



Date: January 28, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Planning Commission  
Michelle Ramirez, Community Development Director

By: Oscar Martinez, Planning Manager | [OMartinez@TorranceCA.gov](mailto:OMartinez@TorranceCA.gov)

Subject: Planning Commission and Community Development – Conduct Public Hearing, Determine California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Exemption, and Adopt an **ORDINANCE** Amending the Torrance Municipal Code Related to Solar Energy Systems and Expedited Permitting Process for Electric Vehicle Equipment (EVSE). Expenditure: None.

## RECOMMENDATION

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Recommendation of the Planning Commission and Community Development Director that City Council:

1. Conduct a public hearing for consideration of proposed amendments to the Torrance Municipal Code pertaining to solar energy systems and expedited permitting process for Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) Citywide and consider any testimony during the hearing; and
2. Determine the project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(3) and 15061(b)(3); and
3. Adopt an **ORDINANCE** amending the Torrance Municipal Code Section 92.2 entitled “Uses Generally” of Chapter 2, Article 2, Division 9 by adding Section 12 entitled “Solar Energy Systems” and adding Section 13 entitled “Expedited Permitting Process for Electric Vehicle Charging Equipment”; and
4. Approve an Ordinance Summary for publication.

## FUNDING

None required.

## DISCUSSION

Since the 1990s, the State of California has adopted a number of policies to address Climate Change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The State has also passed a variety of legislation over the past 20 years to encourage the development of renewable energy sources, and most recently passed the California Solar Mandate that requires most new single-family homes, multi-family buildings, and commercial buildings to include solar panels which can be mounted to the roof, ground, carports, etc. In 2019, the City of Torrance became a SolSmart Gold level City for efforts undertaken to remove barriers and soft costs to rooftop solar panel installations.

Staff proposes amendments to the Torrance Municipal Code to add definitions and requirements for solar energy systems in residential and non-residential land uses. The proposed amendments will add a dedicated section specifically for these systems. In order to make recommended amendments, staff researched the cities of El Monte, Irvine, Rancho Palos Verdes, San Gabriel, Santa Monica, and the County of Ventura for standards related to solar energy systems.

In addition, the amendments will add standards and requirements for Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) in order to comply with the State of California's adopted Assembly Bill 1236 (AB 1236) and Assembly Bill 970 (AB 970), which requires local agencies to adopt an ordinance that creates an expedited, streamlined permitting process for electric vehicle charging stations. For guidance on the recommended amendments, staff used the GoBiz EV Charging Guidebook that is published by the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development.

### Solar Energy Systems

The proposed amendments will provide standards and definitions for roof-mounted solar energy systems and ground-mounted solar energy systems. Roof-mounted solar energy systems are typically mounted to a roof of a structure. As such, height and setback requirements are required to be in compliance with the standards of the underlying zone. Screening requirements are included to maintain aesthetics of the main structure. Staff notes that these requirements do not apply to the solar collectors but to apply to support equipment such as plumbing, water tanks, or conduit along the exterior of a building.

Ground-mounted energy systems, as defined, are structures that are mounted to the ground and not roof-mounted. These types of structures are typically designed as carports or canopies and have become more common in commercial parking lots. These also include solar panels directly installed to the ground with mounts or brackets. The proposed amendments include requirements for height and setbacks of the underlying zone, as well as standards to not allow reduction of required parking.

### Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE)

In 2015, Assembly Bill 1236 (AB 1236) was adopted and required all California cities and counties to develop an expedited streamlined permitting process for vehicle charger installations. Per AB 1236, EVSE projects are not subject to a CUP process, regardless if it is a primary use or accessory use of a site, or vehicle weight classification (light-, medium- or heavy-duty), unless there is substantial evidence of a specific adverse impact to public health and safety. In 2021, Assembly Bill 970 (AB 970) further clarified EVSE project timelines based on the number of proposed chargers and that the number of required parking spaces shall be reduced by the amount necessary to accommodate the equipment.

In addition to the required timelines for review, the proposed amendments provide standards and requirements for electric vehicle chargers and related equipment. They include minimum street setbacks, minimum setbacks to residential uses if the project is located on a commercial or manufacturing zone. The amendments also include a process to add amenities in parking lots, such as additional bicycle parking, additional landscaping, should there be a reduction in the total number of parking spaces. Staff notes that this is not intended to reduce parking requirements when a change in use is proposed at a location that does not meet the requirements of the new use.

### Planning Commission Recommendation

On December 4, 2024, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing regarding the proposed amendments to the Torrance Municipal Code. During the hearing, Planning Commissioners raised concerns regarding screening requirements for solar panels and EVSE, specifications of the charging equipment, terminology on equipment for EVSE, and typographical errors in the draft ordinance. Staff explained that the screening requirements are an effort to maintain a level aesthetic control and that the photovoltaic panels are not subject to the requirements, only supporting equipment and attachments were subject to those requirements. In regards to the specifications of the equipment, staff provided clarification that the equipment needs to meet certain ratings in order to comply with the electrical code. The Planning Commission voted 5-2 (Borgialli and Yeh) to forward the draft ordinance to City Council.

Based on the comments received, staff updated the ordinance to address some of the comments. The draft ordinance has been updated by addressing the typographical errors raised, updated the term for “building official” to “Building Official” to be consistent with other parts of the code, and removed references to mechanical equipment from the EVSE sections to avoid confusion. Lastly, staff added language to the draft ordinance to prevent reduction of parking requirements when a change in use is proposed at an existing location that requires additional parking.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS**

This item is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(3) and 15061(b)(3).

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Ordinance
2. Ordinance Summary
3. Past Planning Commission Staff Reports
4. Proof of Publication

**ORDINANCE NO.****AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING CHAPTER 2 OF DIVISION 9 BY ADDING A NEW SECTION 92.2.12, AMENDING CHAPTER 2 OF DIVISION 9 BY ADDING A NEW SECTION 92.2.13, PERTAINING TO SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS AND EXPEDITED PERMITTING PROCESS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE SUPPLY EQUIPMENT (EVSE) CITYWIDE.**

**WHEREAS**, the Torrance Municipal Code currently does not expressly permit ground mounted solar energy systems in the City of Torrance; and

**WHEREAS**, the regulation solar energy systems will further the goals of the City of Torrance General Plan Land Use Objectives to promote compatible land use patterns and high quality, attractive, residential neighborhoods; and

**WHEREAS**, solar energy systems further the goals of the City of Torrance Strategic Plan as Torrance is committed to increasing the adoption of solar energy systems within the City; and

**WHEREAS**, on October 8, 2015, the State of California adopted Assembly Bill 1236 (AB 1236), which requires local agencies to adopt an ordinance that creates an expedited, streamlined permitting process for electric vehicle charging stations; and

**WHEREAS**, an expedited, streamlined permitting process for electric vehicle charging stations facilitates infrastructure for charging of electric vehicles and supports the City's carbon reduction goals;

**WHEREAS**, an expedited, streamlined permitting process for electric vehicle charging stations supports the State's (or City's) carbon reduction goals by fast-tracking charging infrastructure installations that the public needs to observe physically in place to motivate further investment in EVs; and

**WHEREAS**, prior to the adoption of this Ordinance, the City of Torrance processed electrical vehicle charging station permits pursuant to procedures implemented by the Community Development Department; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the city of Torrance has held publicly advertised hearings on the matter; and

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE DOES HEAREBY ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

**SECTION 1**

That Section 92.2.12 of Chapter 2 of Division 9 is added to the Torrance Municipal Code to read in its entirety as follows:

"SECTION 92.2.12 SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

a) PURPOSE

1) The purpose of the solar energy system standards is to encourage investment in solar energy systems on all parcels in the City, both residential and nonresidential, while providing

guidelines for the installation of those systems that are consistent with the architectural and building standards of the City. All solar energy systems shall comply with all applicable provisions of the City of Torrance Codes and the standards of this chapter.

