costs) and the cost projections associated with your request.*

Proposed edits do not add any additional costs and reflect current best practices for solar development.

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## *UDC 2021 Proposed Amendment*

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**Amendment 18-7****Applicant: Office of Sustainability****Amendment Title** – ‘Sec. 35-398. – Renewable Energy Systems.’**Amendment Language:**

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**(b) Solar Farms:**

1. **Applicability.** The purpose of this subsection is to provide standards for fixed-panel photovoltaic solar farms consisting of ground-mounted solar panels that capture energy from the sun and convert it to electricity. This includes, but is not limited to, solar farms sited on closed landfills and other brownfield sites (also known as “brightfields”), pollinator-friendly solar, and solar farms co-located with productive agricultural land (also known as “agrivoltaics”). The provisions of this section are based on a ground-mounted photovoltaic facility using a rammed post construction technique and panels that support the flow of rainwater between each module and the growth of vegetation beneath the arrays and limiting the impacts of stormwater runoff. The rammed post construction technique allows for minimal disturbance to the existing ground and grading of the site. Based on the assumed solar farm design, the City of San Antonio finds the use to be low intensity with minimal trip generation, low amounts of impervious cover, and low emission thus the use is compatible in non-urbanized, low-density areas with other agricultural and scattered industrial uses.

**2. Site Development Standards:**

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- a. Height: The solar panel arrays shall be constructed to a height that does not reasonably interfere with other activities and uses. ~~The average height of the solar panel arrays shall not exceed twelve (12) feet.~~ The height regulations for all other structures are included in the Unified Development Code, Article III Zoning, Table 310-1.

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- h. On-site power lines shall be buried except when connecting to existing overhead utility lines and solar infrastructure, including, but not limited to, panels, inverters, and distribution boards. ~~Customer-owned on-site power lines shall be buried except where connecting to existing overhead utility lines~~ This requirement shall not apply to fiber optic connections.

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4. **Submittal Requirements:** Building permits are required for solar farms. Plans shall contain the following:

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- b. A description of the electrical generating capacity ~~and~~ means of interconnecting with the electrical grid, and energy storage capabilities, if applicable, as coordinated and pre-approved with CPS Energy.

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- g. Plan for systems performance monitoring, either physically on-site or virtually online, including the controls, monitors, and instrument to be used.

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- 6. **Discontinuation.** A solar farm shall be considered abandoned after three (3) ~~one (1)~~ years without energy production. The solar facility ~~property~~ owner shall remove all solar farm equipment and appurtenances within ninety (90) days of abandonment. Decommissioning must comply with Texas SB 760.
- 7. Design Exceptions for Solar Farms on Closed Landfills and Other Brownfield Sites. A solar farm located on a closed landfill that is properly capped in accordance with local and state law or on other brownfield sites shall not be required to adhere to the rammed post construction technique. Solar farms on these sites shall be permitted to be designed and built with structures that are ballasted and do not penetrate the surface.

(c) Rooftop Solar Arrays

- 1. Applicability. The purpose of this subsection is to provide standards for photovoltaic solar arrays consisting of rooftop-mounted panels that capture energy from the sun and convert it to electricity.
- 2. Site Development Standards:
  - a. Site Design: Specifications for site design and development, including but not limited to, system height, system mounting, landscape buffers, stormwater management, and location of power lines and wires, shall be determined between the City of San Antonio and other contractual parties, as applicable.
  - b. Roof Access: System layout shall meet local fire department, code, and ordinance requirements for roof access.
  - c. Signage: Signage shall conform to Chapter 28 of the Municipal Code as well as any sign limitations of the zoning district, where applicable.
  - d. All Municipal Code provisions not specified in this subsection are required including but not limited to tree preservation, traffic impact analysis and historic preservation.
- 3. Permitted Use. Rooftop solar arrays shall be permitted ("P") by right on any eligible and viable structure, pending approval from CPS Energy.
- 4. Submittal Requirements: Building permits are required for rooftop solar arrays. Plans shall contain the following:
  - a. A plot plan, drawn to scale, of the property indicating the total site acreage, tree preservation, location of all structures, the proposed location of the solar panels, the distances of the solar panels to structures and equipment on the building rooftop as well as distances to the property lines, as applicable. The plot plan shall include any electric lines and/ or overhead utility lines.
  - b. A description of the electrical generating capacity, means of interconnecting with the electrical grid, and energy storage capabilities, if applicable, as coordinated and pre-approved with CPS Energy.
  - c. Drawings or blueprints of solar panels and arrays in conjunction with the application for a building permit for a rooftop solar array.
  - d. Structural engineering analysis for a solar panel, array and its foundation, as applicable.
  - e. Manufacturer's recommended installations, if any.
  - f. Documentation of land ownership and/or legal authority to construct on the property.
  - g. Plan for system performance monitoring, either physically on-site or virtually online, including the controls, monitors, and instrumentation to be used.

