

ORDINANCE NO.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE  
CITY OF LONG BEACH AMENDING THE LONG BEACH  
MUNICIPAL CODE BY AMENDING SUBSECTIONS  
18.06.010.A AND 18.06.020.A; AND BY ADDING CHAPTER  
18.77, RELATING TO AN EXPEDITED PERMITTING  
PROCESS AND FEES FOR SMALL ROOFTOP SOLAR  
ENERGY SYSTEMS

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;

WHEREAS, Subsection (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; and

WHEREAS, Section 66015 of the California Government Code provides  
that permit fees for rooftop solar energy systems shall not exceed the estimated  
reasonable cost of providing the service for which the fee is charged, not to exceed those  
amounts set forth in Section 66015, unless the City Council makes and adopts certain  
findings related to said fees.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long Beach ordains as  
follows:

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OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY  
CHARLES PARKIN, City Attorney  
333 West Ocean Boulevard, 11th Floor  
Long Beach, CA 90802-4664

1           Section 1.    Subsection 18.06.010.A of the Long Beach Municipal Code is  
2 amended by adding a paragraph to read as follows:

3           In addition to the above, rooftop solar energy projects regulated in  
4 accordance with Government Code Section 66015 shall pay a fee as  
5 established by resolution of the City Council, but in no event shall pay an  
6 amount greater than that authorized by Government Code Section 66015.

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8           Section 2.    Subsection 18.06.020.A of the Long Beach Municipal Code is  
9 amended by adding a paragraph to read as follows:

10          In addition to the above, rooftop solar energy projects regulated in  
11 accordance with Government Code Section 66015 shall pay a fee as  
12 established by resolution of the City Council, but in no event shall pay an  
13 amount greater than that authorized by Government Code Section 66015.

14  
15          Section 3.    Chapter 18.77 is added to the Long Beach Municipal Code to  
16 read as follows:

17  
18                           CHAPTER 18.77

19                   EXPEDITED PERMITTING PROCESS FOR SMALL RESIDENTIAL ROOFTOP  
20                   SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

21  
22          18.77.010 – General.

23           A.       Purpose. The purpose of this Chapter is to promote and  
24 encourage the installation and use of small residential rooftop solar energy  
25 systems by limiting obstacles to their use and minimizing the permitting  
26 costs of such systems. Consistent with Subdivision (a) of Section 65850.5  
27 of the California Government Code, this Chapter creates an expedited  
28 permitting process for small residential rooftop solar energy systems.

1 B. Permits required. Small residential rooftop solar energy  
2 systems shall not be installed or used without first having obtained a permit  
3 as required by Section 18.04.010.

4 C. Submittal documents. Submittal documents shall be  
5 governed by Chapter 18.05, except as provided in Section 18.77.030.

6 D. Fee. Fees for small residential rooftop solar energy systems  
7 shall be governed by Subsections 18.06.010.A or 18.06.020.A in  
8 accordance with Section 66015 of the California Government Code.

9 E. Inspection. Inspections shall be governed by Chapter 18.07,  
10 except as provided in Section 18.77.040.

11 F. Effective date. This Chapter shall apply to projects for small  
12 residential rooftop solar energy systems submitted on or after September  
13 30, 2015.

14 18.77.020 – Definitions.

15 Unless otherwise expressly stated, the following words and terms  
16 shall, for the purpose of this Chapter, have the meanings shown in this  
17 Section. Where the words or terms are not defined in this Section, Chapter  
18 18.02 shall apply.

19 "Electronic submittal" means the utilization of one or more of the  
20 following:

- 21 - 1. E-mail;  
22 2. Internet; or  
23 3. Facsimile.

24 "Small residential rooftop solar energy system" means all of the  
25 following:

- 26 1. A solar energy system that is no larger than 10 kilowatts  
27 alternating current nameplate rating or 30 kilowatts thermal;  
28 2. A solar energy system that conforms to all applicable fire,

1 structural, electrical, and other building codes as adopted or amended in  
2 Chapters 18.40 thru 18.48 and Paragraph (iii) of Subdivision (c) of Section  
3 714 of the California Civil Code;

4 3. A solar energy system that is installed on a single or two-  
5 family dwelling; and

6 4. A solar panel or module array that does not exceed the  
7 maximum legal building height as defined by Title 21 of the Long Beach  
8 Municipal Code;

9 "Solar energy system" has the same meaning as set forth in  
10 Paragraphs (1) and (2) of Subdivision (a) of Section 801.5 of the California  
11 Civil Code.

