



Staff Liaison
Christina Leard | (510) 215-4338
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AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING OF THE Environmental Quality Committee

Tuesday, October 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue

This Meeting Place is Wheelchair Accessible

7:00 p.m. CONVENE REGULAR MEETING

1. **ROLL CALL** – Chair Simrun Dhoot; Vice-Chair Fred Bialy; Members Buddy Akacić, Pamela Austin, Howdy Goudey, Heather Hayashi, Mark Miner, Sean O'Connor, Paloma Pavel, Sheila Tarbet
2. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC** *(Estimated time: 5 minutes)*
Remarks are typically limited to three minutes per person, and may be on anything within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body. Remarks on non-agenda items will be heard first. Remarks on agenda items will be heard at the time the item is discussed.
3. **COUNCIL/STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS** *(5 min.)*
Staff and/or Council Liaison Carolyn Wysinger may report on policies, priorities, and actions taken by the City Council, and/or on matters of general interest to the EQC.
4. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** *(5 min.)*
Consider a motion adopting the minutes of the EQC meeting held on September 10, 2024.
5. **YOUTH EQC MEMBER APPOINTMENT PROCESS** *(10 min.)*
Participate in discussion and consider possible action items regarding interviewing and recommending for appointment a youth member to the EQC.
6. **COLLABORATION WITH THE URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE** *(5 min.)*
Hear updates, participate in discussion and consider possible action items regarding collaborating with the City's Urban Forest Committee.
7. **EL CERRITO GREEN MOBILITY FAIR** *(45 min)*
Report-out from the ad hoc subcommittee, participate in discussion and consider possible action items regarding planning efforts around an El Cerrito Green Mobility Fair event in April 2025.
8. **EQC BUDGET AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS** *(15 min.)*
Hear updates, participate in discussion, and consider possible action items regarding planning, logistics, and expenditures for the EQC calendar of events, including:
 - Green Team 2024 Cleanups / Broom Pulls:
 - Sept. 21, Saturday, Coastal Cleanup Day, Baxter Creek Park (Debrief)
 - Dec. 1, Sunday, Baxter Creek Park (w/ Baxter volunteers)
 - Sun. Oct 6; 4-5pm - El Cerrito Library Parking Lot – El Cerrito Free Market community re-use event (formerly "Swap It") (Debrief)
 - October 12, El Cerrito Fall Citywide Garage Sale
 - October 10, 12, 13 – [Albany Film Fest](#), Rialto Cinemas Cerrito
 - October 19, 11am – 4pm – Cedar Rose Park - [Berkeley Ride Electric Event](#)
 - EC Green Mobility Fair – Tentative for April 26, 2025 - TBD

9. SUNSHARES SOLAR & BATTERY STORAGE PROGRAM OVERVIEW (15 min.)

Receive a brief presentation, participate in discussion and consider possible action items regarding outreach on the [SunShares](#) program.

10. MCE CLEAN ENERGY & CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION UPDATES (10 min)

Hear updates, participate in discussion and consider possible action items regarding MCE Clean Energy & California Public Utilities Commission updates.

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (5 min.)

Hear committee member announcements and suggestions for future EQC agenda items. Potentially engage in discussion and make decisions regarding logistics of EQC consideration of items including:

- Next meeting: Tuesday, November 12, 2024
- 2025 Calendar Adoption
- December 10, 2024 - Hillside Natural Area (HNA) Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan (Joint meeting with UFC)
- FY 25-26 & FY 26-27 Biennial Work Plan
- FY 24-25 Accomplishments
- Review of [Brown Act](#) and [Rosenburg's Rules of Order](#) (Parliamentary Procedure)
- Liaison with the Human Relations Commission
- Youth Engagement; Earth Team
- Possible collaboration with the Public Safety Committee

12. ADJOURNMENT

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Staff Liaison, Christina Leard, at (510) 215-4338. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the members regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the El Cerrito Recycling + Environmental Resource Center (7501 Schmidt Lane) during normal business hours.