#### b) DEFINITIONS

- 1) "Solar energy system" has the same meaning as set forth in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) of Section [801.5](#) of the California Civil Code.
- 2) Roof-mounted solar energy system. A solar energy system that is structurally mounted to the roof of a structure.
- 3) Ground-mounted Energy Systems. A solar energy system that is structurally mounted to the ground and is not roof-mounted. A solar carport or canopy shall be considered a ground-mounted solar energy system.

#### c) STANDARDS FOR ROOF-MOUNTED SOLAR ENERGY COLLECTORS

Roof-mounted solar energy collectors shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the following requirements:

- 1) Roof-mounted solar energy collectors shall comply with the height and setback requirements in the zoning district where such property is located.
- 2) All solar energy system appurtenances such as, but not limited to, plumbing, water tanks, and support equipment shall be screened to the maximum extent possible without compromising the effectiveness of the solar collectors and shall be painted a color similar to the color of the surface upon which they are mounted. If panels are used as screening, they shall contain a finish and color consistent with the building's exterior walls. Solar collectors are exempt from the screening and color provisions of this subsection; solar inverter boxes and A/C disconnect boxes are exempt from the color provision of this subsection.

#### d) STANDARDS FOR GROUND-MOUNTED SOLAR ENERGY COLLECTORS

Ground-mounted solar energy collectors shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the following requirements:

- 1) Location. Ground-mounted solar energy collectors are permitted in all zoning districts, provided that such installation is in compliance with any setback requirements in the zoning district where such property is located.
- 2) Height. The maximum height of a ground-mounted solar energy collector system shall comply with the height requirements in the zoning district where such property is located.
- 3) Parking. Solar carports and canopy energy systems shall not result in a net loss of any required parking.

#### e) PERMITTING

- 1) Roof-Mounted Energy Systems. Roof-Mounted energy systems that comply with the height and setback requirements of the zoning district where such property is located shall be reviewed and approved through the City's Building Permit process.

- 2) Ground – Mounted Energy Systems. Ground mounted systems less than three feet above grade shall be permitted by the of the Community Development Director through the Administrative Planning Permit approval process. Ground mounted energy systems exceeding three feet in height shall be reviewed and approved based on the standards of the zoning district where such property is located.

f) EXCEPTION

Notwithstanding anything set forth herein, the regulations set forth in this article shall not preclude the establishment of solar energy systems proposed in accordance with state or federal law.”

**SECTION 2**

That Section 92.2.13 of Chapter 2 of Division 9 is added to the Torrance Municipal Code to read in its entirety as follows:

**“SECTION 92.2.13 EXPEDITED PERMITTING PROCESS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING EQUIPMENT**

a) Purpose

The intent and purpose of this article is to adopt an expedited, streamlined permitting process for electric vehicle charging stations that complies with Government Code Section 6580.71, to achieve timely and cost-effective installations. This article is designed to encourage the use of electric vehicles by removing what the State Legislature considers to be unreasonable barriers, thus minimizing costs to property owners and the city, and expanding the ability of property owners to install electric vehicle charging systems and electric vehicle charging spaces. This article allows the City to achieve these goals while protecting the public health and safety.

b) Definitions.

For purposes of this chapter, the following words and phrases shall have the following meanings:

- 1) Approved, Deemed, (for the purposes of this Article) means the Building and Safety Division determined each item within the application contained all requested and relevant information pursuant to the review procedures set forth in this Article and the application is prepared for permit issuance.
- 2) Complete, Deemed, (for the purposes of this Article) means an applicant has submitted all items listed on the Application Checklist used upon the date the application is received, including all required plans and full payment of all required fees, and the Building and Safety Division has determined each item contains all requested and relevant information pursuant to the review procedures set forth in this Article. The specific review period begins with either the initial or each resubmission of an application.
- 3) "Electric vehicle charging station" or "charging station" means any level of electric vehicle supply equipment station that is designed and built in compliance with Article 625 of the California Electrical Code, as it reads on the effective date of this article and delivers electricity from a source outside an electric vehicle into a plug-in electric vehicle.
  - I. Level 1 (L1) equipment provides charging through a 120-volt (V) alternating current (AC) plug, is standard on vehicles, can be portable and does not require the installation of charging equipment. L1 charging generally takes eight (8) to 12

hours to completely charge a fully depleted battery. L1 charging is typically used in residential settings.

- II. Level 2 (L2) equipment provides charging through a 240-V AC plug and requires installation of charging equipment. L2 charging equipment is compatible with all electric vehicles and plug-in electric hybrid vehicles. L2 charging generally takes four (4) to six (6) hours to completely charge a fully depleted battery. L2 charging is commonly found in residential settings, parking areas, places of employment and commercial settings.
  - III. Level 3 (L3) or direct current fast charging (DCFC) equipment is not compatible with all vehicles, and the charge itself is not accepted by all vehicles. L3 charging can provide half-a-charge in approximately 20 minutes. They are typically used in commercial settings, and providers often charge a fee.
- 4) "Electric vehicle (EV) capable space" means a vehicle space which is provided with a branch circuit, any necessary raceways, both underground and/or surface mounted, to accommodate EV charging, terminating in a receptacle or a charger.
  - 5) "Feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the specific adverse impact" includes, but is not limited to, any cost-effective method, condition or mitigation imposed by the City on another similarly situated application in a prior successful application for a similar permit.
  - 6) "Specific, adverse impact" means a significant, quantifiable, direct, and unavoidable impact, based on objective, identified, and written public health or safety standards, policies, or conditions as they existed on the date the application was deemed complete.
  - 7) "Electronic submittal" means the utilization of one or more of the following:
    - I. Electronic mail or email.
    - II. Facsimile.
    - III. The internet.
  - 8) "Administrative Planning Permit" means an approval from the city's planning department, as allowed in the Torrance Municipal Code, by verifying the proposed use, structure and/or equipment complies with the city's land use requirements.

#### c) Applicability

This article applies to the permitting of all electric vehicle charging stations in the city. Electric vehicle charging stations legally established or permitted prior to the effective date of this article are not subject to its requirements unless physical modifications or alterations are undertaken that materially change the size, type, or components of an electric vehicle charging station in such a way as to require new permitting. Routine operation and maintenance or like for like replacements with no structural alterations shall not require a permit.

#### d) Technical review

- 1) In the technical review of a charging station permit application, consistent with Government Code Section 65850.7, the Building Official shall not condition the

approval for any such permit on the approval of such system by an association, as that term is defined by Civil Code Section 4080.

