

Summary of Public Comments Received for Draft Clean Energy Roadmap for Existing Buildings

County staff received comments from the public regarding the Clean Energy Roadmap from the following venues:

1. Draft Roadmap Information Session #1 (4/9)
2. Draft Roadmap Information Session #2 (4/16)
3. All-electric Working Group (4/15)
4. Comments submitted through Roadmap website (3/25 – 4/24)
5. Written Comments Received via Email

Summary of Comments Received

1. Information Session #1 (4/9)
 - 8 attendees
 - Salvatore Harkins, Office of Senator Jesse Arreguin
 - Question about whether 19% stat is for whole county vs unincorporated county
 - For staff getting grants on their own, is that agendaized already for the BOS?
 - Is there a specific area in unincorporated CCC that has more GHG emissions than others?
2. Information Session #2 (4/16)
 - 2 attendees
 - Lisa Jackson, 350 Contra Costa
 - Lisa's comments were a preview of what was provided in the written comment letter sent to County staff on 4/21/2025 except for the following additional question:
 - Does the Roadmap contain any pilot projects aside from Pinole Pilot Project?
3. All-Electric Working Group Feedback (4/15)
 - 8 attendees
 - Anonymous Feedback
 - What is the goal for the number of buildings upgraded in 2025?
 - Is there interest in a collaboration between the County and some or all cities? How do we bring in GRID?
 - What is the timeline for adoption of the local ordinance requiring all-electric?
 - How can we leverage programs offered by other groups such as MCE, BayREN, etc.?
 - Goals are apparently aspirational without necessarily having funding to implement.
 - I appreciate the emphasis on community engagement within the Roadmap!

- For education/outreach, would it be realistic to create permitting checklists for building electrification for the different building types?
4. Comments submitted through Roadmap website
- Ching Leung - Would it make sense to prioritize helping homeowners with SFH HVAC upgrades, such as heat pump? For instance, a home built in 1996-1997 can have 3 gas appliances: range stove, dryer and furnace. There is a 240V dryer outlet, ready for electric dryer. With the EV charger, the electric panel is close to maxing out for an electric stove, whereas the building should already be wired for an AC unit that can be used for heat pump without panel upgrades.
5. Written Comments from 350 Contra Costa

Clarifying the Roadmap's Purpose

We suggest including a vision statement and clear goals in line with the Climate Action plan's directive in BE-2 to create a detailed pathway for converting existing buildings to carbon-free energy sources. Showing how this can be achieved against the timelines of 2030 and 2045 could help build momentum.

Strengthening Implementation Strategies (Section 10)

- The roadmap effectively outlines focus areas for building electrification, but additional detail on specific strategies, deliverables, and timelines would enhance clarity.
- Clearly defining the County's role versus that of other organizations would provide greater transparency.
- Would the County consider using a structured format, similar to the Climate Action Plan, to improve readability? A visual representation of how different strategies interconnect could also be valuable.

Accelerating Policy Implementation (Section 9)

The roadmap discusses potential policy options. Please consider prioritizing one or two of the report's proposed action items for review and relatively quick enactment. Demonstrating quick wins would reinforce the County's commitment to a clean energy transition. Examples of policies that could be implemented.

- Home modernization at point of sale through an escrow account (see City of Berkeley's BESO program)
- Time of Major Renovation – Requires homeowners to replace gas appliances with the electric equivalent when performing major home renovations.

Incorporating Existing State and Local Policies

- The roadmap does not currently mention key policies that could support its efforts, such as Governor Newsom's 2022 directive to the CPUC setting ambitious electrification targets.
- Additionally, would the County consider highlighting existing local programs—such as Richmond's zonal electrification project, the East Contra Costa Healthy Homes Collaborative, and community electrification fairs—as potential models for implementation?

Expanding Funding and Financing Options (Section 6.0)

- The roadmap presents valuable financing ideas but could be strengthened by including additional funding sources, such as the Equitable Building Decarbonization Program, SB 1212's 2024 zonal decarbonization pilot, and the New Climate Fund. Has the County explored these opportunities for funding?

Tailoring Strategies for Market-Based vs. Equity-Based Approaches

- The roadmap could better differentiate strategies for market-driven electrification versus equity-focused efforts. Would the County consider addressing these distinctions more explicitly, and show how the county role may differ with these different approaches.
- Specifically, for Community Engagement: Will the engagement approach be applied uniformly across all unincorporated communities, or will strategies vary based on income level and impact status?
- Can the plan specify how the County will tailor engagement for households that may need additional support beyond market-based incentives?

Technical Clarifications and Policy Considerations

- Page 36 states that over half of single-family homes require panel upgrades. What data supports this estimate? Does it refer to homes with electrical service below 100 amps? There is ample evidence that homes under 3200 square feet can be electrified on 100 amps.
- Page 40, Section 9.0, does not currently mention education and norm-shifting. We are still behind in community understanding of the need for, and benefits of, electrifying appliances. The County, as a trusted messenger, is important to this education task. Toward that end, consider including strategies to increase public awareness and encourage cultural shifts toward electrification.
- Refining Terminology on Energy Sources - The term "low-carbon fuels" appears in several places (Page 9, Paragraphs 2 and 3, and first bullet on Page 41). Since this phrase is often associated with natural gas, which is low in carbon but high in methane emissions, please replace 'low carbon' with a term such as "zero-GHG emission energy sources".
- Page 43 Other Actions: Should an action be added to evaluate the need for, and encourage the addition of, EV charging infrastructure at existing multi-family

communities. The availability of EV charging capability is an important aspect of “building” electrification.

Expediting Implementation and Leveraging Expertise

- Early-stage electrification projects could proceed in parallel with roadmap finalization. Specify any projects that are in discussion.
- Specify where consultants with specific knowledge are required or could be considered. This will help identify clear areas with a need for funding.

Corrections and Technical Edits

- Page 12: "Many gas appliances still require electricity to power fans and function." Suggested correction: "Most gas appliances require electricity in order to operate."
- Page 13: The description of Building Energy Efficiency Standards needs revision. The current (2022) code prescribes heat pump space conditioning in Climate Zone 3 (West Contra Costa County) and allows gas or heat pump space conditioning in Climate Zone 12 (East Contra Costa County). Heat pump water heating is required in Climate Zone 12.