CITY OF CHICO
OFFICIAL PLANNING DIRECTOR
INTERPRETATION

(Section 19.02.020 Procedures for interpretation of the Chico Municipal Code)

Applicable Code Section: **Section 19.70.060.E - Design and development standards for off-street parking - Landscaping**

Interpretation: Off street parking area regulations for tree shading are designed to provide reasonable requirements to reduce heat loading and improve the amenity value of paved parking areas. Active solar arrays are assemblies of thermal panels or photovoltaic modules used to collect solar thermal energy for heating or other uses, or to generate electricity. Since the City's landscaping standards were developed, it has become clear that amenities such as active solar arrays can serve a shading function similar to landscaping while also enhancing the City's overall energy efficiency.

Requirements for off-street parking lot shading may therefore be fulfilled by installing active solar arrays. The area directly under an active solar array shall be counted toward the required area of parking lot shading normally provided by tree cover. No other live landscaping is required directly underneath an active solar array. All other development standards, including those for perimeter landscaping, overhead clearance, lighting, and parking area design, shall be met. Solar arrays over parking areas shall be subject to design review in conformance with Chapter 19.18 **Site Design and Architectural Review.**

This Official Interpretation is effective immediately and **will not** require an amendment to Title 19 Land Use and Development Regulations nor will it affect calculation of development fees.

Steve Peterson

Steve Peterson, Planning Services Director   Date: February 23, 2007

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      S:\C Stuart\Misc\OPDIs\OPDI 07-01 Solar Arrays Over Parking ver 2.wpd