



Office of the City Manager

September 21, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: *Dee* Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Re: Fall Sustainability & Utility Debt Forgiveness Programs: Ride Electric, Rooftop Solar + Storage, Arrearage Management Program (AMP)

The Planning Department's Office of Energy and Sustainable Development (OESD) is promoting various sustainability and utility bill payment programs this fall, and asks City Council to help spread the word.

On October 2, OESD will host the [4th Annual Ride Electric at the Farmer's Market](#), returning to an in-person outdoor event Downtown after moving online last year. For the first time, this year's Ride Electric will include test drives in new and used electric vehicles (EVs), offered through collaboration with the non-profit Charge Across Town. There will also be an electric bike (eBike) showcase and the opportunity to talk with EV and eBike owners. Councilmembers who own EVs or eBikes are particularly asked to attend and showcase their vehicles to the community. There will be information on incentives and rebates, including the many thousands of dollars in grants and loans available to income qualified drivers. OESD is also working with the Ecology Center to co-host this event.

Homeowners can take advantage of two, limited-time group purchase programs – East Bay Community Energy's (EBCE) [Resilient Home](#) and [Bay Area SunShares](#) – to install discounted solar and storage. Both programs offer rooftop solar, with options for battery backup, pre-negotiated pricing, and free quotes. The Resilient Home program is only open to EBCE customers in Alameda County, while Bay Area SunShares, administered by the non-profit Business Council on Climate Change since 2016, is open to any Bay Area resident through November 30. This year, SunShares offers [monthly webinars](#) on September 22, October 19, and November 8. Both the Resilient Home and SunShares programs offer different discounts and work with different solar companies.

OESD is promoting both solar + storage programs so residents can select from multiple providers to choose the best option for their home. Fortunately, the [federal tax credit](#) has been extended, so participants can get an additional 26% back. Battery storage

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has become more critical as we experience more power disruptions during longer wildfire seasons and more frequent extreme heat events. Both rooftop solar and battery storage support the City's climate and resilience goals.

Lastly, through the statewide [Arrearage Management Program \(AMP\)](#), income qualified residents who are behind on utility bill payments can get up to \$8,000 of utility debt forgiven. To be eligible for AMP, customers must be already be enrolled in one of PG&E's financial assistance programs ([CARE or FERA](#)), owe at least \$500 on their utility bill, and be more than 90 days past due. Once enrolled in AMP, customers will get 1/12 of their debt forgiven for each on time payment over the next 12 months. PG&E manages this program for EBCE customers, who must enroll by calling PG&E customer service. During the pandemic the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) directed utilities, including PG&E, to stop disconnecting customers who cannot pay their bills. This moratorium ends on September 30 and disconnections can resume. Customers on a payment plan, like AMP, however, are not at risk of disconnection.

Please share information about Ride Electric, discounted solar + storage, and AMP with the community. Attached you will find images and text to facilitate communication with your constituents.

Attachment

cc: Paul Buddenhagen, Deputy City Manager
LaTanya Bellow, Interim Deputy City Manager
Jenny Wong, City Auditor
Mark Numainville, City Clerk
Matthai Chakko, Assistant to the City Manager
Jordan Klein, Director, Planning and Development Department