12 18.77.030 – Permit application and submittal.

13 A. Application for permit. An application for a permit shall be  
14 governed by Section 18.04.030.

15 B. Submittal. Application for a permit and supporting documents  
16 may be submitted to the Building Official in person, by mail, or by electronic  
17 submittal together with all required fees.

18 C. Electronic signature. The Building Official is authorized to  
19 accept an electronic signature on all forms, applications, and other  
20 documents in lieu of a wet signature by an applicant.

21 D. Action on application. An application for a permit and  
22 supporting documents that satisfies the information requirements in the  
23 checklist and standard plan, as determined by the Building Official, shall be  
24 deemed complete.

25 Upon confirmation by the Building Official of the application for a  
26 permit and supporting documents being complete and meeting the  
27 requirements of the checklist and standard plan, and consistent with this  
28 Chapter, the Building Official shall administratively approve the application

1 for a permit and supporting documents and issue the required permit.

2 Upon receipt of an incomplete application for a permit or supporting  
3 documents, the Building Official shall issue a written correction notice  
4 detailing all deficiencies in the application for a permit or supporting  
5 documents and any additional information required to be eligible for  
6 expedited permitting in this Chapter.

7 E. Validity of permit. The validity of permit shall be governed by  
8 Section 18.04.050. Such permit does not authorize an applicant to connect  
9 the small residential rooftop solar energy system to the local utility  
10 provider's electricity grid. The applicant is responsible for obtaining such  
11 approval or permission from the local utility provider.

12 18.77.040 – Inspection.

13 A. Number of inspections. Notwithstanding Chapter 18.07 to the  
14 contrary, small residential rooftop solar energy systems eligible for  
15 expedited permitting in this Chapter shall only be required to have one  
16 inspection by the Building Official and/or Fire Code Official. If a small  
17 residential rooftop solar energy system fails inspection, a subsequent  
18 inspection by the Building Official and/or Fire Code Official is authorized  
19 and shall conform to the requirements of Chapter 18.07.

20 B. Consolidated inspection. A consolidated inspection by the  
21 Building Official and Fire Code Official may be performed at their  
22 discretion.

23 18.74.050 – Permitting documentation.

24 A. Checklist and standard plan. The Building Official is hereby  
25 authorized and directed to develop and adopt a checklist and standard plan  
26 of all requirements with which small residential rooftop solar energy  
27 systems shall comply to be eligible for expedited permitting in this Chapter.  
28 The checklist and standard plan shall substantially conform, as deemed

1 necessary and appropriate by the Building Official, to the checklists and  
2 standard plans contained in the most current version of the California Solar  
3 Permitting Guidebook as adopted by the Governor's Office of Planning and  
4 Research ("Guidebook"). The Building Official is authorized to modify the  
5 checklist and standard plan found in the Guidebook due to unique  
6 climactic, geological, seismological, or topographical conditions.

7 B. Other documents. The Building Official shall prepare,  
8 maintain, and update, as deemed necessary and appropriate, in  
9 cooperation with other City departments and stakeholders, informational  
10 bulletins, training manuals and educational materials to assist in the  
11 implementation of this chapter.

12 C. Publically accessible. The Building Official shall publish the  
13 checklist, standard plan, and other documents on a publically accessible  
14 internet website, where possible, or other publically accessible location.  
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16 Section 4. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this ordinance by  
17 the City Council and cause it to be posted in three (3) conspicuous places in the City of  
18 Long Beach, and it shall take effect on September 30, 2015 or the thirty-first (31st) day  
19 after it is approved by the Mayor, whichever comes first.

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I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance was adopted by the City Council of  
the City of Long Beach at its meeting of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ by the  
following vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers:

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Noes: Councilmembers:

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Absent: Councilmembers:

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City Clerk