

# CITY OF ALBANY



NEW YORK

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**MAYOR:** KATHY M. SHEEHAN

**COMMISSIONER:** CHRISTOPHER P. SPENCER

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## USDO USE INTERPRETATION 113020.001

**DATE:** NOVEMBER 30, 2020

**FROM:** CHRIS SPENCER

**ACTION:** NO ACTION REQUIRED

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### ROOFTOP SOLAR:

Rooftop solar energy equipment is permitted in all districts other than Historic Districts as an accessory use, provided that the panels do not extend more than 18 inches above the maximum building height permitted in the district, or 18 inches above the existing structure, whichever is less. Unoccupied roof structure for the housing of elevators, stairways, air conditioning apparatus, cooling towers, ventilating fans, skylights, or other similar equipment to operate and maintain the structure are also permitted as an allowable exception of encroachment of up to ten feet above the roof plane. In general, the USDO looks to screen or blend any rooftop mechanical equipment.

### ROOFTOP SOLAR / UNOCCUPIED STRUCTURE:

Where an unoccupied rooftop structure is designed to house or otherwise supporting solar panels, and is designed to be otherwise compatible with the overall design intent, and is considered an architectural feature as defined in the USDO, it shall be permitted to extend up to ten feet above the flat roof plane, provided that the solar is used to operate the building structure. Solar panels which are supported by such a structure shall be permitted to extend 18 inches above such a structure or architectural feature. Where solar panels are not integral to the operation of a structure or directly related to its energy load, such an unoccupied rooftop structure shall not be utilized for the support of solar panels.