5. Compliance With Other Regulations:

1. Building permit applications for rooftop solar arrays shall be accompanied by a line drawing of electrical components in sufficient detail to allow for a determination that the manner of installation conforms to the city's adopted electrical code and that has been pre-approved by CPS Energy as meeting their Distribution Generation Requirements and Guidelines.
2. Within the city limits, an executed interconnection agreement with CPS Energy is required prior to certificate of occupancy. In the ETJ the interconnection agreement shall be provided prior to utility connection. This subsection does not waive any requirements of the city's building code, electrical code or other technical codes as applicable.
6. Discontinuation. A rooftop solar array shall be considered abandoned after three (3) years without energy production. The property owner shall remove all solar equipment and appurtenances within ninety (90) days of abandonment. Decommissioning must comply with Texas SB 760.

(d) Solar Canopies

1. Applicability. The purpose of this subsection is to provide standards for photovoltaic solar arrays consisting of raised or lofted panels that capture energy from the sun and convert it to electricity. A raised or lofted "canopy" system may be deployed over parking facilities, grounds, and surfaces. Such systems should not substantially impact or interfere with operations and activities beneath the canopies once the solar canopy system is operational.
2. Site Development Standards:
  - a. Site Design: Specifications for site design and development, including but not limited to, system height, system mounting, landscape buffers, stormwater management, and location of power lines and wires, shall be determined between the City of San Antonio and other contractual parties, as applicable.
  - b. Signage: Signage shall conform to Chapter 28 of the Municipal Code as well as any sign limitations of the zoning district, where applicable.
  - c. All Municipal Code provisions not specified in this subsection are required including but not limited to tree preservation, traffic impact analysis and historic preservation.
3. Permitted Use. Solar canopies shall be permitted ("P") by right on any eligible and viable facilities, grounds, and surfaces, pending approval from CPS Energy.
4. Submittal Requirements: Building permits are required for solar canopies. Plans shall contain the following:
  - a. A plot plan, drawn to scale, of the property indicating the total site acreage, landscape and buffer areas, tree preservation, location of all structures, the proposed location of the solar panels, the distances of the solar panels to structures on the property as well as distances to the property lines, as applicable. The plot plan shall include any roads, electric lines and/ or overhead utility lines.
  - b. A description of the electrical generating capacity, means of interconnecting with the electrical grid, and energy storage capabilities, if applicable, as coordinated and pre-approved with CPS Energy.
  - c. Drawings or blueprints of solar panels and arrays in conjunction with the application for a building permit for a solar canopy.
  - d. Structural engineering analysis for a solar panel, array and its foundation, as applicable.
  - e. Manufacturer's recommended installations, if any.
  - f. Documentation of land ownership and/or legal authority to construct on the property.
  - g. Plan for system performance monitoring, either physically on-site or virtually online, including the controls, monitors, and instrumentation to be used.

5. Compliance With Other Regulations:

1. Building permit applications for solar canopies shall be accompanied by a line drawing of electrical components in sufficient detail to allow for a determination that the manner of installation conforms to the city's adopted electrical code and that has been pre-approved by CPS Energy as meeting their Distribution Generation Requirements and Guidelines.
2. Within the city limits, an submitted interconnection agreement with CPS Energy is required prior to certificate of occupancy. In the ETJ the interconnection agreement shall be provided prior to utility connection. This subsection does not waive any requirements of the city's building code, electrical code or other technical codes as applicable.
6. Discontinuation. A solar canopy shall be considered abandoned after three (3) years without energy production. The property owner shall remove all solar canopy equipment and appurtenances within ninety (90) days of abandonment. Decommissioning must comply with Texas SB 760.

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