

City of Piedmont
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: May 4, 2026

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Rosanna Bayon Moore, City Administrator

SUBJECT: City of Piedmont Home Electrification Strategy Informational Update

RECOMMENDATION

Receive an informational update on the development of the City of Piedmont Home Electrification Strategy. No action required.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Piedmont continues to demonstrate leadership in climate action through implementation of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2.0, alongside updated climate action goals of reducing greenhouse (GHG) emissions to 50% below 2005 levels by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2045.

Ongoing GHG emissions tracking indicates that residential natural gas consumption, primarily for home space and water heating, remains one of the largest sources of community-wide emissions in Piedmont. As a result, achieving Piedmont's climate action goals will require a transition toward home electrification, including the adoption of energy efficiency upgrades, electric appliances, and renewable energy. At the same time, Piedmont's housing stock presents unique considerations for accelerating large-scale electrification: homes, on average, are older, larger, and, hence, less energy efficient than those in other Bay Area cities.

In response to and at the direction of Piedmont City Council, the City Administrator empaneled a task force in 2024 to guide City staff in the development of a comprehensive Home Electrification Strategy (hereby referred to as the Strategy).

This informational report provides the City Council an update on the Strategy and the Electrification Task Force as well as seeks to garner Council's input on the Strategy's program concepts before a first draft is written and published for public comment.

To date, the Strategy's developmental milestones include conducting a housing stock and environmental analysis, compiling best practices, and participating in regional technical committees with shared objectives. City staff have also implemented an engagement plan, including conducting two community surveys, hosting in-person and virtual stakeholder outreach events and meetings, and at the center of it, collaborating with the Electrification Task Force.

Based on the outcome of these efforts, the current proposed Strategy is scoped and structured as a five-year, incentive-based roadmap to accelerate electrification in Piedmont's existing homes. The Strategy's goal is to ensure that all Piedmont homeowners and renters can access the benefits of energy efficiency, electric appliances, and renewable energy by reducing barriers to adoption. To achieve this goal, three strategic objectives with a package of 17 conceptual programs were developed and are phased to build foundational capacity while enabling more complex and impactful action over time.

When and where possible, program implementation has already begun to ensure that the City continues to make impact in tandem with finalizing the Strategy. Long term, program progress will be tracked through relevant performance indicators and integrated into the City's regular GHG emissions inventory and CAP 2.0 reporting framework.

Following this informational report and Council's feedback, City staff will write and publish a draft of the Strategy for public comment. Staff will work with the Electrification Task Force to address all feedback and return to Council with a final draft of the Strategy for consideration.

BACKGROUND

The City of Piedmont has a growing legacy of taking action to mitigate climate change. On March 19, 2018, the City Council adopted the Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2.0, which lays out regulatory and incentive-based mitigation measures across all sectors within Piedmont. On July 17, 2023, the Piedmont City Council updated the CAP 2.0's climate action goals to:

- Achieve municipal and community-scale carbon neutrality no later than the year 2045, and transition to a post-carbon community; as well as
- Establish an interim target of 50% emissions reductions from a 2005 baseline emissions level by the year 2030.

City staff regularly measure and report on progress toward achieving these climate action goals through an inventory of all in-boundary GHG emissions and a CAP 2.0 implementation update. Tracking GHG emissions has highlighted clear patterns and areas of most importance. Particularly, the inventories reveal that year-over-year natural gas consumption in Piedmont's homes, used primarily for space and water heating, contributes almost half of Piedmont's community-wide GHG emissions.

Progressing toward Piedmont's climate action goals will require a transition toward home electrification, including the adoption of energy efficiency upgrades, electric appliances, and renewable energy. At the same time, Piedmont's housing stock presents notable considerations: homes, on average, are older and larger, and, according to Home Energy Score data, less energy efficient than those in other Bay Area cities, creating unique challenges and opportunities for accelerating large-scale electrification.

