



Date: November 15, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Council

From: Councilwoman Cindy Allen, Second District

Subject: Request Update on Solar Installation Process and Options to Streamline it for Residents and Small Businesses

R-33

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Request the City Manager to work with the Development Services Department to prepare a report with presentation on the City's solar installation, permitting, and inspection process and timelines and report back to City Council within 90 days. The report shall include options for how to streamline the process.

DISCUSSION:

Increasing local solar adoption in Long Beach, particularly by increasing the amount of building rooftops that have solar photovoltaic generation systems installed and operational, is a key goal in creating a resilient local energy sector and building a more sustainable electrical grid. This goal is explained nicely in the City's approved Climate Action and Adaptation Plan goal BE-2 "Increase Use of Solar Power."¹

With the new formation of an Office of Climate Action in the City Manager's Office, this is the right moment to step up the coordination of all necessary City departments alongside community and institutional partners such as GRID Alternatives, local solar installers, battery and component providers and Southern California Edison.

There are many technological and other tools available to streamline the installation of solar equipment while maintaining the highest levels of safety. Increased communication with the industry, education for the public as well as permitting adjustments can work together to increase solar installations in the City. Industry feedback is an important part of this effort, for example, some local installers have reported delays in the inspection process for installations, so working with local industry to identify and address issues as they arise will continue to be key going forward.

¹ https://longbeach.gov/globalassets/lbds/media-library/documents/planning/lb-cap/adopted-lb-cap_-aug-2022
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There are many benefits to individuals and the entire community by increasing solar installations in Long Beach. These benefits include preparing for increasing extreme heat days and decreasing costs to provide air conditioning during those events, reducing stress on the grid caused by increased adoption of electric vehicles and household appliances, reducing local building energy and transportation energy emissions, and the workforce opportunities available in installing solar projects throughout Long Beach.

As we make solar installation, permitting, and inspection more approachable and accessible for Long Beach small businesses and residents especially, we will see significant positive impacts. For more information on the importance of increasing solar installation and utilization, please see the Long Beach Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, linked in the footnote on the first page.

This item has been reviewed by Budget Manager Grace H. Yoon on October 24, 2022.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The recommendation requests the City Manager to work with the Development Services Department to prepare a report with presentation on the City's solar installation, permitting, and inspection process and timelines. The requested action is anticipated to require a moderate level of staff hours beyond the budgeted scope of duties and have a minimal impact on meeting other City Council priorities. There is no local job impact associated with the recommendation.