- 2) Prior to submitting an application for processing, the applicant shall verify that the installation of an electric vehicle charging station will not have specific, adverse impact to public health and safety and building occupants. Verification by the applicant includes but is not limited to: electrical system capacity and loads; electrical system wiring, bonding and overcurrent protection; building infrastructure affected by charging station equipment and associated conduits; areas of charging station equipment and vehicle parking.
  - 3) Anchorage of either floor-mounted or wall-mounted electric vehicle charging stations shall meet the requirements of the California Building or Residential Code as applicable per occupancy, and the provisions of the manufacturer's installation instructions. Mounting of charging stations shall not adversely affect building elements.
  - 4) CAL Green Standards. When the requirements of this Article differ from those of the California Green Building Standards Code, the stricter of the two shall apply.
- e) Development Standards
- 1) Landscaping. Any displaced landscaping must be restored or replaced and follow the applicable landscaping standards of the zoning district or overlay.
  - 2) Setback. Charging Stations within manufacturing zoning districts, commercial zoning districts or overlays shall be set back at least 10 feet from a street frontage, and 10 feet from any property line that is adjacent to a residential use or district. When possible, the equipment must be located either away from public view, within landscaped areas, or use innovative camouflaging techniques for equipment.
  - 3) Charging Stations pedestals within commercial, manufacturing, or multifamily shall be designed a manner to protect the visual character of the city through careful design, siting, landscaping and innovative camouflaging techniques for electrical charging station equipment. Charging Stations are encouraged to be embedded or co-locate with other features such as functional parking lot lighting, bollards, information signs, planter lighting, etc.
  - 4) Charging stations shall be designed to minimize potential damage by accidents, vandalism, and to be safe for use in inclement weather.
  - 5) Charging Stations shall be a minimum of 24" clear from the face of a curb, parking curb, or wheel stop.
  - 6) Cords shall be retractable or have a place to hang the connector and cord sufficiently above grade. Any cords connecting the charger to a vehicle shall be configured so that it does not cross a driveway, sidewalk, passenger unloading, or create a trip/fall hazard.

- 7) Enclosure of Equipment. Equipment must be enclosed with all equipment and conduit shall be screened on all sides with solid material architecturally compatible with the main structure.
- 8) Existing parking lots. Shall comply with EV charging space requirements if the entire parking lot is being reconstructed based on the total number of parking spaces. If only a portion of the parking lot is being reconstructed, the EV charging space requirements shall be based only on the number of spaces being reconstructed.
- 9) Conversion of existing parking area to charging spaces. If a portion or an existing parking area is proposed to convert existing spaces to charging spaces, (or accessible charging spaces), a reduction of required parking may be permissible if the applicant cannot place the supplemental equipment elsewhere on the property due to site specific constraints. The equipment may be placed within the parking area, however, the applicant shall select a mixture of on-menu mitigation measures that are available to offset the reduction of existing parking spaces. This is not intended to reduce required parking for a proposed change in use that increases parking demand.

On-Menu Reduction of Parking Spaces	
Mitigation Measure	Ratios
Short-term Bicycle parking spaces	4 Short-term Bicycle spaces: 1 Parking space
Long-term Bicycle parking spaces	2 Short-term Bicycle spaces: 1 Parking space
Landscape Planters	150 sq. ft. of Landscape: 1 Parking space
Open Space (i.e. park, picnic area, botanic garden, play area, etc.)	120 sq. ft. of Open Space: 1 Parking space
Motorcycle Parking	Motorcycle parking may substitute for up to five percent of the required parking spaces. Each motorcycle space must be at least four feet wide and seven feet deep, and can accommodate two-wheeled motorized vehicles, including scooters, mopeds, and similar vehicles.

On-menu mitigation measures can be added, changed, altered, or removed at the discretion of the Community Development Director. Other mitigation measures not identified, can be reviewed and determined if the mitigation measure is permissible and the reduction value by the Community Development Director.

- 10) Other Development Standards. For all other development standards not specified in this Section, the development standards of the underlying zoning district shall apply.
- f) Duties of Building and Safety Division and Building Official
- 1) The Building Official shall implement an expedited, streamlined permitting process and adopt a checklist of all requirements which electric vehicle charging stations shall comply with in order to be eligible for expedited review.

- 2) Electric vehicle charging stations shall be eligible for expedited review as provided in this chapter.
  - 3) All documents required for submission of an expedited electric vehicle charging station system shall be made available on the city's publicly accessible website.
  - 4) Electronic submittal of the required permit application and documents via email, the city's website, or facsimile shall be made available to all electric vehicle charging station permit applicants.
  - 5) The Building and Safety Division shall adopt a standard plan and checklist of all requirements with which electric vehicle charging stations shall comply to be eligible for expedited review.
  - 6) The electric vehicle charging station permit process, standard plans, and checklist shall substantially conform to the recommendations for expedited permitting, including the checklist and standard contained in the most current version of the "Plug-in *Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Permitting Checklist*" of the *Zero-Emission Vehicles in California: Community Readiness Guidebook* published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.
  - 7) All fees prescribed for the permitting of electrical vehicle charging stations shall comply with Government Code Section 17556.
  - 8) Appeals. Decisions of the Building Official may be appealed to the City Council.
- g) Expedited review and inspection requirements
- 1) For an application for electric vehicle charging stations that meets the requirements of the approved checklist and standard plan, the Building and Safety Division shall review an application for completeness within five (5) business days ((for review of 1 – 25 EV Chargers) and ten (10) business days (for review of 26 or more charging stations). Once an application is deemed complete, the Building and Safety Division will review the application and issue a building permit or other non-discretionary permit within 20 business days (for review of 1 – 25 EV Chargers) and 40 business days (for review of 26 or more charging stations), as shown in the following chart:

Review Times		
# of Charging Stations Under Review	Business Days to be deemed "Complete"	Business Days to be deemed "Approved"
1 - 25	5	20
26 or more	10	40

The Building and Safety Division shall issue a building permit or other non-discretionary permit within three (3) business days following the receipt of an application be deemed approved. The expedited, streamlined permitting process and checklist refers to the

recommendations contained in the most current version of the "Plug-In Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Permitting Checklist" of the *Zero-Emission Vehicles in California: Community Readiness Guidebook* as published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research. The checklist adopted by the city shall be published on the city's website. The Building Official may require the applicant to apply for an electric vehicle charging station use permit only if the official finds, based on substantial evidence, the electric vehicle charging station could have a specific, adverse impact upon the public health and safety. Such decisions may be appealed to the planning commission by filing a written appeal pursuant to Article 5, Chapter 1, Division 1 of this Code, commencing at 11.5.1.

