

## Build Greener in Your Community

### Proposed energy code amendments encourage cost-effective, emissions-free building

- ✓ For no additional cost to building owners, communities can encourage construction of new buildings that are safer, healthier, and emissions-free
- ✓ Adopting amendments to the state energy code will encourage new construction of buildings utilizing electricity rather than natural gas for space and water heating
- ✓ Acting immediately means we will be building more clean buildings now – versus new buildings that will pollute our environment for decades to come

### SITUATION

- Most local homes and businesses now utilize electricity that is carbon-free, from wind, solar, and hydro sources – reducing area-wide GHG emissions by 16+% since 2015
- However, most homes and businesses still use natural gas for space and water heating – resulting in one-third of all GHG emissions in our area – and most vehicles still use gasoline or diesel, accounting for nearly half of all GHG emissions
- For a healthier environment and to combat climate change, California and our local communities have prioritized ongoing reduction of GHG emissions – targeting reductions of 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2050
- New buildings that utilize natural gas versus clean electricity will generate additional GHG emissions for decades – counter to local climate action goals

### SOLUTION

- Given a carbon-free power supply, buildings and vehicles that run on clean electricity rather than fossil fuels reduce emissions to nearly zero
- The most cost-effective time to address building electrification and vehicle charging is when new buildings are being constructed, rather than paying more later to retrofit
- Construction and operating costs for new all-electric buildings are typically less than 'mixed fuel' buildings – those that use both electricity and natural gas

### HOW

- Building codes significantly influence the choices that are made during new construction processes. By adopting a local amendment to the codes (aka establishing a "Reach Code"), cities can encourage the selection of healthier, safer, emissions-free buildings with greater access to electric vehicle charging.

**SVCE is offering a \$10,000 incentive to each city that brings reach codes to their council.**



### All Electric Home

- Zero emissions
- Lower construction cost



### Mixed Fuel Home (Gas & Electric)

- 4 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>/yr
- Higher construction cost

## DETAILS

- **All-Electric:** Adopting the 2019 California building code without amendments for buildings using electricity for space and water heating, preserves the option that is the lowest cost-to-build, healthiest, safest and best for the environment.
- **Mixed Fuel:** For buildings using natural gas for space and water heating, adopting an amendment (Reach Code) to require a greater degree of energy efficiency than specified the 2019 California building code will help reduce GHG emissions from natural gas if used, while encouraging all-electric construction and still allowing choice; the Reach Code is state-validated as cost-effective, meaning energy efficiency improvements will pay for themselves in lower operating costs.
- **Electric Vehicles:** An EV Reach Code will make new buildings more ready for electric vehicle charging, building for a clean transportation future during construction – and saving millions in future retrofit costs. Santa Clara County leads the nation in EV adoption, and demand for EV charging will be growing rapidly for years to come.

**ACTION: Support your community's effort to establish Reach Codes to encourage emissions-free buildings and more electric vehicle charging**

## COMMON QUESTIONS

### Who is leading this effort?

Silicon Valley Clean Energy, Peninsula Clean Energy and the San Mateo County Office of Sustainability are partnering with local jurisdictions across Santa Clara and San Mateo counties to lower carbon emissions.

### When will the new codes be adopted?

Every three years, the California Energy Commission provides new building energy codes for adoption by cities and counties. All new building codes must be approved by the governing city council or board of supervisors prior to implementation. The upcoming code will be voted upon in 2019, prior to implementation in January 2020.

### Does this ban natural gas?

NO. Amending the energy code still allows for developers to use mixed-fuel, both electric and gas. Communities are moving away from an efficiency paradigm and toward an emissions paradigm. Developing all-electric is the lowest-cost option - as well as the being safer, healthier, and emissions-free.

To learn more visit [SiliconValleyReachCodes.org](https://SiliconValleyReachCodes.org), or to address any questions, please contact:

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