

ORDINANCE NO. 2015-12

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SANTA CRUZ ADDING SECTION 18.06.070 TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE RELATING TO THE EXPEDITED PERMIT PROCESS FOR SMALL RESIDENTIAL ROOFTOP SOLAR SYSTEMS.

The City Council of the City of Santa Cruz ordains as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 18.06.070 of the Municipal Code of the City of Santa Cruz shall be as follows:

**Chapter 18.06**  
**SPECIAL BUILDING REGULATIONS**

Sections:

- 18.06.010 Standard doorway and passageway width.
- 18.06.015 Roll-in shower requirement for apartments and condominiums.
- 18.06.020 Building permit final inspection.
- 18.06.050 Seismic restraints for existing residential buildings.
- 18.06.060 Commercial decks and/or platforms.
- 18.06.070 Expedited Permit Process for Small Residential Rooftop Solar Systems.
- 18.06.080 Best management practices.
- 18.06.080.1 Best management practices for construction activity.
- 18.06.080.2 Post-construction best management practices.

18.06.070 Expedited Permit Process for Small Residential Rooftop Solar Systems

A. The following words and phrases as used in this section are defined as follows:

1. "Electronic submittal" means the utilization of one or more of the following:
  - a. e-mail
  - b. the internet
  - c. facsimile
2. "Small residential rooftop solar energy system" means all of the following:
  - a. A solar energy system that is no larger than 10 kilowatts alternating current nameplate rating or 30 kilowatts thermal.
  - b. A solar energy system that conforms to all applicable state fire, structural, electrical, and other building codes as adopted or amended by the City and paragraph (iii) of subdivision (c) of Section 714 of the Civil Code, as such section or subdivision may be amended, renumbered, or redesignated from time to time.
  - c. A solar energy system that is installed on a one or two family dwelling.
  - d. A solar panel or module array that does not exceed the maximum legal building height as defined by the authority having jurisdiction.

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“Solar energy system” has the same meaning set forth in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 801.5 of the Civil Code, as such section or subdivision may be amended, renumbered, or redesignated from time to time.

B. 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 that creates an expedited permitting process for small residential rooftop solar energy systems.

C. Section 65850.5 of the California Government Code provides that in developing an expedited permitting process, the city, county, or city and county shall adopt a checklist of all requirements with which small rooftop solar energy systems shall comply to be eligible for expedited review. The Building Official is hereby authorized and directed to develop and adopt such checklist.

D. The checklist shall be published on the City’s internet website. The applicant may submit the permit application and associated documentation to the City’s building division by personal, mailed, or electronic submittal together with any required permit processing and inspection fees.

E. Prior to submitting an application, the applicant shall:

1. Verify to the applicant’s reasonable satisfaction through the use of standard engineering evaluation techniques that the support structure for the small residential rooftop solar energy system is stable and adequate to transfer all wind, seismic, and dead and live loads associated with the system to the building foundation; and

2. At the applicant’s cost, verify to the applicant’s reasonable satisfaction using standard electrical inspection techniques that the existing electrical system including existing line, load, ground and bonding wiring as well as main panel and subpanel sizes are adequately sized, based on the existing electrical system’s current use, to carry all new photovoltaic electrical loads.

F. For a small residential rooftop solar energy system eligible for expedited review, only one inspection shall be required, which shall be done in a timely manner and may include a consolidated inspection by the building official and fire official. If a small residential rooftop solar energy system fails inspection, a subsequent inspection is authorized; however the subsequent inspection need not conform to the requirements of this subsection.

G. An application that satisfies the information requirements in the checklist, as determined by the building official, shall be deemed complete. Upon receipt of an incomplete application, the building official shall issue a written correction notice detailing all deficiencies in the application and any additional information required to be eligible for expedited permit issuance.

H. Upon confirmation by the building official of the application and supporting documentation being complete and meeting the requirements of the checklist, the building official shall administratively approve the application and issue all required permits or authorizations. Such approval does not authorize an applicant to connect the small residential rooftop energy system to the local utility provider’s electricity grid. The applicant is responsible for obtaining such approval or permission from the local utility provider.

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Section 2. This ordinance shall be in force and take effect thirty (30) days after its final adoption.

PASSED FOR PUBLICATION this 29th day of September, 2015, by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers Chase, Terrazas, Comstock, Posner, Noroyan; Vice Mayor Mathews; Mayor Lane.

NOES: None.

ABSENT: None.

DISQUALIFIED: None.

APPROVED: ss/Don Lane, Mayor

ATTEST: ss/Bren Lehr, City Clerk Administrator

PASSED FOR FINAL ADOPTION this      day of      , 2015, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

DISQUALIFIED:

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk Administrator

This is to certify that the above and foregoing document is the original of Ordinance No. 2015-12 and that it has been published or posted in accordance with the Charter of the City of Santa Cruz

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk Administrator