- 2) Review of the application for a permit for an electric vehicle charging station shall be limited to the Building Official's review of local, state and federal building health and safety requirements. If the Building Official determines that the permit application is incomplete, he or she shall issue a written correction notice to the applicant, detailing all deficiencies in the application and any additional information required to be eligible for expedited permit issuance.
- 3) If a planning administrative action is required pursuant to subsection (h) of this section, the Building Official may deny the application if the Building Official makes written findings based upon substantive evidence in the record that the proposed installation would have a specific, adverse impact upon public health or safety and there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the specific, adverse impact. Such written findings shall include the basis for the rejection of the potential feasible alternative for preventing adverse impact. Such decisions may be appealed to the planning commission as provided in this chapter.
- 4) Any condition imposed on an application shall be designed to mitigate the specific, any potential adverse impact upon the health or safety at the lowest possible cost. The city shall use its best efforts to ensure the selected method, condition, or mitigation to meet the intent of AB 1236, AB 970, AB 1100 and any other applicable laws.
- 5) If an application for an electric vehicle charging station is deemed incomplete, a written correction notice detailing all deficiencies in the application and any additional information or documentation required to be eligible for expedited permitting shall be sent to the applicant within the applicable review times identified in subsection (g) of this article.
- 6) The Building Official shall allow for electronic submittal of permit applications covered by this article and associated supporting documentation. In accepting such permit applications, the Building Official shall also accept electronic signatures on all forms, applications, and other documentation in lieu of a wet signature by any applicant.
- 7) A permit application that satisfies the information requirements in the City's adopted checklist shall be deemed complete and be promptly processed. Upon confirmation by the Building Official that the permit application and supporting documents meets the requirements of the city's adopted checklist, and is consistent with all applicable laws and health and safety standards, the Building Official shall approve the application and issue all necessary permits. Such approval does not authorize an applicant to energize or utilize the electric vehicle charging station until it passes final inspection by the City.
- 8) Only one inspection shall be required, and it shall be performed by the Building and Safety Division for electric vehicle charging stations eligible for expedited review.

- 9) The inspection shall be done in a timely manner and should combine inspections of multiple trades if feasible. An inspection shall be scheduled within two business days of a request.
- 10) If an electric vehicle charging station fails inspection, a subsequent inspection is authorized but need not conform to the requirements of this chapter.

h) Electric Vehicle Charging Station Administrative Permit and Appeals

- 1) If the Building Official determines, based on substantial evidence, that the electric vehicle charging station could have a specific, adverse impact upon the public health or safety, the Building Official shall make written findings to support this determination and shall require the applicant to apply for an administrative planning permit.
- 2) If the Building Official requires an administrative planning permit, the Community Development Director shall approve an application for an administrative planning permit to install an electric vehicle charging station, provided that the Community Development Director is able to make the findings set forth in Torrance Municipal Code Section 95.1.6.
- 3) Appeals. Decisions of the Community Development Director may be appealed to the Planning Commission pursuant to the provisions of Torrance Municipal Code Section 92.30.11. The decision of the Planning Commission may be appealed to the City Council pursuant to the provisions of Article 5, Chapter 1, Division 1 of this Code, commencing at Section 11.5.1.

i) Electric vehicle charging station installation requirements

- 1) Electric vehicle charging station equipment shall meet the requirements of the California Electrical Code, the Society of Automotive Engineers, the National Electrical Manufacturers Association, and accredited testing laboratories such as Underwriters Laboratories, and rules of the Public Utilities Commission or a Municipal Electric Utility Company regarding safety and reliability.
- 2) Installation of electric vehicle charging stations and associated wiring, bonding, disconnecting means and overcurrent protective devices shall meet the requirements of Article 625 and all applicable provisions of the California Electrical Code.
- 3) Installation of electric vehicle charging stations shall be incorporated into the load calculations of all new or existing electrical services and shall meet the requirements of the California Electrical Code. Electric vehicle charging equipment shall be considered a continuous load.

j) Administrative Planning Permit Review

- 1) An Administrative Planning Permit shall be required if, based on substantial evidence, a finding is made that the charging station would have a specific, adverse impact upon the public health, safety and general welfare.

- 2) Any conditions on a Planning Administrative Approval shall be solely imposed in order to mitigate the specific, adverse impact upon the public health or safety and shall do so at the lowest cost possible.
- 3) New and proposed electric charging stations shall be subject to the applicable City of Torrance residential and non-residential development standards, and design guidelines.
- 4) New and proposed electric charging stations shall be designed in a manner to protect the visual character of the city through careful design, siting, landscaping and innovative camouflaging techniques for electrical charging station equipment.”

### **SECTION 3**

Any provisions of the Torrance Municipal Code or its appendices, or any other ordinances of the City inconsistent with this ordinance to the extent of the inconsistencies and no further, are repealed.

### **SECTION 4**

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this Ordinance is for any reason deemed or held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision will not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The City Council of the City of Torrance hereby declares that it would have adopted this Ordinance and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, phrases or other portions might subsequently be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

### **SECTION 5**

Any person violating any of the provisions of this Ordinance will be guilty of an infraction, and upon conviction will be subject to a fine as provided for in Section 36900 of the California Government Code.

**SECTION 6**

This Ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days after the date of its adoption. Within fifteen (15) days following adoption, this Ordinance or a summary of this ordinance if authorized by the City Council, will be published at least once in the Daily Breeze, a newspaper of general circulation, published and circulated in the City of Torrance.

**INTRODUCED** and **APPROVED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

**ADOPTED** and **PASSED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

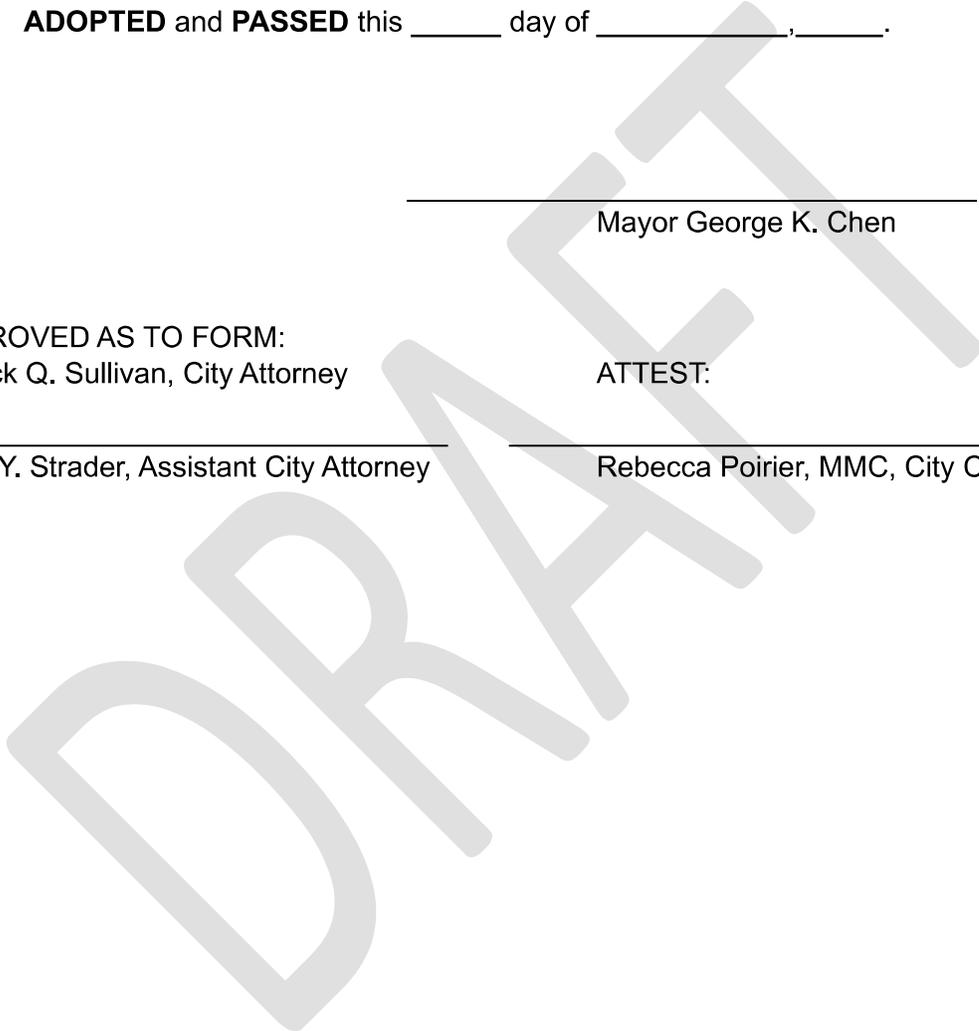
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor George K. Chen