Electrifying Piedmont's homes is a community-wide effort. The City, among other regional, state, and federal agencies, has an important role to play and is well positioned to encourage homeowners and renters to invest in energy efficiency upgrades, electric appliances, and renewable energy.

Over the last several years, the City has risen to this challenge, spearheading and implementing the following initiatives:

- 2017: The City began partnering with the Bay Area Sunshares Program to offer Piedmont residents options for solar and battery storage bulk purchasing at roughly 15% below average market rates.
- 2018: City Council unanimously adopted automatic enrollment for Piedmont residents into Ava Community Energy's Renewable 100 service.
- 2021: The City Council adopted Ordinance 751 N.S. requiring Home Energy Scores or Assessments at the time of sale or certain renovation projects in Piedmont.
- 2021: The City launched a free Induction Cooktop Lending Program.
- 2022: City Council adopted Ordinance No. 766 N.S. with energy efficiency Reach Codes for homes undergoing major renovations.
- 2023: The City launched a Home Electrification Rebate Program that continues to offer cash rebates to property owners installing electric appliances.
- 2024: The City's hosted the inaugural Sustainability Awards as part of the Planning Commission Design Awards.
- 2025: City Council adopted Ordinance No. 786 N.S. to update energy efficiency Reach Codes for homes undergoing major renovations.

To build on the City's leadership, in February 2023, City Council passed a resolution to "direct the City Administrator to empanel and oversee a task force to develop and implement a strategic plan on existing building electrification, providing information to the community during the process and a final report at its conclusion." The resolution also provided "that the City Administrator is directed to determine the appropriate number of members for the body and ensure the task force is diverse."

At the time, Council emphasized the importance of ensuring the Task Force reflected a broad cross-section of the community, including a diversity in geography with Piedmont, expertise, and socio-economic background; as well as ensuring it represented varied perspectives on climate action. Council also highlighted that program implementation should commence throughout, not only at the conclusion of, the development process.

This informational update provides the City Council an update on the Strategy and the Electrification Task Force, as well as seeks Council's input on the Strategy's program concepts before a first draft is written and published for public comment.

HOME ELECTRIFICATION STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT TO-DATE

Development of the Strategy officially commenced in spring 2024. City staff started with three elements, 1) a project plan and scope, 2) an engagement plan developed with the City's Communications Officer, and 3) recruitment of the task force (the Electrification Task Force).

Project Scope

In establishing the scope of the Strategy, considerations were made to achieve Council's 2023 resolution, as well as integrate, not duplicate, measures in the City's CAP 2.0. The scope also

considers the growing regional- and state- led regulatory and programmatic landscape, which includes:

1. The Bay Area Air District's Rule 9-6 to effectively ban the sale of residential NOx emitting natural gas water heaters in the Bay Area as of 2027.
2. The Bay Area Air District's Rule 9-4 to effectively ban the sale of residential NOx emitting natural gas furnaces in the Bay Area as of 2029.
3. The California Heat Pump Partnership, a public-private partnership to rapidly scale California's heat pump market and achieve Governor Newsom's goal of installing six million heat pumps in California by 2030.
4. Implementation of Senate Bill 1221 (Min), requiring that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) establish a voluntary zonal decarbonization program and designate priority neighborhood decarbonization zones. Currently, Piedmont is not in consideration for this program.

Thus, the Strategy is scoped to take an incentive-based approach, that reduces barriers to adoption and encourages the uptake of energy efficiency upgrades, electric appliances, and renewable energy in Piedmont's existing homes. The Strategy consolidates existing City efforts as well as identifies and maps out future approaches to accelerate home electrification within a five-year period.

Engagement Plan

The Strategy's engagement plan established three objectives to guide the work of City staff on engaging the task force, internal City departments, Council, and the public. Those objectives are:

1. Build community and municipal capacity for implementation of electrification measures across Piedmont.
2. Center equity by capturing and integrating diverse perspectives, experiences, and challenges - particularly from underserved and vulnerable populations - in all elements of strategic development and implementation.
3. Garner support for the Strategy's proposed measures. Ensure that the strategy speaks to Piedmont-specific pain points, barriers, values, and priorities.