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DRAFT MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE Environmental Quality Committee

Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue

This Meeting Place is Wheelchair Accessible

CONVENE REGULAR MEETING Chair Dhoot called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL** – Chair Simrun Dhoot; Vice-Chair Fred Bialy; Members Buddy Akacić, Howdy Goudey, Heather Hayashi, Mark Miner, Sean O'Connor, Paloma Pavel, Sheila Tarbet, **Absent:** Pamela Austin, Rose Vekony **Also Present:** Christina Leard, Staff Liaison
2. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**
There were no communications from the public.
3. **COUNCIL/STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS**
There were no announcements.
4. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**
Consider a motion adopting the minutes of the EQC meeting held on August 13, 2024.
Move/Second: O'Connor/Bialy **Action:** Passed a motion to adopt the minutes of the August 13, 2024 EQC meeting. **Ayes:** Unanimous of members present **Noes:** None
5. **YOUTH EQC MEMBER APPOINTMENT PROCESS**
The interview for a youth member was rescheduled to October, and this item will come back at the October meeting.
6. **COLLABORATION WITH THE URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE**
Urban Forest Committee member Robin Mitchell provided brief updates from the most recent meeting of the Urban Forest Committee.
7. **RICHMOND STREET COMPLETE STREETS PROJECT PRESENTATION**
Committee members received a presentation and participated in robust discussion regarding the [Richmond Street Complete Streets Improvement Project](#).
There was public comment from El Cerrito residents Steve Price and Audrey Liese.
8. **SUPPORT FOR RECYCLEMORE DO-IT-YOURSELF (DIY) REPAIR WORKSHOP**
Staff Liaison Leard provided updates on collaborating with RecycleMore on a DIY repair workshop in El Cerrito. The event will take place some time in the new year once coaches for the event have been identified.
There was public comment from El Cerito residents Steve Price, Audrey Liese, and Robin Mitchell.
9. **REAL PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX (RPTT) REBATE RECOMMENDATIONS**
The committee received a report-out from the ad hoc subcommittee, participated in discussion and considered possible action items on recommendations for suggested changes to the RPTT rebate.

Move/Second: Goudey/Miner **Action:** Passed a motion to send the recommendations made by the subcommittee to the Planning Department. **Ayes:** Unanimous of members present
Noes: None

10. EL CERRITO GREEN MOBILITY FAIR

Committee members heard a report-out from the ad hoc subcommittee and participated in discussion regarding planning efforts around an El Cerrito Green Mobility Fair event in April 2025.

11. EQC BUDGET AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Staff and Committee members provided updates on recent events the EQC has supported and discussed plans for future events in 2024, including:

- Green Team 2024 Cleanups / Broom Pulls:
 - Sept. 21, Saturday, Coastal Cleanup Day, Baxter Creek Park
 - Dec. 1, Sunday, Baxter Creek Park (w/ Baxter volunteers)
- Sept. 21, 2024 - CA Coastal Cleanup Day, Baxter Creek Park
- Sun. Oct 6; 4-5pm - El Cerrito Library Parking Lot – El Cerrito Free Market community re-use event (formerly “Swap It”)
 - Consider a motion to be a community partner
 - **Move/Second:** Goudey/O'Connor **Action:** Passed a motion to be a community partner with the October 6, 2024 El Cerrito Free Market
Ayes: Unanimous **Noes:** None
- October 12, El Cerrito Fall Citywide Garage Sale
- October 10, 12, 13 – [Albany Film Fest](#), Rialto Cinemas Cerrito
 - Public Comment from Albany FilmFest founder Jack Kenny
- October 19, 11am – 4pm – Cedar Rose Park - [Berkeley Ride Electric Event](#)
- EC Green Mobility Fair – April 2025 TBD

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Staff and Committee members provided updates on recent events the EQC has supported and discussed plans for future events in 2024, including:

- Next meeting: Tuesday, October 8, 2024
- Hillside Natural Area (HNA) Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan Joint meeting with UFC – Approved for December 10, 2024
- MCE Clean Energy & California Public Utilities Commission Updates
- Input for other outreach opportunities in Planning Dept. on Electrification
 - Christina to check with Planning Dept for interest
- Review of [Brown Act](#) and [Rosenburg's Rules of Order](#) (Parliamentary Procedure)
- Liaison with the Human Relations Commission
- Youth Engagement; Earth Team
- Possible collaboration with the Public Safety Committee

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Simrun Dhoot, Chair

This is to clarify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Environmental Quality Committee meeting of September 10, 2024 as approved by the Environmental Quality Committee.

Christina Leard, Staff Liaison

EQC Recommendations for Updating the Real Property Transfer Tax Rebate Program

The newly adopted El Cerrito Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) delineates a series of actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase climate change resilience in El Cerrito. In the section on Buildings & Energy, Strategy 1 (Use cleaner energy sources), Action BE1.4 (page 36) calls for an update of the Real Property Transfer Tax (RPTT) rebate program in which subsidies would no longer be offered for any gas appliances. Additionally, it was recommended to expand qualifying work to include rebates for resiliency upgrades (e.g. battery storage), wildfire hardening, all-electric appliances, and other climate mitigation or adaptation activities.

