



SF Environment

Our home. Our city. Our planet.

A Department of the City and County of San Francisco

Zero Emission Building Taskforce Update

April 6, 2020

New Construction Workgroup

San Francisco is committed to 100% renewable electricity citywide by 2030. Today natural gas is responsible for 81% of operational GHG emissions from San Francisco buildings, and when the 100% renewable electricity goal is met natural gas usage would account for all operational emissions. In the Fall of 2019, Supervisor Mandelman committed to introducing in Spring 2020 an ordinance to eliminate natural gas from new construction permitted in 2021 or beyond. Thus, a New Construction Workgroup was convened with representatives from land use development, labor, affordable housing, engineering and architecture firms, equity and environmental advocates, utilities, and city officials. The workgroup met three times between January and April with the goal of developing legislation to require all-electric new construction. The first two meetings focused on key elements of the ordinance such as applicability, timing, and exceptions. In the third meeting, SF Department of the Environment staff presented a draft ordinance for consideration, the purpose and findings of which focused on risks to health, safety and resilience, in addition to climate and equity impacts. The ordinance will apply to both residential and non-residential new constructions applying for building permits after January 1, 2021. It will not impact existing buildings, additions, or alterations at this time. The ordinance will allow for specific limited exceptions when it is not feasible to construct an all-electric building. Workgroup stakeholders also provided feedback on what type of marketing, outreach, and programming will be necessary for successful implementation of the ordinance. Next steps include convening a smaller subset of the workgroup to provide guidance on rules and regulations for exemptions and additional outreach to impacted stakeholders. The ordinance is tracking for a late May 2020 introduction depending on COVID-19 developments.

Existing Residential and Equity Building Initiative

The SF Department of the Environment has convened an Anchor Partners Network (APN) to establish equitable zero emissions residential building strategies that will inform the San Francisco Climate Action Plan (CAP) and a Roadmap to Zero Emissions Buildings (Roadmap). The APN is co-led by Emerald Cities and PODER, organizations that are committed to equity in the clean energy sector, that organize with frontline communities including low-income people, people of color and those most burdened by the impacts of the climate crisis, and that are at the forefront of promoting genuine inclusive climate solutions. Through a series of stakeholder meetings, the APN shared the twin goals of residential building decarbonization and racial equity, and collected community feedback to prioritize key strategies for CAP and Roadmap. The partnership structure supports direct collaboration between city officials and community organizations to promote equitable and just redevelopment and fair planning practices, creating benefits such as energy security, job creation, economic stimulus, resilience, and racial and economic equity and justice. The APN completed four meetings between October 2019 and March 2020, focusing on: (1) workforce opportunities and challenges; (2) deed-restricted affordable housing; (3) single family and multifamily housing; and (4) preliminary findings and recommendations. Next steps include compiling final recommended actions from stakeholders and presenting them in a concluding meeting, scheduled for May 2020.

Existing Commercial Building Workgroup

The Existing Commercial Building Workgroup convened representatives of commercial real estate, national and local environmental organizations, local energy utilities, engineers, and city officials. Three workgroup meetings were held



SF Environment

Our home. Our city. Our planet.

A Department of the City and County of San Francisco

between January and March 2020, centering on three main points: (1) failing to mitigate climate impacts will pose great risk to the city; (2) the city will need to utilize long-range planning and effectively manage the time horizon to meet its net zero building goal; and (3) the city must send a clear and consistent signal that emission reduction targets will be met and then enable stakeholders to meet them. The key recommendations from the workgroup include:

- The city needs to send a clear signal that use of onsite fossil fuel must be eliminated by 2035.
- Requirements must be reasonable and allow narrow exceptions so that most buildings decarbonize by 2035, with all buildings completing the process by 2050.
- Planning is vital in assisting building owners to create electrification plans. The city should replace its energy audit requirement, instead requiring that each large commercial building develop a capital plan for decarbonization.
- A public recognition program should be set up, with formal certification to support the success of pilots and case studies.
- A decarbonization master plan should be developed, to coordinate dismantling of the gas network and to manage equity and resilience benefits.

Next steps include solidifying the aforementioned recommendations into strategies for the CAP and the development of an implementation pathway with greater detail in the Roadmap.

[Municipal Existing Building Workgroup](#)

The Municipal Existing Building Workgroup comprises twelve city staff and one representative from the Municipal Green Building Task Force with a diversity of expertise in the funding, design, construction, and operation of San Francisco's municipal building stock. In three meetings between January and March 2020, the Workgroup mapped the necessary changes to the typical building improvement project process to integrate considerations for fuel-switching. It also recommended that we establish portfolio-wide data gathering and analysis, to inform funding decisions as well as goal-setting strategies that include carbon reduction targets. The Workgroup has begun to identify and prioritize electrification issues, such as project scope influences and building characteristics, and this line of inquiry will continue in future meetings. Next steps also include rounding out the understanding of other supporting needs, like education and training, and overarching linkages to other existing citywide or department-specific commitments.