Electrification Task Force

At the heart of the engagement plan is the Electrification Task Force, a group of community champions and chief advisors to Sustainability Program Manager Deniz Ergun for the development of the Strategy. Seven community members were recruited to the task force to help ensure full integration of the Strategy's analytical outcomes with community values and perspectives.

Task force members were selected from a pool of applicants to represent a variety of interests, expertise, priorities, and geographical locations within Piedmont. Since inception, the task force has met formally at four sessions, in step with the Strategy's other analytical and engagement milestones. Task force meeting information and summaries can be found on the City's website: www.piedmont.ca.gov/electrificationstrategy.

Data Analysis and Community Engagement

Throughout 2024, City staff conducted a thorough housing stock and environmental analysis and a community survey, which received 263 responses. In combination the resulting data and feedback were used to identify:

1. Piedmont's local electrification pain points;
2. Relevant environmental, social, economic, and health factors; and
3. Potential vulnerable groups to electrification programming.

Then in early 2025, City staff compiled an extensive literature review of electrification strategies from across the United States, with a focus on the Bay Area. City staff, with input from the Task Force, then drafted the Strategy's first iteration of draft program concepts.

Of the draft program concepts, the most complex were presented to the public for further education and input. City staff engaged the public by attending four community-wide events, reaching out to 11 community groups for focused discussions, and by conducting another community survey, which received 73 responses. Some highlights of this phase of engagement included collaborating with the Piedmont Community Church, who invited their congregation and faith leaders from across the community to an evening discussion with City staff on the Strategy's development, as well as attending electrification themed meals with residents and real estate agents at a Piedmonter's home.

ELECTRIFICATION STRATEGY PROPOSED PROGRAMS

The Strategy's draft goal, objectives, and program concepts are a result of the comprehensive analytical and engagement efforts outlined above. As shown below, Staff leveraged opportunities along the way to initiate program implementation in advance of finalizing the Strategy. City staff also continue to participate in regional and statewide technical committees to ensure Piedmont is well positioned to collaborate with others and align with evolving best practices.

Strategy Draft Goal and Objectives

The goal of Piedmont's Home Electrification Strategy will be to ensure all Piedmont homeowners and renters can access the benefits of energy efficiency, electric appliances, and renewable energy by reducing barriers to adoption.

To achieve this goal, three strategic objectives were developed:

- Objective 1. Educate and increase awareness of home electrification benefits, processes, and resources.
- Objective 2. Reduce the time and costs of home electrification.
- Objective 3. Collaborate with and promote regional and state efforts that reduce barriers to home electrification.

Proposed Electrification Programs

A package of 17 programs has been proposed to be fully implemented or initiated over a five-year period to meet the Strategy's objectives. The programs are phased and designed to build on each

other, with most beginning in the first phase to develop the foundational capacity for more complex programming over time.

The programs are organized by objective and outlined in tables 1, 2, and 3. They are intentionally drafted to be conceptual, not detailed, in nature to account for a rapidly evolving electrification landscape as well as to enable flexibility and the ability for more precise design at the time of implementation.

When the Strategy is drafted, each program description will include information on the (1) specific Piedmont barriers addressed, (2) anticipated implementation timeline, (3) estimated implementation costs to the City, and (4) program leads and collaborators. Impacted City staff outside of the Sustainability Division have been engaged to verify that internal policies, procedures, and capacity will realistically allow for implementation.

Measuring Progress

The Strategy will also identify relevant performance indicators to track implementation progress and impact. City staff intend to embed progress reports with the regular GHG inventory and CAP 2.0 implementation update to City Council.