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
Patrick Q. Sullivan, City Attorney

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tatia Y. Strader, Assistant City Attorney

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rebecca Poirier, MMC, City Clerk



**ORDINANCE SUMMARY**

On \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ the City Council of the City of Torrance adopted Ordinance No. \_\_\_\_\_, which adopts amendments to the Torrance Municipal Code (Division 9, Planning and Land Use Code) pertaining to Solar Energy Systems and expedited permitting process for Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE).

\*\*\*\*\*City Clerk to add a paragraph stating that copies of the Ordinance are available at the City Clerk's Office and stating the names of the City Council members that voted in favor and those that voted against.\*\*\*\*\*

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 8D**

**DATE:** November 20, 2024  
**TO:** Members of the Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Oscar Martinez, Planning Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Land Use Study, LUS24-00003

Consideration of proposed amendments to the Torrance Municipal Code pertaining to solar energy systems and expedited permitting process for Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) Citywide. This item is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(3) and 15061(b)(3).

**RECOMMENDATION**

Provided are two options the Planning Commission may choose to direct staff:

- A. Forward the draft Ordinance amending the Torrance Municipal Code, as presented, to the City Council for consideration;
- B. Modify or add to the draft Ordinance amending the Torrance Municipal Code, as directed, and forward to the City Council for consideration; or
- C. Refer staff to obtain additional information and return the item back at a later date.

The Community Development Director recommends the Planning Commission choose Option A and direct staff to forward the draft Ordinance to the City Council for consideration.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Staff proposes amendments to the Torrance Municipal Code to add definitions and requirements for solar energy systems in residential and non-residential land uses. The proposed amendments will add a dedicated section specifically for these systems.

In addition, a new section will add standards and requirements for Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) in order to comply with the State of California's adopted Assembly Bill 1236 (AB 1236), which requires local agencies to adopt an ordinance that creates an expedited, streamlined permitting process for electric vehicle charging stations.

**DISCUSSION***Solar Energy Systems*

The proposed amendments will provide standards and definitions for roof-mounted solar energy systems and ground-mounted solar energy systems. Requirements for screening, maximum height and ensuring effectiveness of the ordinance for solar energy while minimizing any adverse impact on adjacent neighbors.

*Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE)*

The proposed amendments provide standards and requirements for electric vehicle chargers and the related equipment. As there are no standards in place, staff is limited on requiring proper screening for the equipment. The proposed amendments also include a process to add amenities in parking lots should there be a reduction in the total number of parking spaces. Per State law, EVSE may reduce the number of parking spaces without the need to be replaced.

The proposed amendments include timelines for review and approval of EVSE in line with the State's requirements.

**DRAFT CODE AMENDMENTS**

For review attached is a draft Ordinance that contains the recommended amendments to Torrance Municipal Code (TMC) Sections. The proposed ordinance would add TMC92.2.12 related to solar energy systems, adds TMC92.2.13 related to Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE).

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Draft Ordinance

**STAFF CONTACT**

Oscar Martinez, Planning Manager  
OMartinez@TorranceCA.gov

**ITEM 8D**  
**ATTACHMENT 1**  
**DRAFT ORDINANCE**

**ORDINANCE NO.****AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING CHAPTER 2 OF DIVISION 9 BY ADDING A NEW SECTION 92.2.12, AMENDING CHAPTER 2 OF DIVISION 9 BY ADDING A NEW SECTION 92.2.13, PERTAINING TO SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS AND EXPEDITED PERMITTING PROCESS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE SUPPLY EQUIPMENT (EVSE) CITYWIDE.**

**WHEREAS**, the Torrance Municipal Code currently does not expressly permit ground mounted solar energy systems in the City of Torrance; and

**WHEREAS**, the regulation solar energy systems will further the goals of the City of Torrance General Plan Land Use Objectives to promote compatible land use patterns and high quality, attractive, residential neighborhoods; and

**WHEREAS**, solar energy systems further the goals of the City of Torrance Strategic Plan as Torrance is committed to increasing the adoption of solar energy systems within the City; and

**WHEREAS**, on October 8, 2015, the State of California adopted Assembly Bill 1236 (AB 1236), which requires local agencies to adopt an ordinance that creates an expedited, streamlined permitting process for electric vehicle charging stations; and

**WHEREAS**, an expedited, streamlined permitting process for electric vehicle charging stations facilitates convenient charging of electric vehicles and helps reduce the City's reliance on environmentally damaging fossil fuels; and

**WHEREAS**, prior to the adoption of this Ordinance, the City of Torrance processed electrical vehicle charging station permits pursuant to procedures implemented by the Community Development Department; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the city of Torrance has held publicly advertised hearings on the matter; and

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE DOES HEAREBY ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

**SECTION 1**

That Section 92.2.12 of Chapter 2 of Division 9 is added to the Torrance Municipal Code to read in its entirety as follows:

“SECTION 92.2.12 SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

a) PURPOSE

1) The purpose of the solar energy system standards is to encourage investment in solar energy systems on all parcels in the City, both residential and nonresidential, while providing guidelines for the installation of those systems that are consistent with the architectural and building standards of the City. All solar energy systems shall comply with all applicable provisions of the City of Torrance Codes and the standards of this chapter.

b) DEFINITIONS

- 1) "Solar energy system" has the same meaning as set forth in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) of Section [801.5](#) of the California Civil Code.
- 2) Roof-mounted solar energy system. A solar energy system that is structurally mounted to the roof of a structure.
- 3) Ground-mounted Energy Systems. A solar energy system that is structurally mounted to the ground and is not roof-mounted. A solar carport or canopy shall be considered a ground-mounted solar energy system.

c) STANDARDS FOR ROOF-MOUNTED SOLAR ENERGY COLLECTORS

Roof-mounted solar energy collectors shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the following requirements:

- 1) Roof-mounted solar energy collectors shall comply with the height and setback requirements in the zoning district where such property is located.
- 2) All solar energy system appurtenances such as, but not limited to, plumbing, water tanks, and support equipment shall be screened to the maximum extent possible without compromising the effectiveness of the solar collectors and shall be painted a color similar to the color of the surface upon which they are mounted. If panels are used as screening, they shall contain a finish and color consistent with the building's exterior walls. Solar collectors are exempt from the screening and color provisions of this subsection; solar inverter boxes and A/C disconnect boxes are exempt from the color provision of this subsection.

d) STANDARDS FOR GROUND-MOUNTED SOLAR ENERGY COLLECTORS

Ground-mounted solar energy collectors shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the following requirements:

- 1) Location. Ground-mounted solar energy collectors are permitted in all zoning districts, provided that such installation is in compliance with any setback requirements in the zoning district where such property is located.
- 2) Height. The maximum height of a ground-mounted solar energy collector system shall comply with the height requirements in the zoning district where such property is located.
- 3) Parking. Solar carports and canopy energy systems shall not result in a net loss of any required parking.

e) PERMITTING

- 1) Roof-Mounted Energy Systems. Roof-Mounted energy systems that comply with the height and setback requirements of the zoning district where such property is located shall be reviewed and approved through the City's Building Permit process.
- 2) Ground – Mounted Energy Systems. Ground mounted systems less than three feet above grade shall be permitted by the of the Community Development Director through the Planning Administrative Approval process. Ground mounted energy systems exceeding three feet in height shall be reviewed and approved based on the standards of the zoning district where such property is located.

f) EXCEPTION

Notwithstanding anything set forth herein, the regulations set forth in this Chapter shall not preclude the establishment of solar energy systems proposed in accordance with state or federal law.”

