

Fwd: Reach Codes

Patrice Olds <polds@cityofsanmateo.org>

Mon 9/19/2022 12:35 PM

To: Andrea Chow <achow@cityofsanmateo.org>; Martin McTaggart <mmctaggart@cityofsanmateo.org>; Erin Fellers <efellers@cityofsanmateo.org>

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From: Gary Latshaw [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, September 19, 2022 12:10:48 PM

To: City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: Reach Codes

I have a more complete letter, with an attachment, attached to this email. My comments are:


I urge the City to adopt a Reach Code that severely restricts or eliminates the use of natural gas in new construction. I was on the Cupertino City Sustainability Commission when this subject was considered a few years ago. We unanimously recommend the reach codes to the City Council, which ratified our recommendation. I was surprised, as a commissioner, to receive the letter (attached) from PG&E supporting this decision.

Since these codes have gone into effect, the City of Cupertino has approved the fully electric designs for a major mixed-use development involving below-market-rate housing, normal housing, retail, and office space. Many other single-family dwellings have been constructed in compliance with the reach codes. The construction is currently on-going on Stevens Creek Blvd across from De Anza College.

There are savings associated with all-electric construction since there is no need for the utility hookups and piping of natural gas. The use of natural gas is now seen as the most dangerous climate pollutant because of the exceptionally strong global warming potential associated with the inevitable leaks of natural gas, which is primarily methane. If mankind stops emitting methane into the atmosphere, the gas will quickly (10 years) decline in concentration.

A recent Study done by the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, Department of Environmental Health Sciences, has found that, apart from the impact on climate, the use of natural gas has serious impact to indoor and outdoor air quality. Two key findings:

- *INDOOR: Gas appliances emit a wide range of air pollutants, such as carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NOx, including nitrogen dioxide (NO2)), particulate matter (PM), and formaldehyde, which have been linked to various acute and chronic health effects, including respiratory illness, cardiovascular disease, and premature death.*
- *OURDOOR: If all residential gas appliances were immediately replaced with clean electric alternatives, the reduction of outdoor NOX and PM2.5 would result in 354 fewer deaths, as well as 596 fewer cases of acute bronchitis and 304 fewer cases of chronic bronchitis annually in California (Table 3-1). This is equivalent to approximately \$3.5 billion in monetized health benefits over the course of one year.*

Thank you for your consideration of this analysis,
 Text, letter Description automatically generated

Gary Latshaw, Ph.D.

Former Cupertino Commissioner on the Sustainability Commission, and Staff Scientist at Securethefuture2100.org

--

Fight for Renewable Energies! Save the global ecology; create jobs; eliminate dependence on foreign oil; reduce military requirements

Gary Latshaw Ph.D.
[REDACTED]

To: San Mateo City Council and Staff

From: Gary Latshaw, Staff Scientist with Securethefuture2100

Subject: Supporting Reach Codes restricting or eliminating natural gas in new San Mateo Construction

Date: September 19, 2022

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Thank you for your consideration of this analysis,



Gary Latshaw, Ph.D.

Former Cupertino Commissioner on the Sustainability Commission, and Staff Scientist at Securethefuture2100 org



Robert S. Kenney
Vice President
State and Regulatory Affairs

P. O. Box 77000
San Francisco, CA 94177-00001
Mail Code B23A
(415) 973-2500
Robert.Kenney@pge.com

October 22, 2019

VIA EMAIL TO: sustainabilitycommission@cupertino.org

Sustainability Commission
City Hall
City of Cupertino
10300 Torre Avenue
Cupertino, CA 95014

Dear Sustainability Commission:

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) is proud to provide electric and natural gas service to the City of Cupertino. And we are committed to helping customers and the community achieve their energy goals. As part of this commitment, PG&E welcomes the opportunity to support the City of Cupertino's efforts to promote efficient, all-electric new construction, when it is cost-effective.

