



Meeting the Climate Challenge in Berkeley, CA

Kate Harrison, Berkeley City Council

Existing Climate Mandates

- ▶ 2006 Measure G
 - ▶ Advisory poll on reducing GHG emissions by 80% by 2050
- ▶ 2009 Climate Action Plan
 - ▶ Targets emissions at 33% below 2000 by 2020, 80% below 2000 by 2050
- ▶ 2014 Berkeley Energy Saving Ordinance mandating energy audits on property transfer with possible use of a portion of transfer tax
- ▶ 2012 Downtown Area Plan and 2016 Deep Green Building incentives
- ▶ 2018 Climate Emergency Declaration
- ▶ 2018 Fossil Free Resolution
 - ▶ Transitioning to 100% renewable municipal operations by 2030
 - ▶ Moving toward building and transportation electrification
 - ▶ Opposing rollback of climate actions at the federal level

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Current Situation

- ▶ Berkeley is **18% behind** its 2020 goal
- ▶ Catastrophic fires, unprecedented smoke, drought, heat, flooding dramatically underscore the need for immediate action
- ▶ **U.N.** IPCC report (2018) says that coping with climate change will require “far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society”
- ▶ Natural gas responsible for **27% of total Berkeley GHG** emissions and 73% of building sector GHGs
- ▶ Every new building with natural gas “locks in” significant GHGs for decades

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Past Attempts to Phase Out Gas

- ▶ Since 2016, the City Council, CEAC, and Energy Commission have attempted to phase out natural gas
 - ▶ “Reach codes” have proven infeasible because Title 24 hasn’t been updated to reflect electrification
 - ▶ Focus on efficiency crowds out efforts to reduce GHGs
- ▶ CPUC three-prong test hinders incentives for electric appliances
- ▶ A coalition of decarbonization advocates and experts commissioned a legal opinion confirming the City’s approach is statutorily allowed

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The Proposed Ordinance

- ▶ **Phases out** natural gas and *encourages* **all-electric design** in new buildings where it can be most feasibly and **cost-effectively** introduced
- ▶ **Not** intended for **renovations to existing buildings**, which we are approaching through incentives
- ▶ **Relies on the City's police power and authority to establish and enforce local Building Codes consistent with state building, health and safety codes**
- ▶ **Avoids the inevitable costs associated with decommissioning** new gas infrastructure
- ▶ Relates only to **infrastructure behind the meter**

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Findings of Necessity

Legal Findings of Necessity				
Climatic Impacts	Impacts from Geologic Events	Health & Safety Impacts	Economic Impacts	Policy Underpinnings
<p>CO₂ & CH₄ emissions leading to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sea level rise 2) Fires 3) Extreme heat 4) Drought 5) Flooding 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) USGS Hayward Fault 7.0 earthquake simulation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 450 major Bay Area fires (many from gas lines) b) Death c) Loss of residential & commercial building floor area equivalent to more than 52k single-family homes d) Property losses approaching \$30 billion 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Toxic air quality <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) indoor stove exhaust b) outdoor flue exhaust 2) Pipeline explosions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) RMI study: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) cost savings for new single-family³ - <i>no trenching + plumbing</i> 2) Energy consultant testimony before CEC + NRDC study: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) cost savings for new multi-family - <i>no trenching + plumbing</i> 3) Most cost effective during new construction vs. retrofit 4) Future state/federal regulation may lead to stranded utility-owned gas assets – with costs passed to ratepayers 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Measure G 2) CAP obligations 3) Climate Emergency Declaration obligations 4) Fossil Free Resolution 5) Prior Council, CEAC, Energy Commission policies

Outstanding Questions

- ▶ Regulatory pathway: stand-alone ordinance or paired with submission to California Building Standards Commission?
- ▶ Any limitations on building types or occupancies?
- ▶ Scope of public interest exemption?
- ▶ Implementation date?
- ▶ City staffing needs? Assistance to project sponsors?
- ▶ Approaches to existing buildings:
 - ▶ Prohibit natural gas appliances? What required from CEC?
 - ▶ Expand to capping gas fixtures for remodels/alterations/on-sale?

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Further Information

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