The EQC appreciates Council's direction at the July 16th adoption of the CAAP to act swiftly on implementing updates to the RPTT rebate, and the EQC wishes to support the implementation of that update and provide some further input for consideration.

Because we do not know exactly how the update will be documented, our recommendations are listed here in general terms, followed by some specific language suggestions for the existing public facing documents ([City RPTT rebate webpage](#), [Transfer Tax Rebate Upgrade Checklist](#) and the [RPTT rebate application form](#)), as these are how most users will interact with the rebate. See attached mark-ups of the first two. Changes to the application form can be copied from the checklist update.

In General:

- Strike any reference to RPTT rebate applying to installation of efficient fossil fuel appliances. If possible, explicitly state that it does not apply to fossil fuel sourced appliances
- Explicitly call out heat pump water heaters and heat pump space heating as qualifying for the rebate (not just referencing the voluntary CalGreen code, especially in public facing documents). Heat pumps that only provide room cooling (air conditioning), without the heat pump also having a heating mode, should not be eligible for the rebate
- Continue to emphasize rebate eligibility for installation of electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE). If possible, include eligibility for installation of a dedicated circuit/outlet, in a good location for vehicle charging, for use with a cord and plug EVSE, not just hardwired EVSE
- Continue to emphasize rebate eligibility for solar photovoltaic (PV) and solar thermal installations, but also emphasize that the rebate can be used toward installation of household battery back-up systems, with or without a solar system
- Include rebate eligibility for installation of upgraded electrical service panel/s (including "smart" panels) to support the installation of solar PV, household battery, EVSE, heat pump water and space conditioning, etc. Include eligibility for installation of electrical circuit sharing and/or demand respond hardware that may, or may not, be integrated in an electrical service panel
- Add rebate eligibility for home hardening improvements such as those recommended by Cal Fire: (<https://www.fire.ca.gov/home-hardening>).
- Consider expanding the eligibility timing from one year prior, or following, the date of the real estate sale to two years prior, or after, the sale

Thank you,

El Cerrito Environmental Quality Committee

City RPPT rebate webpage: <https://el-cerrito.org/1314/Transfer-Tax-Rebate-Program>

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS OR UPGRADES QUALIFY?

Seismic upgrades:

1. Work on residential structures that would qualify for the California Earthquake Bolt and Brace program, or other similar programs that the City Council may identify by resolution.
2. Corrective work on buildings that are listed on the City of El Cerrito inventory of potentially hazardous, unreinforced masonry buildings, if the work necessary to meet City standards or requirements applicable to such buildings. Qualifying work must be performed pursuant to a plan prepared by a structural engineer and approved by the Building Official or designee.
3. Any other work found by the building official to substantially increase the capability of structures on the property to withstand destruction or damage in the event of an earthquake, including but not limited to such work on buildings that use soft-story construction. Qualifying work must be performed pursuant to a plan prepared by a structural engineer and approved by the Building Official or designee.

Energy and water conservation projects: (include but not limited to)

1. Installation of electric vehicle supply equipment ("EVSE") or electric vehicle charging stations.
2. Installation of rooftop solar energy systems. **and household battery systems**
3. ~~Voluntary measures listed in Appendix A4 or Appendix AS of the California Green Building Standards Code for energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, or water reuse.~~ **3. Heat pump water heaters**
4. ~~Upgrades to residential, multifamily, and commercial properties that would qualify for the Bay Area Regional Energy Network program ("BayREN"), or other similar programs that the City Council may identify by resolution.~~ **4. Heat pump space heating**
5. Installation of ~~stormwater retention~~ **greywater and rain catchment** systems that comply with the California Plumbing Code.
- 6. Building envelope efficiency upgrade**
- 7. Electrical service panel upgrade**
- 8. Household fire hardening measures**

APPLY

Please refer to the Transfer [Tax Upgrades Checklist](#) to see if you qualify for the rebate.

To apply for the rebate, [click here](#) to fill out and submit the form online.