## **SECTION 2**

That Section 92.2.13 of Chapter 2 of Division 9 is added to the Torrance Municipal Code to read in its entirety as follows:

### **“SECTION 92.2.13 EXPEDITED PERMITTING PROCESS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING EQUIPMENT**

#### **a) Purpose**

The intent and purpose of this chapter is to adopt an expedited, streamlined permitting process for electric vehicle charging stations that complies with Government Code Section 6580.71, to achieve timely and cost-effective installations. This chapter is designed to encourage the use of electric vehicles by removing what the State Legislature considers to be unreasonable barriers, thus minimizing costs to property owners and the city, and expanding the ability of property owners to install electric vehicle charging systems and electric vehicle charging spaces. This chapter allows the City to achieve these goals while protecting the public health and safety.

#### **b) Definitions.**

For purposes of this chapter, the following words and phrases shall have the following meanings:

- 1) Approved, Deemed, (for the purposes of this Article) means the Building and Safety Division determined each item within the application contained all requested and relevant information pursuant to the review procedures set forth in this Article and the application is prepared for permit issuance.
- 2) Complete, Deemed, (for the purposes of this Article) means an applicant has submitted all items listed on the Application Checklist used upon the date the application is received, including all required plans and full payment of all required fees, and the Building and Safety Division has determined each item contains all requested and relevant information pursuant to the review procedures set forth in this Article. The specific review period begins with either the initial or each resubmission of an application.
- 3) "Electric vehicle charging station" or "charging station" means any level of electric vehicle supply equipment station that is designed and built in compliance with Article 625 of the California Electrical Code, as it reads on the effective date of this article and delivers electricity from a source outside an electric vehicle into a plug-in electric vehicle.
  - I. Level 1 (L1) equipment provides charging through a 120-volt (V) alternating current (AC) plug, is standard on vehicles, can be portable and does not require the installation of charging equipment. L1 charging generally takes eight (8) to 12 hours to completely charge a fully depleted battery. L1 charging is typically used in residential settings.
  - II. Level 2 (L2) equipment provides charging through a 240-V AC plug and requires installation of charging equipment. L2 charging equipment is compatible with all electric vehicles and plug-in electric hybrid vehicles. L2 charging generally takes four (4) to six (6) hours to completely charge a fully depleted battery. L2 charging

is commonly found in residential settings, parking areas, places of employment and commercial settings.

III. Level 3 (L3) or direct current fast charging (DCFC) equipment is not compatible with all vehicles, and the charge itself is not accepted by all vehicles. L3 charging can provide half-a-charge in approximately 20 minutes. They are typically used in commercial settings, and providers often charge a fee.

- 4) "Electric vehicle (EV) capable space" means a vehicle space which is provided with a branch circuit, any necessary raceways, both underground and/or surface mounted, to accommodate EV charging, terminating in a receptacle or a charger.
- 5) "Feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the specific adverse impact" includes, but is not limited to, any cost-effective method, condition or mitigation imposed by the City on another similarly situated application in a prior successful application for a similar permit.
- 6) "Specific, adverse impact" means a significant, quantifiable, direct, and unavoidable impact, based on objective, identified, and written public health or safety standards, policies, or conditions as they existed on the date the application was deemed complete.
- 7) "Electronic submittal" means the utilization of one or more of the following:
  - I. Electronic mail or email.
  - II. Facsimile.
  - III. The internet.
- 8) "Minor Use Permit" means an approval from the city's planning department, as allowed in the Torrance Municipal Code, by verifying the proposed use, structure and/or equipment complies with the city's land use requirements.

#### c) Applicability

This chapter applies to the permitting of all electric vehicle charging stations in the city. Electric vehicle charging stations legally established or permitted prior to the effective date of this chapter are not subject to its requirements unless physical modifications or alterations are undertaken that materially change the size, type, or components of an electric vehicle charging station in such a way as to require new permitting. Routine operation and maintenance or like for like replacements with no structural alterations shall not require a permit.

#### d) Technical review

- 1) In the technical review of a charging station permit application, consistent with Government Code Section 65850.7, the building official shall not condition the approval for any such permit on the approval of such system by an association, as that term is defined by Civil Code Section 4080.
- 2) Prior to submitting an application for processing, the applicant shall verify that the installation of an electric vehicle charging station will not have specific, adverse impact to public health and safety and building occupants. Verification by the applicant includes but is not limited to: electrical system capacity and loads; electrical system wiring, bonding and overcurrent protection; building infrastructure affected by charging

station equipment and associated conduits; areas of charging station equipment and vehicle parking.

- 3) Anchorage of either floor-mounted or wall-mounted electric vehicle charging stations shall meet the requirements of the California Building or Residential Code as applicable per occupancy, and the provisions of the manufacturer's installation instructions. Mounting of charging stations shall not adversely affect building elements.
- 4) CAL Green Standards. When the requirements of this Article differ from those of the California Green Building Standards Code, the stricter of the two shall apply.

e) Development Standards

- 1) Landscaping. Any displaced landscaping must be restored or replaced and follow the applicable landscaping standards of the zoning district or overlay.
- 2) Setback. Charging Stations within the commercial zoning districts or overlays shall be set back at least 10 feet from front and rear property lines.
- 3) Charging Stations pedestals within commercial, manufacturing, or multifamily shall be designed a manner to protect the visual character of the city through careful design, siting, landscaping and innovative camouflaging techniques for electrical charging station equipment. Charging Stations are encouraged to be embedded or co-locate with other features such as functional parking lot lighting, bollards, information signs, planter lighting, etc.
- 4) Charging stations shall be designed to minimize potential damage by accidents, vandalism, and to be safe for use in inclement weather.
- 5) Charging Stations shall be a minimum of 24" clear from the face of a curb, parking curb, or wheel stop.
- 6) Cords shall be retractable or have a place to hang the connector and cord sufficiently above grade. Any cords connecting the charger to a vehicle shall be configured so that it does not cross a driveway, sidewalk, passenger unloading, or create a trip/fall hazard.
- 7) Location of Mechanical Equipment. Mechanical equipment must not be located within the street side landscape areas, abutting public-right-of-way, or near the driveways leading into the nonresidential property. The mechanical equipment must be located either away from public view, within landscaped areas, or use innovative camouflaging techniques for mechanical equipment.
- 8) Enclosure of Mechanical Equipment. Mechanical equipment must be enclosed with all equipment and duct work shall be screened on all sides with solid material architecturally compatible with the main structure.
- 9) Existing parking lots. Shall comply with EV charging space requirements if the entire parking lot is being reconstructed based on the total number of parking spaces. If only a portion of the parking lot is being reconstructed, the EV charging space requirements shall be based only on the number of spaces being reconstructed.