PG&E strongly supports California's climate and clean air goals. We recognize that achieving these goals requires a range of approaches and tools, including increasing the use of energy-efficient electric appliances in buildings when cost-effective. PG&E welcomes the opportunity to avoid investments in new gas assets that might later prove underutilized as local governments and the state work together to realize long-term decarbonization objectives. With all this in mind, PG&E supports local government policies that promote all-electric new construction when cost effective.


Beyond new construction, PG&E believes a multi-faceted approach is needed to cost-effectively achieve California's broader economy-wide long-term GHG reduction objectives, including both electrification and decarbonizing the gas system with renewable natural gas and hydrogen. As California's decarbonization policies evolve, PG&E will continue to ensure the safe and reliable operation of the electric and gas systems to continue supporting the customers that depend on us.

PG&E appreciates the partnership with the City of Cupertino during its policy development process, which allows us to prepare for the future and continue providing the best service possible to customers. PG&E continuously forecasts load in its service territory and implements upgrades to the distribution grid to meet the demand. PG&E fully expects to meet the needs that all-electric buildings will require. PG&E remains ready to engage with our customers, local government, businesses, and community members to meet their needs safely, reliably, affordably, and with clean energy.

PG&E looks forward to continuing to work with the City of Cupertino to accomplish its policy goals.

Thank you, and have a safe day.

Sincerely,



Robert S. Kenney
Vice President

cc: Andre Duurvoort, Sustainability Manager [AndreD@cupertino.org]
Albert Salvador, Building Official [AlbertS@cupertino.org]
Aimee Bailey, Ph.D., Director of Decarbonization and Grid Innovation,
Silicon Valley Clean Energy [aimee.bailey@svcleanenergy.org]
Anna Brooks, Sr. Manager, Public Affairs, PG&E [anna.brooks@pge.com]
Darin Cline, Sr. Manager, Government Relations, PG&E [Darin.Cline@pge.com]

FW: Reach Code Study Session

Patrice Olds <polds@cityofsanmateo.org>

Mon 9/19/2022 12:10 PM

To: City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>; Martin McTaggart <mmctaggart@cityofsanmateo.org>; Erin Fellers <efellers@cityofsanmateo.org>

From: Alan R. Mattlage [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2022 11:33 AM
To: Patrice Olds <polds@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Reach Code Study Session

Patrice,

Please forward my comments below this to the Council.

Thanks so much,
Alan

"It is a magnificent thing to be alive in a moment that matters so much."
-- Ayana Elizabeth Johnson

Dear Honorable City Council Members,

I have spent the last decade (nearly full-time) reading about climate change, including peer-reviewed literature in climate science, climate law, and environmental economics. In addition, I have closely followed public policies regarding the climate at all levels of government. Sadly, none of the policies that have gained any political traction are remotely adequate to address the unfolding crises. In light of this, I strongly urge you to adopt the most ambitious reach codes you can devise.

It is a cold, hard fact, that if we are to leave our children with a stable and prosperous society, we must use the power and authority we have to take the most aggressive action possible to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. As councilmembers, your power and authority is significant, and your responsibility must be to protect the wellbeing of the people of San Mateo through the whole of our lives, not simply to promote the current desires of one segment of our present population. As trustees of our City who make policies for the future, you must be the ones to take a comprehensive, long view regarding what is good for San Mateo.

I won't bore you with the pros and cons of the reach code policies before you today. You know them as well as I. I will note, however, that the single argument I have heard in favor of a "go slow" approach to eliminating methane gas from our buildings is that it might involve a marginal cost to some building owners beyond electrifying their buildings. This argument is weak in two ways.

First, a growing package of rebates is now reducing and sometimes eliminating the marginal costs of electrification. Furthermore, additional rebates and rising methane gas prices can be expected to make electrification generally more affordable than fossil fuel appliances in the not-so-distant future.

Second, reports commonly used to assess the comparative costs of fossil fuel appliances versus clean, renewable electric appliances do not include the social cost of carbon. When we do not include the social cost in our calculations, we ignore the harms that the climate crisis is producing and will continue to produce. We make a mockery of our purported concerns about those harms. Our pious rhetoric of concern becomes, in the words of the Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg, "blah, blah, blah, blah, blah."