TRANSFER TAX REBATE UPGRADE CHECKLIST

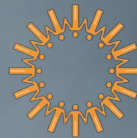
Energy Efficiency upgrades may include (but are not limited to):

- Water heater upgrades to ~~82% AFUE or better units (storage type, tankless, or heat pump)~~
- Doors and windows upgrades to ~~U factor of .32 or better~~
- Higher efficiency built-in appliances
- Wall and attic insulation to
- Skylight upgrades to ~~.32 U factor or better~~
- Re-roof with "cool roof" system and/or materials
- Installation of radiant barrier under roof sheathing and rafters
- Install attic ventilation fan with thermostatic control
- ~~Replace older natural gas heating units with higher efficiency units of 80% or better rating~~
- Replace older natural gas or electric heating and or cooling units with heat pump units
- ~~Advanced circulating fans for natural gas, propane or oil furnaces~~
- Weather-stripping and caulking around doors, windows, exterior seams, electrical outlets
- Seal around wall, floor, and furnace register boots
- Install code approved gray water irrigation system with permit
- Install code approved rain water catchment system with permit
- Permanently installed electric vehicle charging station
- Installation of a solar electric and/or solar thermal (water heating) system

Seismic Upgrades may include (but are not limited to):

- Approved and permitted seismic strengthening upgrade complying with Standard Planset A, CEBC Appendix Chapter A3, or engineered plan
- Replacement/Repair of Foundation and/or replacement/repair of rotted mudsills in conjunction with seismic strengthening upgrade
- Installation of shear walls designed by a licensed engineer
- Anchoring of water heaters or refrigerators
- Installing flexible gas and water connectors at water heaters
- Removing masonry chimneys to firebox shoulder and rebuilding with metal chimney system
- Remove wood burning fireplaces and chimneys completely ~~(if desired replace with gas burning fireplaces)~~
- Repairing unsafe egress components such as stairs, landings, ramps, etc.

Note: Most of the above upgrades require a permit and inspection by the Building Division. Please call to confirm if the specific upgrade requires a permit before proceeding. Work that requires a permit and inspection and that is completed without will not be eligible for the transfer tax rebate. Property owners wishing to perform their own work may not include a charge for their time for rebate consideration.



Bay Area SunShares



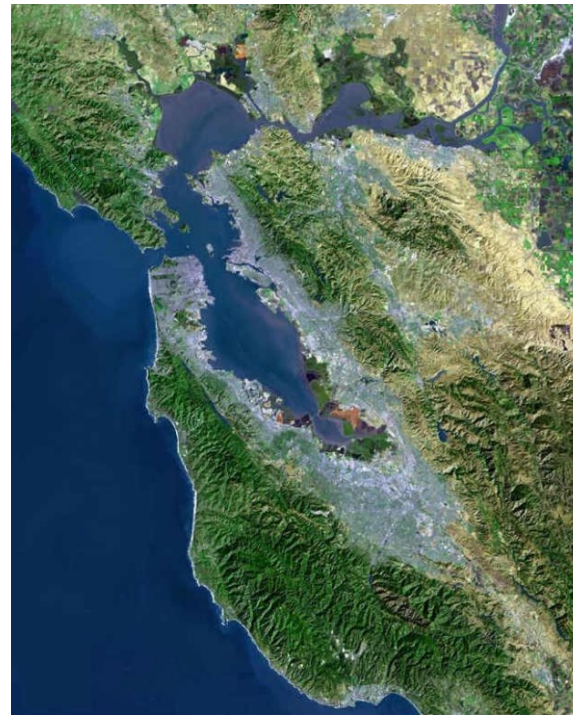
BUSINESS COUNCIL ON
CLIMATE CHANGE



Bay Area SunShares

In partnership with the City of El Cerrito,
Bay Area SunShares offers **discounts on
home solar + storage**

- Learn more by attending a SunShares webinar
- Sign up via SunShares website to get free proposals from pre-vetted installers
- Visit www.bayareasunshares.org
- **Limited Time Discounts: Sept 1st - Nov 15th**



Bay Area SunShares



BUSINESS COUNCIL ON
CLIMATE CHANGE

What is SunShares?

SunShares makes it simple and more affordable for Bay Area residents to go solar + storage by pooling the buying power and negotiating discounts with pre-vetted installers. This allows all of us to accelerate clean energy adoption and build regional resilience to climate change.

**Discounts are available for a limited time in the fall:
September 1st - November 15th, 2024**



Bay Area SunShares



BUSINESS COUNCIL ON
CLIMATE CHANGE

How does SunShares work?