- 10) Conversion of existing parking area to charging spaces. If a portion or an existing parking area is proposed to convert existing spaces to charging spaces, (or accessible charging spaces), a reduction of required parking may be permissible if the applicant cannot place the supplemental mechanical equipment elsewhere on the property due to site specific constraints. The mechanical equipment may be placed within the parking area, however, the applicant shall select a mixture of on-menu mitigation measures that are available to offset the reduction of existing parking spaces.

On-Menu Reduction of Parking Spaces	
Mitigation Measure	Ratios
Short-term Bicycle parking spaces	4 Short-term Bicycle spaces: 1 Parking space
Long-term Bicycle parking spaces	2 Short-term Bicycle spaces: 1 Parking space
Landscape Planters	150 Sq.ft of Landscape: 1 Parking space
Open Space (i.e. park, picnic area, botanic garden, play area, etc.)	120 Sq.ft of Open Space: 1 Parking space
Motorcycle Parking	Motorcycle parking may substitute for up to five percent of the required parking spaces. Each motorcycle space must be at least four feet wide and seven feet deep, and can accommodate two-wheeled motorized vehicles, including scooters, mopeds, and similar vehicles.
Car-Sharing, EV	Every one (1) electric vehicle car sharing parking space shall count towards two parking spaces, up to a total of five (5) percent of the total required parking spaces.

On-menu mitigation measures can be added, changed, altered, or removed at the discretion of the Community Development Director. Other mitigation measures not identified, can be reviewed and determined if the mitigation measure is permissible and the reduction value by the Community Development Director.

- 11) Other Development Standards. For all other development standards not specified in this Section, the development standards of the underlying zoning district shall apply.
- f) Duties of Building and Safety Division and Building Official
- 1) The building official shall implement an expedited, streamlined permitting process and adopt a checklist of all requirements which electric vehicle charging stations shall comply with in order to be eligible for expedited review.
  - 2) Electric vehicle charging stations shall be eligible for expedited review as provided in this chapter.
  - 3) All documents required for submission of an expedited electric vehicle charging station system shall be made available on the city's publicly accessible website.

- 4) Electronic submittal of the required permit application and documents via email, the city's website, or facsimile shall be made available to all electric vehicle charging station permit applicants.
  - 5) The building and safety division shall adopt a standard plan and checklist of all requirements with which electric vehicle charging stations shall comply to be eligible for expedited review.
  - 6) The electric vehicle charging station permit process, standard plans, and checklist shall substantially conform to the recommendations for expedited permitting, including the checklist and standard contained in the most current version of the "Plug-in *Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Permitting Checklist*" of the *Zero-Emission Vehicles in California: Community Readiness Guidebook* published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.
  - 7) All fees prescribed for the permitting of electrical vehicle charging stations shall comply with Government Code Section 17556.
  - 8) Appeals. Decisions of the building official may be appealed to the City Council.
- g) Expedited review and inspection requirements
- 1) For an application for electric vehicle charging stations that meets the requirements of the approved checklist and standard plan, the building and safety division shall review an application for completeness within five (5) business days ((for review of 1 – 25 EV Chargers) and ten (10) business days (for review of 26 or more charging stations). Once an application is deemed complete, the building and safety division will review the application and issue a building permit or other non-discretionary permit within 20 business days (for review of 1 – 25 EV Chargers) and 40 business days (for review of 26 or more charging stations), as shown in the following chart:

Review Times		
# of Charging Stations Under Review	Business Days to be deemed "Complete"	Business Days to be deemed "Approved"
1 - 25	5	20
26 or more	10	40

The Building and Safety Division shall issue a building permit or other non-discretionary permit within three (3) business days following the receipt of an application be deemed approved. The expedited, streamlined permitting process and checklist refers to the recommendations contained in the most current version of the "Plug-In Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Permitting Checklist" of the *Zero-Emission Vehicles in California: Community Readiness Guidebook* as published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research. The checklist adopted by the city shall be published on the city's website. The building official may require the applicant to apply for an electric vehicle charging station use permit only if the official finds, based on substantial evidence, the electric vehicle charging station could have a specific, adverse impact upon the public health and safety.

Such decisions may be appealed to the planning commission by filing a written appeal pursuant to Chapter Article 5, Chapter 1, Division 1 of this Code, commencing at 11.5.1.

- 2) Review of the application for a permit for an electric vehicle charging station shall be limited to the building official's review of local, state and federal building health and safety requirements. If the building official determines that the permit application is incomplete, he or she shall issue a written correction notice to the applicant, detailing all deficiencies in the application and any additional information required to be eligible for expedited permit issuance.
- 3) If a minor use permit is required pursuant to subsection (h) of this section, the building official may deny the application if the building official makes written findings based upon substantive evidence in the record that the proposed installation would have a specific, adverse impact upon public health or safety and there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the specific, adverse impact. Such written findings shall include the basis for the rejection of the potential feasible alternative for preventing adverse impact. Such decisions may be appealed to the planning commission as provided in this chapter.
- 4) Any condition imposed on an application shall be designed to mitigate the specific, any potential adverse impact upon the health or safety at the lowest possible cost. The city shall use its best efforts to ensure the selected method, condition, or mitigation to meet the intent of AB 1236, AB 970, AB 1100 and any other applicable laws.
- 5) If an application for an electric vehicle charging station is deemed incomplete, a written correction notice detailing all deficiencies in the application and any additional information or documentation required to be eligible for expedited permitting shall be sent to the applicant within the applicable review times identified in subsection (g) of this section.
- 6) The building official shall allow for electronic submittal of permit applications covered by this chapter and associated supporting documentation. In accepting such permit applications, the building official shall also accept electronic signatures on all forms, applications, and other documentation in lieu of a wet signature by any applicant.
- 7) A permit application that satisfies the information requirements in the City's adopted checklist shall be deemed complete and be promptly processed. Upon confirmation by the building official that the permit application and supporting documents meets the requirements of the city's adopted checklist, and is consistent with all applicable laws and health and safety standards, the building official shall approve the application and issue all necessary permits. Such approval does not authorize an applicant to energize or utilize the electric vehicle charging station until it passes final inspection by the City.
- 8) Only one inspection shall be required, and it shall be performed by the building and safety division for electric vehicle charging stations eligible for expedited review.
- 9) The inspection shall be done in a timely manner and should combine inspections of multiple trades if feasible. An inspection shall be scheduled within two business days of a request.
- 10) If an electric vehicle charging station fails inspection, a subsequent inspection is authorized but need not conform to the requirements of this chapter.