It is long past time we abandon half-measures toward eliminating greenhouse gas emissions. I hope you will, out of love for our children and their future, adopt the strongest reach code that you can devise.

Sincerely,
Alan Mattlage, Ph.D.

Fwd: Comments re: Reach Code study session tonight

Patrice Olds <polds@cityofsanmateo.org>

Mon 9/19/2022 12:35 PM

To: Martin McTaggart <mmctaggart@cityofsanmateo.org>; Erin Fellers <efellers@cityofsanmateo.org>

1 attachments (521 KB)

Letter to San Mateo.pdf;

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Terry Nagel [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, September 19, 2022 12:17:40 PM

To: Rick Bonilla <RBonilla@cityofsanmateo.org>; Diane Papan <dpapan@cityofsanmateo.org>; Amourence Lee <aalee@cityofsanmateo.org>; Joe Goethals <jgoethals@cityofsanmateo.org>; Eric Rodriguez <erodriguez@cityofsanmateo.org>

Cc: Drew Corbett <dcorbett@cityofsanmateo.org>; Andrea Chow <achow@cityofsanmateo.org>; Community Development Distribution <communitydevelopment@cityofsanmateo.org>; Christine Kohl-Zaugg <christine@sustainablemateo.org>; Patrice Olds <polds@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: Comments re: Reach Code study session tonight

Dear Mayor Bonilla and Council Members,

Climate change is here. One of the easiest and most effective things you can do is to approve Reach Codes that get natural gas (which is primarily methane, a fossil fuel) out of buildings. It will make homes and commercial buildings healthier by eliminating toxic indoor pollution, and it will make them safer by capping gas lines underneath your city, many of which haven't been well maintained for decades and may explode and cause fires.

The California Public Utilities Commission is poised to end subsidies to gas line extensions to customers, and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and Bay Area Quality Management District are actively considering policies to ban the sale of new gas appliances, along with CARB's recently adopted ban on new gasoline-powered vehicles by 2035 and new gasoline-power landscaping equipment by 2025. Residents and business owners who continue to use gas will find themselves paying more and more as the pool of gas users shrinks. (PG&E splits the cost of maintaining its gas infrastructure with gas users.)

Setting a city goal of phasing out gas by a certain date will help the public understand the importance of the transition to all-electric energy. It will also drive the market, ushering in more trained installers and enlarging the supply chain.

For the next building code cycle, Sustainable San Mateo County urges you to:

- Require all buildings to install heat pump air conditioning when new air conditioning is installed or replaced, and install heat pump water heaters when water heaters are replaced. Many people don't know that heat pump space heaters double as air conditioners.
- Require installation of electric appliances and heating/cooling equipment when 50 percent or more of a residence or commercial building is renovated.
- Require all new buildings and all new outdoor equipment (such as pools, firepits, barbecues and grills) to be fully electric and to forbid the extension of fuel gas infrastructure into backyards for outdoor equipment.
- Require all new residential and commercial buildings to install electric vehicle infrastructure as recommended in Peninsula Clean Energy's Model Code.
- Should you decide to allow some exceptions, which we don't suggest, we recommend that you require electric-ready panel capacity and outlets that allow use of electric appliances in the future. We also recommend that you require applications for infeasibility exceptions that require documented proof that these exceptions are necessary because of a unique need that cannot be served with electrification, and sign-off by the chief building official.

Many rebates and incentives from the state and from the federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) will be available to subsidize the transition to electrification starting in early 2023. Using [U.S. Census Bureau data](#) for average household income in the City of San Mateo during 2016-2020 (\$128,091), the average four-person household with a single breadwinner will qualify for \$35,450 toward electrification improvements from the IRA. With two incomes, the total is \$27,700. You can find out how much you'll be eligible for by using Rewiring America IRA calculator here:

<https://www.rewiringamerica.org/app/ira-calculator>.

Thank you for your consideration. You will be doing your residents a favor by urging them to transition from fossil fuels to healthier, safer electric alternatives.

