

Memorandum

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Allison Eddins , Senior planner
DATE: January 28, 2025
SUBJECT: Public Hearing: Text amendment to Sections 101.2 and 107.67 of the Shoreview Municipal Code related to Solar Arrays
ITEM NUMBER: 7.D
SECTION: NEW BUSINESS

REQUESTED MOTION

To recommend the city council approve Ordinance No. 1049, and ordinance summary for publication, for the amendment to Sections 101.2 and 107.67 of the Shoreview Municipal Code in order to create a definition for *ground mounted solar array* and standards for ground mounted solar arrays in the R1 - Detached Residential zoning district.

INTRODUCTION

As solar energy systems have become more efficient and less costly, Shoreview is anticipating an increasing interest from property owners. Roof mounted solar systems are already popular and are currently regulated with building and electrical permits. Certain buildings, however, are not suitable for roof mounted solar systems due to factors like roof condition, excessive shade from nearby trees or buildings, roof orientation or complex roof design. For situations like this, ground mounted solar is a viable alternative. Due to the potential size of a ground mounted solar array (some can be up to 10 feet in height), city staff is proposing a text amendment that would regulate the placement of this type of energy system similar to an accessory building.

The proposed ordinance would establish a definition for ground mounted solar arrays and would restrict the installation of ground mounted solar arrays in front yards of non-riparian lots in the R1 zoning district without a variance. City staff used the [Minnesota Solar Model Ordinance](#) from the Great Plains Institute as a guide for crafting the proposed text amendment.

DISCUSSION

Proposed Text Amendments

Section 101.2 Definitions

Ground mounted solar array means a solar energy system mounted on a support system that rests or is attached to the ground. Ground mounted systems must be accessory to the principle use.

Section 107.67 Detached Residential District (R1) - (proposed text is red and underlined and text proposed for removal is ~~stricken~~)

(e) Required Conditions. In addition to the conditions of section 107-65 (d), the following conditions apply:

(8) No ground mounted solar arrays shall be located in the front yard of any lot, except for a riparian lot which shall comply with the provisions of section 103-96.

~~(9)~~(8) Buildings housing non-domestic animals: 100 feet from all property lines except as permitted by the city's licensing provisions.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff is recommending that the planning commission hold the required public hearing and recommend that the city council adopt Ordinance No. 1049, and ordinance summary for publication, amending Sections 101.2 and 107.67 of the Shoreview Municipal Code in order to create a definition for *ground mounted solar array* and standards for ground mounted solar arrays in the R1 - Detached Residential zoning district.

ATTACHMENTS

[Ordinance Summary](#)

[Ordinance 1049](#)