#### h) Electric Vehicle Charging Station Use Permit and Appeals

- 1) If the building official determines, based on substantial evidence, that the electric vehicle charging station could have a specific, adverse impact upon the public health or safety, the building official shall make written findings to support this determination and shall require the applicant to apply for a minor use permit pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 5, Division 9.
- 2) If the building official requires a minor use permit, the Community Development Director shall approve an application for a minor use permit to install an electric vehicle charging station, provided that the Community Development Director is able to make the findings set forth in Torrance Municipal Code Section 95.1.6.
- 3) Appeals. Decisions of the Community Development Director may be appealed to the Planning Commission pursuant to the provisions of Torrance Municipal Code Section 92.30.11. The decision of the Planning Commission may be appealed to the City Council pursuant to the provisions of Article 5, Chapter 1, Division 1 of this Code, commencing at Section 11.5.1.

#### i) Electric vehicle charging station installation requirements

- 1) Electric vehicle charging station equipment shall meet the requirements of the California Electrical Code, the Society of Automotive Engineers, the National Electrical Manufacturers Association, and accredited testing laboratories such as Underwriters Laboratories, and rules of the Public Utilities Commission or a Municipal Electric Utility Company regarding safety and reliability.
- 2) Installation of electric vehicle charging stations and associated wiring, bonding, disconnecting means and overcurrent protective devices shall meet the requirements of Article 625 and all applicable provisions of the California Electrical Code.
- 3) Installation of electric vehicle charging stations shall be incorporated into the load calculations of all new or existing electrical services and shall meet the requirements of the California Electrical Code. Electric vehicle charging equipment shall be considered a continuous load.

#### j) Minor Use Permit Review

- 1) A Minor Modification Review shall be required if, based on substantial evidence, a finding is made that the charging station would have a specific, adverse impact upon the public health, safety and general welfare.
- 2) Any conditions on a Minor Use Permit approval shall be solely imposed in order to mitigate the specific, adverse impact upon the public health or safety and shall do so at the lowest cost possible.
- 3) New and proposed electric charging stations shall be subject to the applicable City of Torrance residential and non-residential development standards, and design guidelines.
- 4) New and proposed electric charging stations shall be designed in a manner to protect the visual character of the city through careful design, siting, landscaping and innovative camouflaging techniques for electrical charging station equipment.”

**SECTION 3**

Any provisions of the Torrance Municipal Code or its appendices, or any other ordinances of the City inconsistent with this ordinance to the extent of the inconsistencies and no further, are repealed.

**SECTION 4**

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this Ordinance is for any reason deemed or held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision will not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The City Council of the City of Torrance hereby declares that it would have adopted this Ordinance and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, phrases or other portions might subsequently be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

**SECTION 5**

Any person violating any of the provisions of this Ordinance will be guilty of an infraction, and upon conviction will be subject to a fine as provided for in Section 36900 of the California Government Code.

**SECTION 6**

This Ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days after the date of its adoption. Within fifteen (15) days following adoption, this Ordinance or a summary of this ordinance if authorized by the City Council, will be published at least once in the Daily Breeze, a newspaper of general circulation, published and circulated in the City of Torrance.

**INTRODUCED** and **APPROVED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

**ADOPTED** and **PASSED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor George K. Chen

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
Patrick Q. Sullivan, City Attorney

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tatia Y. Strader, Assistant City Attorney

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rebecca Poirier, MMC, City Clerk

Daily Breeze  
2615 Pacific Coast Highway #329  
Hermosa Beach, California 90254  
(310) 543-6635

**CITY OF TORRANCE  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE WILL CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2025, AT 6:30 PM IN THE LeROY J. JACKSON COUNCIL CHAMBER LOCATED AT 3031 TORRANCE BOULEVARD, TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, 90503, ON THE FOLLOWING MATTER:**

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE PERTAINING TO SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE SUPPLY EQUIPMENT:** Conduct a Public Hearing on Land Use Study 24-00003 regarding proposed amendments to the Torrance Municipal Code pertaining to solar energy systems and expedited permitting process for Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) Citywide and adopt ORDINANCE amending applicable Torrance Municipal Code. This item is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Guidelines Sections 15060(3) and 15061(b)(3).

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Manager's Office at (310) 618-5880. If you need a special hearing device to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk's office at (310) 618-2870. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. [28CFR35.102-35.104 ADA Title II]

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Members of the public may comment on the matter during a 7-day comment period that begins on January 20, 2025, and ends at 5:30 p.m. on January 27, 2025. Comments may be submitted via the OneMeeting Public Portal at <https://torranceca.primegov.com/public/portal?fromiframe=true>. All comments submitted before 5:30 p.m. on January 27, 2025, will be published for public review prior to the meeting. Comments received after 5:30 p.m., but prior to the adjournment of the meeting will be added to the record.

**MEETING BROADCAST**

Meetings are broadcast on CityCABLE Channel 3 (Spectrum) and Channel 31 (Frontier), and live stream on [TorranceCA.Gov](https://torranceca.gov), [Facebook@City of Torrance CA Government](https://www.facebook.com/CityofTorranceCA), and YouTube Channel [TorranceCityCABLE](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1t1t1t1t1t1t1t1t1t1t1t).

**PUBLIC RECORDS**

Members of the public may review the public record for any items on the meeting agenda by visiting the City Clerk's Office located at City Hall, 3031 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance, CA 90503, open 7:30am to 5:30pm, Monday through Thursday, open alternate Fridays. Members of the public may also submit a public records request for any items on the meeting agenda by contacting the City Clerk's Office at (310) 618-2870 or submitting an online request via the City webpage at [www.blf.ly/PublicRecordsCenter](http://www.blf.ly/PublicRecordsCenter).

**RESOLUTION NO. 88-19**

Any challenge in court to items listed on the meeting agenda may be limited to only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written comments delivered to the City Clerk's Office, prior to the public hearing and further, by the terms of Resolution No. 88-19, and may be limited to 90 days in which to commence such legal action pursuant to Section 1094.6 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

**CONTACT US**

For more information about this item, please contact the Planning Division of the Community Development Department at (310) 618-5990.

**REBECCA POIRIER  
CITY CLERK**

**Daily Breeze  
Published: 1/17/25**

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City of Torrance  
3031 Torrance Blvd  
Torrance, California 90503

**PROOF OF PUBLICATION  
(2015.5 C.C.P.)**

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
County of Los Angeles**

I am a citizen of the United States and a resident of the County aforesaid; I am over the age of eighteen years, and not party to or interested in the above-entitled matter. I am the principal clerk of the printer of Daily Breeze, a newspaper of general circulation, printed and published in the City of Torrance\*, County of Los Angeles, and which newspaper has been adjudged a newspaper of general circulation by the Superior Court of County of Los Angeles, State of California, under the date of June 15, 1945, Decree No. Pomo C-606. The notice, of which the annexed is a printed copy (set in type not smaller than nonpareil), has been published in each regular and entire issue of said newspaper and not in any supplement thereof on the following dates, to wit:

**01/17/2025**

I certify (or declare) under the penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated at Hermosa Beach, California

On this 17th day of January, 2025.



Signature

\*Daily Breeze circulation includes the following cities: Carson, Compton, Culver City, El Segundo, Gardena, Harbor City, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Inglewood, Lawndale, Lomita, Los Angeles, Long Beach, Manhattan Beach, Palos Verdes Peninsula, Palos Verdes, Rancho Palos Verdes, Rancho Palos Verdes Estates, Redondo Beach, San Pedro, Santa Monica, Torrance and Wilmington