



Office of the City Manager

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CONSENT CALENDAR
December 1, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
Submitted by: Jordan Klein, Interim Director, Planning and Development Department
Subject: Revenue Grant: Reach Code support from East Bay Community Energy

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager, or her designee, to submit a grant agreement and accept a \$10,000 grant award from East Bay Community Energy (EBCE) for reach code support.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

This grant will support Planning Department efforts to electrify the existing and newly constructed building stock in Berkeley, using existing staff resources. Funds will be deposited into a revenue grant code to be established. This grant will be included as part of the next Annual Appropriations Ordinance amendment cycle. No other costs are associated with acceptance of this grant.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

East Bay Community Energy (EBCE) is the local not-for-profit Community Choice Energy provider, formed by Alameda County and 11 local cities in 2018. As a member city, Berkeley plays a leadership role in EBCE's efforts to provide renewable energy at competitive rates for its customers including Berkeley residents and businesses. Like the City of Berkeley, EBCE recognizes that all-electric buildings and transportation are healthier, safer, and, particularly in new construction, more cost-effective.

To encourage electrification, EBCE is supporting the development of "reach codes," local amendments to the 2019 California Energy Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6) that are cost-effective and accelerate the production of zero net energy buildings. For each member city that brings a reach code to their council, EBCE is providing technical assistance and a \$10,000 grant award as an incentive for the action. The City of Berkeley has utilized EBCE's free technical assistance, such as cost-effectiveness evaluations of potential reach code measures, model reach code language, and project-based support for electrification in new high-rise residential buildings. This \$10,000 grant would supplement ongoing reach code implementation and broader building electrification outreach and education prioritizing low-income households and communities of color most impacted by climate change.

BACKGROUND

In 2019, staff coordinated with EBCE, the California Energy Codes and Standards Program, the Building Decarbonization Coalition, BayREN, and other Bay Area jurisdictions to develop an electric-favored reach code. The reach code, which has been approved by the California Energy Commission, affects all building permit applications for newly constructed buildings submitted on or after January 1, 2020. The reach code encourages all-electric construction and specifies what is required for electric-readiness to enable future electrification when natural gas appliances are utilized. The reach code also extends the solar PV requirement to nonresidential buildings, high-rise residential buildings, and hotel/motels.

The Berkeley City Council adopted the reach code, along with other local amendments to the 2019 California Building Standards Code, on December 3, 2019. The Council also adopted a local amendment to the 2019 California Green Building Code, supported by EBCE, which requires increased electric vehicle charging readiness and installation in new buildings.

On July 23, 2019, the Council also adopted a Prohibition of Natural Gas Infrastructure in New Buildings (BMC Chapter 12.80). This requires new buildings, with land use permit applications submitted on or after January 1, 2020, to be free of natural gas infrastructure, subject to limited exceptions and exemptions.

As an EBCE member city, bringing a reach code to council for consideration fulfills the grant requirements for this EBCE award. Berkeley has gone beyond this threshold with adoption of the reach code, its filing with the California Building Commission, and its approval by the California Energy Commission on February 20, 2020.

In order to receive the \$10,000 grant from EBCE, the grant agreement must be executed and award accepted by December 31, 2020. This award will enable the Planning Department to provide additional support for building electrification, particularly to meet equity goals of serving low-income residents, communities of color, and other underserved populations.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Adoption of the reach code is an important step towards meeting Berkeley's Climate Action Plan and Fossil Fuel Free Berkeley goals. In particular, it makes significant gains towards reducing the greenhouse gas emissions associated with constructing and operating new buildings. The grant will support building electrification work.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Accepting this grant will support ongoing work on building electrification and can be used to further advance equity work in this domain. The City of Berkeley has already completed the requirements of this grant award; no additional staff time or commitments are needed.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None considered.

CONTACT PERSON

Billi Romain, Manager, Office of Energy and Sustainable Development, Planning and Development Department, 510-981-7432

Attachments:

Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

REVENUE GRANT: REACH CODE SUPPORT FROM
EAST BAY COMMUNITY ENERGY

WHEREAS, on June 2, 2009, the Berkeley City Council adopted the Berkeley Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% of Berkeley's 2000 emissions level; and

WHEREAS, on April 1, 2016, the City of Berkeley released its Resilience Strategy; and

WHEREAS, on November 1, 2016, the Berkeley City Council approved Berkeley's participation in the East Bay Community Energy (EBCE) Authority and authorized implementation of EBCE in Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, on June 12, 2018, the Berkeley City Council declared a Climate Emergency and resolved to become a "Fossil Fuel-Free City"; and

WHEREAS, on July 23, 2019, Berkeley City Council adopted a Prohibition of Natural Gas Infrastructure in New Buildings (BMC Chapter 12.80); and

WHEREAS, on December 3, 2019, Berkeley City Council held a public hearing and adopted an electric-favored reach code to complement the Natural Gas Prohibition; and

WHEREAS, to encourage electrification, EBCE is providing technical assistance and a \$10,000 grant award to each member city that brings a reach code to their council; and

WHEREAS, the grant award will provide additional support for building electrification, particularly to meet equity goals of serving low-income residents, communities of color, and other underserved populations.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager, or her designee, is authorized to submit a grant agreement and accept a \$10,000 grant award from East Bay Community Energy (EBCE) for reach code support.