



SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS



Solar energy systems are allowed in all zoning districts in the City of Brisbane subject to compliance with the development standards of the zoning district.

- ☀️ **Flush-mounted** rooftop solar systems are exempt from building height limits. To be considered flush-mounted, the panels may not extend more than twenty-four (24) inches above the roofline of the structure on which they are mounted, measured from the exterior roofing material to the highest point of the panel.
- ☀️ Non-flush mounted panels extending more than 24 inches above the roofline are subject to compliance with the building height limits of the zoning district in which the building is located.
- ☀️ If the system meets the development standards of the zoning district, then a **Building Permit** may be issued.
- ☀️ If a non-flush mounted system exceeds the maximum height limit of the zoning district, a **Height Exception Permit** is required from the Zoning Administrator prior to issuance of a building permit.
- ☀️ If a non-flush mounted system does not comply with other zoning district regulations such as setbacks, a **Conditional Use Permit** from the Planning Commission is required prior to issuance of a building permit.

Small rooftop solar energy systems installed on one or two-family dwellings may be eligible for streamlined application review and inspection. For more information, please visit the City's website: <http://www.brisbaneca.org/residential-rooftop-solar>.

Basic Submittal Requirements:

- Plot plan showing the location of the solar system on the structure or property in relation to the property lines.
- Architectural elevations demonstrating compliance with building height limits consistent with the City's standards
- Structural drawings and calculations stamped and signed by a California-licensed Civil or Structural Engineer.
- The type of roof covering and the number of roof coverings installed
- Type of roof framing, size of members and spacing
- Weight of panels, support locations and method of attachment
- Framing plan and details for any work necessary to strengthen the existing roof structure
- Site-specific structural calculations
- Documentation showing manufacturer of the rack system, maximum allowable weight the system can support, attachment method to the roof or ground and product evaluation information or structural design for the rack system

Brisbane Municipal Code Excerpts

BMC Section 17.32.060 Exceptions - Height Limit

C. Rooftop solar energy systems may exceed the maximum building height limit of the applicable zoning district in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Rooftop solar energy systems, including those for water heating as well as photovoltaic purposes, that do not extend more than twenty-four (24) inches above the roofline of the structure on which they are mounted, measured from the exterior roofing material to the highest point of the panel, are exempt from maximum building height limits in all zoning districts.
2. Rooftop solar energy systems that extend more than twenty-four (24) inches above the roofline of the structure on which they are mounted, measured from the exterior roofing material to the highest point of the panel, may exceed the height limit through approval of an administrative permit by the zoning administrator. If the zoning administrator determines that the granting of the permit would not result in a specific adverse impact upon the public health and safety, the zoning administrator shall give written notice of the intended approval to property owners and occupants on both sides of, to the rear of and directly across the street from the site on which the system is proposed to be located. The notice shall generally describe the nature, design and location of the proposed system and advise the recipients that they may submit written comments on the intended decision by a certain date, which shall be not less than twenty-one (21) days from the date of mailing the notice. The notice shall also advise the recipients that they have the right to appeal a decision of the zoning administrator to the planning commission. The zoning administrator shall send a copy of the final decision on the application to each person who has submitted written comments within the time prescribed in the notice.

BMC Section 17.32.190 - Solar energy systems.

To encourage the use of solar energy systems, the systems shall be permitted to the extent that they conform to the regulations for structures contained in this chapter. Solar energy systems to be installed on the roof of an existing building may exceed the height limit through approval of an administrative permit by the zoning administrator in accordance with the process established in [Section 17.32.060](#)(C). Where the systems would not conform to the regulations for the district within which they would be located and no exceptions to those regulations are applicable, they shall be treated as conditional uses, subject to obtaining a use permit, which shall be approved, provided the establishment and use of the system would pose no threat to the public health and safety. Reasonable restrictions or conditions may be imposed, provided they do not significantly increase the cost of the system or significantly decrease its efficiency.