



February 26, 2021

**TO: SolSmart**

**RE: Advisory Determination of Use: Solar Photovoltaic Systems**

### **Purpose**

The City of Boca Raton (the “City”) wishes to encourage the use of solar photovoltaic (“PV”) systems. Solar PV systems are not specifically regulated in the Code of Ordinances, so this advisory determination is provided to ensure property owners, developers, contractors and other industry stakeholders how Zoning will determine compliance during the permit review process.

### **Background**

Through the Sustainability Action Plan, the City has committed to greenhouse gas reduction targets of 15 percent by 2025 in line with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). According to the City’s greenhouse gas inventory for 2018, 59 percent of the City’s greenhouse gas emissions relate to electricity use in commercial and residential districts. Electricity generated by solar PV systems has the potential to displace fossil fuel-based electricity. Over the last ten years, the cost of installing a solar PV system has decreased by 60 percent and the solar industry is a growing source of employment.

### **Determination**

Through working with advisors to the SolSmart program, the City is hereby clarifying that solar PV systems are considered mechanical equipment and are therefore allowable subject to the same requirements as other mechanical equipment, including but not limited to air conditioning units, electrical power generators and such similar equipment. Depending upon location, zoning district and other factors, such mechanical equipment (including solar PV) may be subject to additional design review by the Historic Preservation Board and/or the Community Appearance Board. This determination confirms to residents and property owners that such systems are allowed in all zoning districts while also complying with requirements outlined in the Florida Building Code, and the Florida Fire Prevention Code. Ground-mounted and building mounted solar PV systems are to be lawfully situated on the same property as the main building use, contingent upon issuance of the proper permit pursuant to Chapter 19, Code of Ordinances.

This determination will reduce administrative costs of solar PV installations and help advance solar energy in the City.

Brandon R. Schaad, AICP, LEED AP

Development Services, Director