Sincerely,

Terry Nagel

Chair, Sustainable San Mateo County

Christine Kohl-Zaugg

Executive Director, Sustainable San Mateo County



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September 19, 2022

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Thank you for your consideration. You will be doing your residents a favor by urging them to transition from fossil fuels to healthier, safer electric alternatives.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Terry Nagel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Terry" and last name "Nagel" clearly distinguishable.

Terry Nagel
Chair, Sustainable San Mateo County

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Christine Kohl-Zaugg". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first name "Christine" and last name "Kohl-Zaugg" clearly distinguishable.

Christine Kohl-Zaugg
Executive Director, Sustainable San Mateo County



PHYSICIANS FOR
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
SAN FRANCISCO BAY CHAPTER

September 19, 2022

Dear Mayor Bonilla and Council Members,

My name is Dr. Robert M. Gould. After working as a Pathologist at San Jose Kaiser for over 30 years, since 2012, I've been an Associate Adjunct Professor at UCSF School of Medicine, working in our Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment. Since 1989 I've also been President of San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), for which I'm speaking today, representing many hundreds of health professionals throughout our region, who speak for the health of our patients and communities, who are increasingly impacted by the unfolding public and environmental health impacts of global warming, and clearly connected issues of air pollution.

The most recent assessment by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is unequivocal in its call for urgent action to ensure an energy efficient and fossil free future. In the SF Bay Area, we've witnessed the intersecting impacts of our pandemic and climate crisis, having suffered through our recent wildfire seasons, where resultant smoke harming our overall health has increased the toll of COVID, especially among already increasingly over-burdened communities who are poor and of color.

Promoting *Building Electrification*, and reducing toward elimination our current reliance on gas appliances is health protective, not only in the climate benefits of moving away from fossil fuel extraction and use, but also because gas stoves and other appliances can be a large source of toxic pollution in homes, reaching levels of pollution that would be illegal in outdoor settings. Children, especially those of color, are particularly at risk of respiratory illnesses, such as asthma, associated with gas appliance pollution, and lower income households may be at higher risk of exposure.

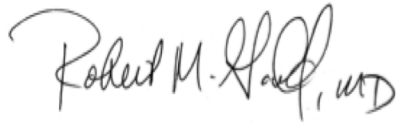
As such, we urge you to fully consider a *comprehensive* Reach Code for new and *existing* buildings based on the model code provided by the [Bay Area Reach Codes team](#) (the "Time of Permit – Electric-Required," available [here](#)). It is essential that the City of San Mateo consider all reasonable measures to prevent new uses of gas and facilitate the necessary transition from fossil gas at the speed and scale called for by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, as well as to address the air quality, health, and safety impacts of current fossil gas use in our homes and other buildings.

While applauding the diligent efforts of city staff and Commissioners to date in considering health-protective reach codes, we join coalition partners in requesting your strong consideration of these items in the next Reach Code to be finalized by the end of the year:

1. Require new construction to be fully electrified, effective January 1, 2023;
2. Require that all replacements of gas equipment in homes and businesses be electric or zero emissions models, effective January 1, 2025;
3. End the flow of gas in San Mateo, effective January 1, 2030; and
4. Include appropriate exemptions for economic hardship and technical feasibility.

In conclusion, we at SF Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility hope you will implement these measures, and thus strongly demonstrate the City of San Mateo's leadership and commitment to rapidly develop the more economical, pollution-free buildings we need now for the optimal public, environmental and climate health we and future generations so deserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert M. Gould, MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert M. Gould, MD
President
San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility

From: [Laurie Hietter](#)
To: [City Council \(San Mateo\)](#); [Diane Papan](#); [Rick Bonilla](#); [Eric Rodriguez](#); [Amourance Lee](#); [Joe Goethals](#); [Patrice Olds](#)
Subject: Reach Codes and SB 9
Date: Monday, September 19, 2022 4:00:22 PM

Dear Mayor Bonilla and Council Members,

I urge the City to be cautious in approving Reach Codes. We do not have enough electricity or infrastructure to mandate electrification. Very little new generation is proposed, and the desert is locked up so little to no wind or solar will be constructed there due to the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan. Power plants require 5-10 years for permitting and environmental review. Even fast-track projects can barely be permitted in one year. Rooftop solar is not enough. Very few transmission upgrades are currently proposed, according to the California Public Utilities Commission website. The push for electric cars alone will vastly expand the need for electricity. Each electric car requires 4 MW per year. We should not be relying only on one source of power until we have a plan for additional power supply and transmission.

