



COMMITTEE REPORT

PRESENTED FOR COMMISSION MEETING DATE: 12/17/19

SUBMITTED BY: David Freedman

COMMITTEE NAME: Standing Committee on Solar and Green Building

SUBMITTED DATE: 12/10/19

COMMITTEE MEETING DATE: 12/03/19

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE: 01/07/20, 10 am

Committee Meeting Goals:

- Council Meeting agenda Items
 - Palm Springs Solar Zoning Ordinance and Administrative Regulations
 - New Building Codes, including 2019 Energy Code
 - Palm Springs Arena Project Report
- Climate Action Plan implementation
 - Urban heat island reduction
 - Commercial building GHG-free energy requirements
- Home energy audit program
- EV charger update

Summary:

Commissioners Freedman noted that the Solar Zoning Ordinance approved by the Commission at its September meeting was on the Council agenda for final adoption the following evening. Manager Tallarico and Glenn Mlaker of the Planning Services Department are working on Administrative Regulations requested by Council when they approved the Solar Zoning Ordinance on first reading. Concerns raised by a resident on glare from solar panels installed on hillside houses will be addressed via the Building & Safety Department information bulletin for solar PV installation.

At its December 19 meeting, Council will consider an ordinance adopting the 2019 state Building Standards Codes, effective January 1, 2020. The code package includes the 2019 Energy Code, which, among other things, will require solar energy systems on all new residential development three stories and under. Commissioner Freedman will prepare a public comment supporting the ordinance and noting that the Sustainability Commission is continuing to work on renewable energy and greenhouse gas reduction measures.

Manager Tallarico noted that Council was holding a special meeting on December 5 to discuss the Tribe's Project Report for its downtown arena. The staff report includes Manager Tallarico's recommendations on environmental mitigation on energy and water consumption, lighting, GHG emissions and solid waste, which reflects input from Commissioner Freedman. Commissioner Freedman made a public comment at the meeting supporting these environmental mitigation measures, which Council adopted.

Commissioner Flanagan provided background on using reflective street paving as an urban heat island reduction measure. While research from Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory suggested that this paving reduced heat from streets, Tucson reported that it caused glare for pedestrians. Further research on this measure will be suspended, pending additional research studies on its effectiveness.

Commissioner Flanagan also suggested an updated tree inventory, as shade tree planting is another urban heat island reduction measure. The City's Tree Inventory on the Office of Sustainability landing page dates from 2015-16, and many trees were lost since then in the drought. Program Coordinator DeGarmo noted that the dead trees identified in the inventory had been removed, with two trees planted for every tree removed. Manager Tallarico said he would prepare an RFP for an updated tree inventory.

Manager Tallarico reported that the Building & Safety Department does not have available statistics on the size of buildings in the City, which would assist in determining which size commercial buildings would be subject to the requirement to procure 100 percent carbon-free or renewable electricity. However, this information may be available from the City's GIS expert. Commissioner Freedman has drafted an ordinance with placeholders for the building sizes, which the Committee will review at its January 7 meeting. Presentation of the ordinance to the full Commission will occur at its January 21 meeting, following the January 13 meeting of the Board of Desert Community Energy (DCE), when the Board will set DCE's 2020 rates in advance of its April 2020 launch. This information is necessary to provide an estimate of the additional cost of DCE's carbon-free option above Southern California Edison (SCE) base rates for commercial buildings.

Manager Tallarico is continuing to work on the EV charger and home energy efficiency label rebate pilot programs. Discussions with SCE on EV charger locations are continuing. Manager Tallarico will consider issuing an RFP for a third party to manage the chargers. As an alternative, the City could contract directly with ChargePoint, which participates in a municipal cooperative buying program. Program Coordinator DeGarmo noted that ChargePoint is available in Canada and has charging stations along Interstate 5, so visitors from Canada and the Pacific Northwest may already have ChargePoint accounts for their EVs. Pending further discussion with SCE, Manager Tallarico will proceed with the installation of a Level 3 charging station at City Hall, which is covered by a grant from the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

Recommendation/Request:

Continuing working on energy-related GHG reduction measures to further goals in Climate Action Plan.

ACTION ITEMS REQUEST TO COMMISSION	Approve draft ordinance setting GHG-free energy requirements for commercial buildings once a proposal is ready.
ACTION ITEMS REQUEST TO OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY	Work with Planning Services Department on Solar Zoning Ordinance Administrative Regulations. Work with CVAG on launch of DCE in April 2020. Implement EV charger and home energy efficiency label rebate pilot programs.
POTENTIAL FISCAL IMPACT/REQUEST IF ANY:	The cost to the City for the EV charger program will be approximately \$200,000, in addition to the \$80,000 that will be covered by grants.