To accommodate for the additional capacity needed by the Sustainability Division to implement the Strategy, the Division will reduce community-wide GHG inventories from an annual exercise to once every two years. Biennial inventories still exceed the City's requirements under the Carbon Disclosure Project and Global Covenant of Mayor, while facilitating more time for program implementation and impact building. The Sustainability Division can continue to provide the City Council with a CAP 2.0 implementation update annually.

Table 1. Program proposed to achieve Objective 1: Educate and increase awareness of home electrification benefits, processes, and resources.

Draft Program Concepts	Implementation Kickoff Timeline	Barriers Addressed	Costs to the City
1. Develop peer-to-peer, resident networks for information sharing on lessons learned, resources, and contractor recommendations.	Phase 1 – Implementation began in 2025	Informational, social/cultural – The desire for Piedmont residents to hear from each other came up as a theme throughout engagement. Residents are looking for real-world and local examples, recommendations, and to connect with experienced neighbors and peers.	Staff Time
2. Update the City’s website to create a resource hub for home electrification.	Phase 1	Informational, social/cultural – Electrification information is complex and often confusing. The City can help with clear and concise information and direct links to key regional, state, and national websites with vetted resources and incentive tools.	Staff Time / Fiscal Year (FY) 26-27 Budget Proposal: as part of City-wide update
3. Foster long-term relationships with community groups to promote electrification and garner feedback on program implementation.	Phase 1 – Implementation began in 2025	Informational, social/cultural – To ensure the Strategy continues to speak to the priorities of all, the City will check back in with stakeholders, particularly those in vulnerable communities, on an ongoing basis.	Staff Time
4. Develop a long-term approach for promoting electrification through information campaigns.	Phase 1	Informational, social/cultural – Residents have different priorities. It is critical for information to not only highlight the direct benefits of electrification, but also the co-benefits to health, home comfort, resiliency, and more.	Staff Time
5. Host annual Sustainability Awards to recognize and promote early adopters of electrification.	Phase 1 – Implementation began in 2024	Informational, social/cultural – The desire for Piedmont residents to hear from each other came up as a theme from our engagement. The awards showcase early adopters and leaders in home electrification.	Staff Time / FY 26-27 Budget Proposal: part of Sustainability Division budget
6. Develop a cost analysis to demonstrate the short and long cost implications of electrification in Piedmont-specific home archetypes.	Phase 1	Informational, social/cultural – Piedmont homes are older and bigger than most in the Bay Area. As such, existing cost studies of electrification packages are not relevant to Piedmont’s housing stock.	Staff Time/ FY 26-27 Budget Proposal: \$40,000

Table 2. Program proposed to achieve Objective 2: Reduce the time and costs of home electrification.

Draft Program Concepts	Implementation Kickoff Timeline	Barriers Addressed	Costs to the City
7. Update and expand Piedmont's Electrification Rebate Program.	Phase 1 – Implementation began in 2025	Financial – Capital costs associated with electrification were by far the most common barrier highlighted by Piedmont residents. See May 4, 2026 Council Agenda Item City of Piedmont Home Electrification Rebate Program Update for more information.	Staff Time/ FY 26-27 Budget Proposal: \$50,000
8. Create a pilot program for a set number of homes to undergo an electrification planning exercise.	Phase 2	Financial, technical, informational, lead times - Home electrification plans are a recognized tool to reduce the capital cost of electrification.	Staff Time / Estimated \$500-\$1,000 a home
9. Explore a neighborhood-level electrical upgrade/ direct install program.	Phase 3	Financial, lead times – Neighborhood level approaches may reduce individual costs and lead times by consolidating larger-scale installation and inspections processes.	Staff Time / \$75,000 estimated for consulting services
10. Launch a limited-offer smart panel direct install and education program.	Phase 3	Financial, technical, lead times – The complexity of upgrading electrical panel capacity was a key identified barrier to electrification. Smart panels and circuits can allow households to install electric appliances without requiring a costly and time-consuming panel upgrades.	Staff Time / \$4,000 a unit, about \$10,000 estimated for equipment and installation
11. Update the City of Piedmont Design Guidelines for heat pumps	Phase 1 – Implementation began in 2025	Financial, technical, informational, lead times – Reduce requirements for design review.	Staff Time
12. Explore options for refining the heat pump related permitting and data gathering processes	Phase 1 – Implementation began in 2025	Technical, informational, lead times – While most residents expressed that permits by utilities caused the longest delays, there are opportunities to explore how City permitting processes can be further standardized with other Bay Area communities and potentially streamlined.	Staff Time