The City is doing a lot by requiring new homes to be electric. Don't push this on small remodeling projects. Please do not approve any more reach codes.

SB 9 Ordinance

The public routinely has expressed opposition to excessive growth in San Mateo. I agree with the staff's approach to generally not increase allowances under SB 9 beyond state requirements, and disagree with the Planning Commission recommendation to allow 3-4 units on each split lot.

Historic Definitions

I agree with and support Keith Weber's comments on the historic language. The City should not be arbitrarily defining what is and is not historic. We have state and federal laws that have definitions. The City would be in violation of state historic preservation law and CEQA if an applicant is allowed to demolish up to 50% of an eligible property without preparing a Historic Resource Evaluation for structures more than 45 years old. At a minimum, that demolition should not be in front of a building that may be historic or in a historic district, of which we have many in San Mateo.

The new language in the ordinance seems to indicate that only the existing identified historic buildings qualify as historic. The language does not adequately address historic districts. The State Historic Preservation Office indicates historic surveys have a shelf life. The Downtown Historic District was designated over 30 years ago and should be revisited.

The following statement in the ordinance inappropriately limits contributors to only those buildings previously identified, and only in the Downtown District:

"Contributor building" shall mean those buildings identified as such and located within the Downtown Historic District as adopted by resolution of the City Council and identified in the City of San Mateo General Plan.

Case law shows the courts err on the side of the preservation of historic resources. Why is the City inviting litigation by trying to narrow the definition of historic resources and ignore all the historic districts in our City?

Public Notice

I support the public notice requirement and request that the distance for noticing be increased to 1,200 ft or the entire neighborhood.

Access

I support the staff's recommendation to maintain the 10-foot access corridor on newly created lots to minimize safety issues, especially in our most vulnerable neighborhoods where streets are very narrow.

Interim Objective Design Standards

I agree the City needs objective design standards, especially in historic neighborhoods that have not been evaluated. San Mateo is known for its charming neighborhoods. Let's work to maintain that charm through specific design standards. The standards should be defined by architects and historians working together with the City planners.

I support the list of prohibited exterior finishes in the ordinance. The prohibition of some exterior finishes such as plywood and vinyl outlined in the interim objective design standards is to ensure development consists of high-quality and durable materials. A prohibited exterior material **SHOULD NOT** be allowed through the discretionary review process where staff would review to ensure that the material would still result in a durable and high-quality structure.

Front setbacks of 20 feet are not adequate in some neighborhoods, such as Baywood, Aragon, and San Mateo Park. Structures at 20 feet from the street are out of place when most homes in the neighborhood are 30-35 feet from the street (it varies).

Windows are critically important elements in architecture. Replacement windows should be of the same as the other windows on the house and of the same character as the majority of homes in the area.

Discretionary Review

The staff report seems to indicate that if units are subject to discretionary review then all rules and standards are up for negotiation (e.g., exterior finishes). The purpose of having standards is to ensure the rules are followed.

Public Comments and Outreach

This is a good opportunity to present my concerns about summarizing public comments. Every City meeting I have attended in the last year or so has last-minute commenters who call in to support growth and more housing with no restrictions. The callers often do not live in San Mateo or appear to be paid activists (YIMBY Law and others). The City has had an unprecedented number of high-rise development applications, along with the General Plan update meetings, reach codes, and meetings about SB 9 and 10. It is difficult to devote enough time to review all materials (this packet is 712 pages) and present informed comments. The City should resume the practice of asking for the address or at least the neighborhood where commenters reside.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Laurie

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Laurie