



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota

Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Sq Dr NE
Blaine MN 55449

Legislation Text

File #: ORD 21-2474, **Version:** 3

Development Business - *Lori Johnson, City Planner*

Title

Second Reading

Granting a Code Amendment to the Industrial Zoning Districts (I-1, I-1A, I-2, I-2A) to Add Ground Mounted Solar as an Accessory Use with the Issuance of a Conditional Use Permit (Case File No. 21-0027/SLK)

Executive Summary

This is a request to allow ground mounted solar as an accessory use with a conditional use permit in all industrial zoning districts (I-1, I-1A, I-2, I-2A).

Schedule of Actions

Planning Commission Public Hearing	05/11/21
City Council (1 st Reading)	06/07/21
City Council (2 nd Reading)	06/21/21

Background

Staff report prepared by Shawn Kaye, Associate Planner

The City has been presented with an application by Medtronic that involves a ground mounted solar array for vacant land near their corporate headquarters. Currently, the zoning ordinance only allows free standing solar arrays in the PBD (Planned Business District) zoning district with a conditional use permit. The zoning ordinance does not support such use in the industrial zoning districts.

The City Council reviewed a possible code amendment and ground mounted solar array project for the Medtronic site on 82nd Lane NE at a workshop in March 2021. As a result of that workshop, the City Council directed staff to initiate code amendments to all industrial zoned districts that would allow ground mounted solar arrays as a conditional use in the industrial zoning districts (I-1, I-1A, I-2, I-2A).

As a part of the direction to initiate a code amendment, the City Council also requested information related to the number of industrial properties that may be able to construct a substantial solar array. The attached zoning map identifies a limited number of sites (approximately 12) that may accommodate a substantial solar array. The parcels included on the map have an industrial zoning, are at least 5 acres, and have the ability/area to develop a solar array of a minimum of 1 acre. Industrial parcels that are fully developed (had less than 1 acre available for a solar garden) have been removed from the map. One industrial-zoned property identified on the map is located adjacent to two townhome units and one single family home. This property is currently operating as a truck terminal by Old Dominion Freight (3701 85th Avenue). Although unlikely in this location, a solar array would have minimal impact on this I-2A (Heavy Industrial) zoned property. All other properties

identified on the map are not located adjacent to residentially zoned property.

The area proposed for the solar array is currently a vacant area that is part of the Medtronic campus and is zoned I-2A (Heavy Industrial). The Medtronic campus buildings are located in Mounds View, but the parking lot and vacant land proposed to be used for the solar array is in Blaine.

Additionally, the solar array must be an accessory use to a principal structure, which is stated in the code amendment. This means that a solar array cannot be the only use on a property as a principal building must be present.

The City is supporting the comprehensive plan, which states that the City will look at ways to support alternative energy sources.

Strategic Plan Relationship

Not Applicable.

Board/Commission Review

The Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve the code amendment. There were no comments at the public hearing.

Financial Impact

Not Applicable.

Public Outreach/Input

Notice of a public hearing were:

1. Published in Blaine/Spring Lake Park/Columbia Heights/Fridley Life.
2. Posted on the City's website.

Staff Recommendation

By motion, approve the ordinance.

Attachment List

Code Amendment

Potential Solar Properties

Unapproved Planning Commission Minutes 5/11/21

THE CITY OF BLAINE DOES ORDAIN : (Added portions are underscored and deleted portions are shown in overstrike.)

31.04 - Conditional Uses for I-1 (Light Industrial)
(n) Ground mounted solar as an accessory use.

31.14 - Conditional Uses for I1-A (Light Industrial)
(m) Ground mounted solar as an accessory use.

31.24 - Conditional Uses for I-2 (Heavy Industrial)
(x) Ground mounted solar as an accessory use.

31.34 - Conditional Uses for I-2A (Heavy Industrial)
(u) Ground mounted solar as an accessory use.

INTRODUCED and read in full this 7th day of June, 2021.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Blaine on this 21st day of June, 2021.