1

We find and vet quality installers

SunShares **pre-vets selected installers** to make sure you're getting the best solar & battery storage products and service.

[Learn more about our Installers](#)

2

We negotiate a discount on solar & storage

For a limited time every year, our installers offer SunShares participants a **discount on turnkey solar and battery storage** installation.

[Learn more about our products and pricing](#)

3

You sign up for SunShares

During the campaign discount season, sign up in the SunShares website to receive zero commitment proposals from our pre-vetted installers - for free!

[Learn more about the SunShares process](#)

4

You choose a installer and sign a contract

Compare proposals, select an installer, and sign a contract to secure the SunShares discount.

[Learn more about solar & battery storage](#)



Bay Area SunShares



BUSINESS COUNCIL ON
CLIMATE CHANGE

Bay Area SunShares Webinar Calendar 2024



SunShares Informational Webinar #1

September 24th, 2024 @ 5 -
6 pm

[Watch Recording](#)



Electrification Exclusive!

October 9th, 2024 @ 5 pm

[Register](#)

with partners from
CLEAResult, Switch Is On,
Ride and Drive Clean!



SunShares Informational Webinar #2

October 16th, 2024 @ 12 -
1 pm

[Register](#)



SunShares Informational Webinar #3

November 7th, 2024 @ 5 - 6
pm

[Register](#)



Bay Area SunShares



BUSINESS COUNCIL ON
CLIMATE CHANGE



Opt Up to 100% Renewable Energy!

Local Incentives & Rebates

How to Opt Up

1

Identify your energy provider

Find the provider for your area using the map below

2

Go to their website

Click on your energy provider's name to power your account with renewable energy

3

Fill out the form

Have your PG&E account number handy for this step!

The Solar Investment Tax Credit

The Solar Investment Tax Credit (ITC) is a Tax Credit to homeowners install renewable energy and is applied to your federal income taxes. **The Solar ITC has been extended for 10 more years!** Learn more on the [U.S. Department of Energy website](#).

The Self Generation Incentive Program Rebate

The Self-Generation Incentive Program (SGIP) helps Californians purchase battery storage to extend their home's electrical power for several hours during power outages. Incentives can cover up to 100% of the purchase costs for customers who have home medical equipment, live in an outage-prone area, or are income-qualified.



- **Electrify Your Home and Ride**

What to consider as you're going solar

1

Learn about your electrification options

Electric appliances and vehicles are safer, healthier, and better for the planet when powered by clean energy! In the Bay Area, there are many programs

2

Improve your home's energy efficiency

The more efficiently you use electricity, the more you'll get out of solar. [BayREN](#) provides free home energy assessments and helps you plan your energy improvements.

[Contact a Home Energy Advisor](#)

3

Plan for your future energy needs

Discuss your electrification and energy efficiency plans with your Selected SunShares Solar Installers. They'll work with you to size your solar system correctly for your future energy needs.

Electrify your Home and your Transportation!

Information, Rebates & Incentives for Bay Area residents

[QuitCarbon](#)

Free expert guidance on upgrading your home's comfort and savings

[BayREN Home +](#)

Rebates for Home Electrification and Energy Efficiency Improvements

[The Switch Is On](#)

Your Guide to Home Electrification

[Ride & Drive Clean](#)

Information & Discounts on Electric Vehicles, Chargers & Other Clean Mobility Options

[EV Rebate and Incentive Calculator from PG&E](#)

Find out about Additional EV Incentives

El Cerrito At A Glance

Customer Enrollment

MCE Participation Rate	91.2%
Deep Green	12.9%
Solar	11.6%
CARE Discount	12%
Medical Baseline	2%

Community Benefits¹

EV Rebates Distributed ²	\$154,000
EV Ports Installed ³	5
Energy Efficiency Rebates Distributed	\$280,780
Total Bill Savings Across MCE Service Area	\$83 Million

- MCE’s Small Business Energy Advantage program is launching October 2024, offering no-cost energy efficiency improvements and audits to qualifying small businesses. This is great opportunity for small businesses in El Cerrito!
- MCE looking forward to working with the El Cerrito’s new Operations and Environmental Division Manager.
- Proud sponsors of El Cerrito’s 4th of July Festival.

¹ Cumulative statistics since joining MCE
² Funds distributed directly to customers
³ Ports installed at public parking lots for small businesses, schools, multifamily housing, and public agencies



MCE Board Vice Chair Quinto attending ribbon cutting for the 1MW Fallon Two Rock Solar Project