ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PLACERVILLE AMENDING TITLE 4, CHAPTER 1 OF THE PLACERVILLE MUNICIPAL CODE BY ADDING SECTION 11 (4-1-11) TO IMPLEMENT STATE-MANDATED REMOTE VIRTUAL INSPECTION OPTIONS FOR QUALIFYING RESIDENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS AND CLEAN ENERGY PROJECTS PURSUANT TO ASSEMBLY BILL 1738 (ORDINANCE AMENDMENT ZOA 26-09)

WHEREAS, on September 18, 2026, the Governor of the State of California signed Assembly Bill 1738 (AB 1738) into law, adding Section 17970.9 to the California Health and Safety Code, which mandates that local building enforcement agencies provide an option for homeowners or licensed contractors to utilize remote virtual inspections for qualifying lower-risk residential construction and clean energy improvements; and

WHEREAS, the State of California has mandated full local compliance with the remote inspection framework no later than January 1, 2028; and

WHEREAS, the City of Placerville Development Services Department has successfully utilized virtual inspection workflows in the recent past and continues to successfully administer its Certificate of Lateral Compliance program using virtual verification methods; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to build upon this established local precedent and administrative infrastructure by formalizing a comprehensive Remote Virtual Inspection (RVI) framework to enhance municipal efficiency, accelerate clean energy installations, and satisfy the state mandate ahead of the statutory deadline; and

WHEREAS, on November 17, 2026, the Planning Commission of the City of Placerville held a duly noticed public hearing to consider Ordinance Amendment (ZOA) 26-09, evaluated the proposed additions to the Placerville Municipal Code, and voted to forward a recommendation of approval to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that this Ordinance is exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) ("Common Sense Exemption") because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the procedural and administrative updates herein will have a significant effect on the environment.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PLACERVILLE DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. **ENACTMENT.** Title 4, Chapter 1 of the Placerville Municipal Code is hereby amended by adding a new Section 11 (4-1-11) to read in its entirety as follows:

4-1-11: REMOTE VIRTUAL INSPECTIONS

(A) Purpose and Intent. The purpose of this Section is to implement the state-mandated remote inspection options required by California Health and Safety Code Section 17970.9 (Assembly Bill 1738). This framework provides an alternative, streamlined mechanism for evaluating and finalizing qualifying low-risk residential improvements using live video and digital media, thereby optimizing municipal resources, reducing municipal vehicle miles traveled, and accelerating clean energy goals.

(B) Option to Request. Any homeowner or licensed contractor performing authorized work under an active building permit on a one- or two-family dwelling may request that a required inspection be

performed via the City's Remote Virtual Inspection (RVI) framework, subject to the eligibility criteria and operational controls set forth in this Section.

(C) Eligible Scope of Work. Remote Virtual Inspections shall be limited to minor, lower-risk residential construction and clean energy improvements, including but not limited to:

1. Installation of heat pump water heaters and supporting electrical circuits.

2. Installation of heat pump space heating and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

3. Residential reroofing projects.

4. Residential solar photovoltaic (PV) systems (15 kW AC or less) and associated energy storage systems.

5. Installation or replacement of battery-operated smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

(D) Explicit Exclusions. The following construction activities are strictly excluded from the RVI framework and require standard, in-person field inspections:

1. New or upgraded main electrical service panels.

2. High-risk utility or structural expansions.

3. Multi-family residential buildings containing three (3) or more dwelling units.

4. All commercial or industrial properties.

(E) Administrative Authority and Inspector Discretion.

1. The Building Official shall maintain authority to determine the technological platforms, scheduling protocols, and digital media verification requirements utilized for the RVI program.

2. The field inspector retains absolute discretion during an RVI to halt the remote review and convert the evaluation into a standard, in-person field inspection if they determine that a full sensory, on-site evaluation is necessary to verify code compliance or protect public safety.

(F) Precedent and Existing Specialty Programs. The establishment of the RVI framework for residential structures under this Section shall not alter, impair, or supersede any pre-existing or concurrent virtual inspection protocols administered by the City, including the ongoing virtual verification process utilized for issuing a Certificate of Lateral Compliance.

(G) Enforcement Controls and Auditing.

1. Random Onsite Audits: The Building Official is authorized to establish an ongoing verification protocol, including conducting random, unannounced onsite audits of projects previously approved or finalized through an RVI.

2. Fraud and Misrepresentation: Any applicant, contractor, or homeowner found to have willfully misrepresented, hidden, or falsified construction work or site conditions during an RVI shall be subject to immediate removal from the RVI program, revocation of the underlying permit approval, and standard administrative citations under Title 1, Chapter 4A of this Code.

(H) Cost and Operational Equity. Remote Virtual Inspections shall be delivered to the applicant at no greater fee or cost, and with no greater processing delay, than a traditional in-person field inspection for an identical scope of work.

(I) Statutory Liability Protection. Pursuant to state law and California Government Code Sections 818.4 and 818.6, the City of Placerville, its officers, and its employees assume no additional liability by virtue of performing an inspection through electronic or virtual mediums. The issuance of an inspection sign-off via RVI does not constitute a guarantee that the construction is entirely free from defects.

SECTION 2. CEQA EXEMPTION. The City Council finds that this Ordinance is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the adoption of this water conservation ordinance may have a significant effect on the environment.

SECTION 3. SEVERABILITY. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance.

SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days after its adoption, and prior to the expiration of fifteen (15) days from the date of its passage, the City Clerk shall cause it to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the City.

The foregoing Ordinance was introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Placerville held on December 8, 2026, by Councilmember _____ who moved its introduction and waiver of first reading. The motion was seconded by Councilmember _____.

The Ordinance was read for the second time and adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Placerville held on January 12, 2027, by Councilmember _____ who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Councilmember _____**.**

The motion was passed by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

_____

Nicole Gotberg, Mayor

ATTEST:

_____

Regina O'Connell, City Clerk