

Santa Cruz EV Charging Ordinance – July 15, 2020

The City of Santa Cruz is bringing forward an ordinance to expedite permits for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations throughout the city in accordance with Assembly Bill 1236. As part of the expedited process, all EV charging station permits would be reviewed ministerially, with no design review permit needed unless the building official makes findings that the application results in specific health or safety concerns. The state bill also requires the adoption of a checklist for items that must be included with permit application submittals for the application to be eligible for the expedited permit review process. A final requirement is that the City will accept all EV charging applications, including permit plans and technical materials, by electronic submittal. Applications that meet the requirements of the checklist may not be conditioned upon approval of a homeowners or other association.

The City has been following this expedited approach but had not formally adopted it into the Municipal Code. The ordinance will also clarify that charging stations Level 2 or higher can be counted towards meeting the requirement that roughly 6 percent of the total number of parking spaces in a development be served by EV charging stations.

These changes were presented to the Planning Commission at a special meeting on May 22, 2020. The Planning Commission voted to recommend that the City Council approve the ordinance. The amendments received a first reading by City Council on June 23, 2020, where Council voted unanimously to move the item forward for its second reading on August 11, 2020. At the second reading, City Council can approve the ordinance and authorize submittal of the changes to the California Coastal Commission for final approval.

Thank you for your interest in electric vehicles and EV charging policy. The City of Santa Cruz supports the use of low and zero emission vehicles and will continue to look for opportunities to improve access to charging stations in the city.

Provided by:

Matthew VanHua

Principal Planner – Advance Planning Division

City of Santa Cruz Planning and Community Development Department