

**CITY OF SEBASTOPOL  
CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE  
WORKING GROUP AGENDA ITEM**

**Meeting** 13-July-2022

**To:** Climate Action Committee

**From:** Energy Working Group

**Subject:** Municipal Building Code changes to address Climate Change

**Recommendation:** That the Climate Action Committee recommend City Council to modify Municipal Code over time to consolidate Green Building And Energy topics under Sebastopol Title 15 (Building Code) and adopt the following for this (2022) revision cycle of the California Title 24.

- Establish Chapter 15.41 as Sebastopol Green Building Code
  - Adopt the Title 24 part 11 Tier 1 building standard
  - Move any existing Sebastopol Municipal clauses that expand on topics covered in Title 24 part 11 to this chapter
- Establish Chapter 15.42 as Sebastopol Energy Code
  - Adopt the Title 24 part 6 building standard
  - Move any existing Sebastopol Municipal clauses that expand on topics covered in Title 24 part 6 to this chapter
  - Specify in this chapter that new construction and major remodels will be completed as All Electric with exception to restaurant and industry where the applicant can demonstrate that their product quality requires an exception.
- Remove Sebastopol Municipal code Chapter 15.72 and rely on solar mandate and calculations provided in Title 24 Part 6 for 2022 and future state modifications.

**Funding:** Funding Needs: \$0 to incorporate Tier 1 standards (already budgeted for) and remove chapter 15.72

\$15,000 to reorganize the municipal code and move clauses to a new Energy Code section;  
Could be less if only the structure is provided and no items moved at this time, but rather used for new items only or as other sections are modified.

Funding Source(s): Sebastopol Operational Budget for Building Department

**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:**

Today the Sebastopol Municipal contains a number of sections in both Title 15 and 17 that overlap with specification provided by California Title 24. There is no indication that Sebastopol completed the necessary filings with the California Energy Commission nor the California Building Standards Commission that make these clauses enforceable. As well, current building department practice requires submissions to satisfy Title

24 Tier 1 specification. This is neither noted in the Sebastopol Municipal code as required.

This information surfaced as the Energy Task Force of the Sebastopol Climate Action Committee investigated crafting a Reach Code. A reach code is comprised of sections in a Municipal code that locally override the mandatory clauses of Title 24.

Initially the extent of the changes envisioned by the Energy Task force was to simply specify new and major remodel construction be All-electric. However, with the gaps that were discovered in the SMC we recommend that these be corrected as part of establishing the reach code.

This form of the recommendation we are submitting does include the all-electric requirement. However, in adoption of this extension, we should keep in mind that a mandatory clause in the Title 24 2022 revision is that new construction that uses mixed fuels, must include full electric service be provided to each appliance that is being installed using a gaseous fuel. As well ventilation standards have been modified to address the less rigorous requirements of an all-electric building.

The consideration of the all-electric clause is warranted by the major impact Methane (natural gas) plays as a short term Green House Gas (GHG). Though over a 100 year period, it is 34 times more impactful than CO<sub>2</sub>, it is over the short term where it participates most heavily to climate change. Over a 2 year horizon, methane is 120 times stronger as a GHG than CO<sub>2</sub>. A reduction in methane emissions would actually result in a decrease in accumulated GHGs in less than a lifetime (as compared to the 1,000 years it takes for CO<sub>2</sub> to dissipate.)

Studies have shown that the lines that deliver methane to buildings as well as the appliances that use it do leak a considerably. The EPA estimates at wells 3.7% of the gas is emitted to the atmosphere. Recent reports estimate a further 1.3% is emitted from stovetops even when they are turned off.

#### **GOALS:**

- Bring Sebastopol practices and Municipal Code into compliance with state regulations.
- Make reading and compliance of Sebastopol Green Building and Energy Conservation measures easier.
- Reduce Emission of methane.
- The following Goals of the Sebastopol General Plan are supported by this Municipal Code improvement:

COS1: Make Proactive, Forward-Thinking Environmental Protection and Resource Management the Cornerstone of Sebastopol's Identity

COS7: Improve Air Quality in Sebastopol and Reduce Air Quality Impacts from Future Development

COS8: Reduce Emissions of Greenhouse Gases from City Operations and Community Sources

COS9: Promote Conservation of Energy and Other Natural Resources

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

[Generally this is "As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment. However,

staff anticipates receiving public comment from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report. Such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, public comments may be offered during the public comment portion of the agenda item.”]

**PUBLIC NOTICE:**

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to schedule meeting date.

**FUNDING NEEDS:**

[Either “None” or “To be determined” or a specific dollar amount.]

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That [insert whatever is being recommended. If there are multiple options, include them here. Try to be complete but brief.]

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

- [Presentation to Sebastopol Climate Action Committee Reviewing Reach Code options and process](#)
- [Table of Reach Code Options](#)
- [Presentation to Sebastopol Climate Action Committee summarizing Energy Task Force recommendation of changes](#)