Table 3. Program proposed to achieve Objective 3: Collaborate with and promote regional and state efforts that reduce barriers to home electrification.

Draft Program Concepts	Implementation Kickoff Timeline	Barriers Addressed	Costs to the City
13. Continue to offer the City's free induction cooktop lending program.	Phase 1 – Program launched in 2021. Partnership approach began in 2024	Financial, informational, social/cultural – Of all the common electric appliance technology, Piedmont residents expressed the biggest pushback to induction stoves, typically because of their experience with traditional electric stoves. In partnership with Acterra, this program allows residents to gain real experience with induction at no cost to them.	Staff Time/ City invested roughly \$700 in four cooktops in 2021.
14. Partner with bulk purchasing organizations for technology discounts.	Phase 1 – Underway for solar and battery since 2017	Informational, social/cultural – Several Bay Area entities are collaborating to establish a bulk purchasing program for heat pump hot water heaters.	Staff Time
15. Share electrification concierge and planning services and form trusted local and regional partners.	Phase 1	Informational – Resources exist that provide the advisory services to residents interested in electrifying their homes. Rather than recreate these services on a small scale, City staff can vet and connect residents to existing and well-established resources.	Staff Time
16. Pursue partnerships with cities on workforce development.	Phase 1 – Implementation began in 2025	Technical, informational – Several Bay Area entities are collaborating to provide workforce training. Workforce development seeks to train more contractors in electrification to help drive more competitive pricing.	Staff Time
17. Support state legislation that aligns with the goals, objectives, and programs in this strategy.	Phase 1	Ongoing support for state action and resourcing supports all the Piedmont specific electrification barriers.	Staff Time

CONCLUSION, COUNCIL ACTION AND NEXT STEPS:

Piedmont's Home Electrification Strategy seeks to advance the City of Piedmont toward its 2030 and 2045 climate action goals. The development of the Strategy builds on the City's existing leadership and is the next step in addressing home natural gas consumption, which consistently accounts for almost half of the City's community-wide GHG emissions.

Once drafted, the Strategy intends to be a data-driven and community-informed five-year pathway to ensure all Piedmonters, regardless of resources, can access the benefits of energy efficiency, electric appliances, and renewable energy upgrades in their homes. The Strategy's programs are designed to balance the evolving regional and state electrification landscape, account for ongoing CAP 2.0 implementation, respond directly to Piedmont-specific barriers and priorities, and be practically achievable given the constraints of City staff and stakeholder capacity.

Following this informational report and Council's feedback, City staff will prepare and publish a draft of the Strategy for public comment. Staff will work with the Electrification Task Force to address all feedback and return to Council with a final draft of the Strategy for consideration.

REVIEW BY CITY ATTORNEY:

This informational report has been reviewed and approved by the City Attorney.

FISCAL IMPACT

To achieve the goal and objectives identified for Piedmont's Home Electrification Strategy, 17 program concepts have been proposed, each with estimated costs to the City. Phase 1 programs are anticipated to require either staff time or will utilize previously approved FY 25-26 budget and/or have been proposed in the FY 26-27 budget. Phase 2 and 3 draft programs would require additional budget, estimated to be a combined minimum of \$100,000 (but could be scaled higher for greater impact) over a three-year period that would be considered for budget approval as early as FY 28-29.

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