



# STAFF REPORT

## CITY of YORBA LINDA

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### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**DATE:** AUGUST 27, 2025

**TO:** HONORABLE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

**FROM:** COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**BY:** ALEXIS GARCIA, ASSOCIATE PLANNER

**SUBJECT:** DESIGN REVIEW 2025-09 THONEY

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**APPLICANT:** **Shane Thoney**  
5525 Blue Ridge Drive  
Yorba Linda, California 92887

**CEQA STATUS:** Categorical Exemption (Class 3 - New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures)

**RELATED ITEMS:** None

**LOCATION:** 5525 Blue Ridge Drive

**REQUEST:** A request to construct a ground-mounted 56 panel solar photovoltaic system within the vacated LMAD easement area along the rear of the property, outside of required rear and side setback areas, on the property addressed as 5525 Blue Ridge Drive, located along the westerly portion of Blue Ridge Drive, within the RE (Residential Estate) zone.

### **PROJECT DATA**

**APN:** 329-111-19  
**General Plan:** Residential Medium Low  
**Zoning:** RE (Residential Estate)

Property Development Standards

	<u>Required</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Side Yard Setback (North)...	15 feet	56 feet 7 inches
Side Yard Setback (South)...	15 feet	54 feet
Rear Yard Setback . . . . .	25 feet	25 feet

\* Setbacks exist and will not change with project development.

**BACKGROUND**

The applicant is requesting review and approval of a Design Review application to construct a 56-panel, ground-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) system along the **western (rear)** slope of the subject property, within a vacated Landscape Maintenance Assessment District (LMAD) easement. The subject landscaped slope was fully vacated as part of Local Landscaping Zone L-1B in 1994, returning the area to the property owner for their private use and maintenance. The PV system is proposed to be rectangularly shaped, 63 feet and 9 inches (63'-9") long by 12 feet and 8 inches (12'-8") wide for a total of 808 square feet. Ground clearance is proposed to be between one and four feet, depending upon topographical conditions. As shown on the plans provided, the applicant is requesting to keep the structure outside of any required rear or side yard setback area, as well as the Fire Maintenance Easement located along the northern portion of the lot. Given the location of the PV system being within the vacated LMAD easement area, design review approval by the Planning Commission is required.

**DISCUSSION**

The subject property is approximately 1.25 acres in size with the rear one-third being characterized by a steep downward slope (approximately 42 percent) that is conducive for a ground-mounted PV system. Solar energy systems are generally governed by Section 18.10.110(F) of the YLZC, which requires ground-mounted systems to conform to setback requirements of the main structure and take efforts to minimize their appearance from public areas.

The property has a required rear yard setback of 25 feet as measured from the rear property line; staff has determined that the PV system is not located within that area as it is proposed to be 25 feet from the nearest corner of the arrays towards the **rear** property line. Furthermore, Section 18.10.090 of the YLZC defines the side yard setback interpretation for Residential Estate (RE) zones as 10% of the lot width which would be approximately 15 feet wide for this specific property. As proposed, the PV system will maintain setbacks of 56 feet and 7 inches from the **north (side)** property line and 54 feet from the **south (side)** property line. Lastly, the PV system is proposed to be approximately 300 feet from the **front** property line and is therefore well outside of the front setback. (Figure 1)

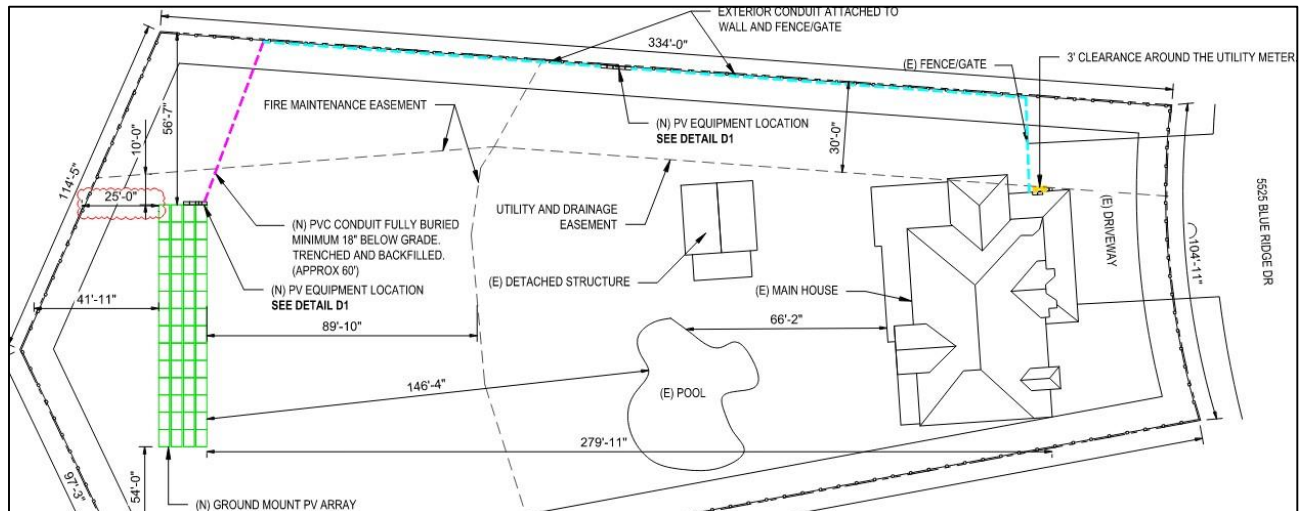


Figure 1

Public views of the proposed PV system are anticipated to be limited primarily due to the neighborhood context consisting of large (1-1.5 acre) lots with single-family homes and steep hillsides with no trails or other public amenities. Additionally, the existing fencing along the property boundary and presence of mature landscaping on downhill properties provides adequate screening when viewed from the west. With these considerations, staff believes the proposed PV system satisfies the locational and screening criteria prescribed by the YLMC, believes there would be no health and safety risks associated with this request, and is supportive of the project. As of this writing, no objections or concerns from surrounding property owners have been received.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Planning Commission approve, by minute motion, Design Review 2025-09 – Thoney, with conditions.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- 1) Plans
- 2) Locator Map
- 3) Design Review 2025-09 – Thoney Conditions of Approval