



Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning
817 Montgomery Street
Mountain View, CA 94041

October 22, 2019

Mountain View City Council
City Hall, 500 Castro Street
PO Box 7540
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540

Re: Strong Support for Item 6.1 Ordinances Amending Chapters 8, 14, and 24 of the City Code to Adopt the 2019 California and 2018 International Codes, Incorporating by Reference Other Uniform Codes, and Adopt Reach Codes, with specific emphasis on Reach Codes.

Dear Mayor Matichak and City Council members:

The Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning (MVCSP) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the upcoming building code ordinances, with specific emphasis on the Reach Codes. We thank you for all the attention to detail that will protect the safety and health of our community, and for protecting the climate with Reach Codes.

Mountain View's proposed Reach Code ordinance is among the top ten Reach Codes proposed so far in the entire state of California, and stands out along with Menlo Park and San Jose regionally, in taking a strong stance to eliminate gas from our buildings. We are proud to see Mountain View take this position. We are pleased Mountain View chose an **all-electric, gas-prohibiting code** over the SVCE/PCE models for the simplicity in implementation for planning and building staff, builders and developers, and the impact it will have in encouraging all-electric development. We believe the elimination of gas space and water heating in residential units, in particular, will likely discourage gas hookups for other uses in many cases.

Natural gas has no place in the future of Mountain View. It is methane, a potent greenhouse gas, causing 95% more greenhouse gas emissions from well to meter due to leaks than it does when combusted. Costs are skyrocketing, with PG&E asking for a 24% increase and SoCal Gas asking for a 42% increase by 2022. Future legislation will most assuredly ban gas from buildings. Prices will go up more as demand goes down due to electrification. Building with gas today leaves future consumers with expensive infrastructure that will need to be retrofitted and burdens the system with stranded gas assets, all the while creating more greenhouse gas emissions. It makes sense to aggressively eliminate gas now to protect Mountain View's future.

We have some minor modifications that we hope you will consider to encourage even more electrification as follows:

- **Ban gas cooktops in single family residential residences.** Following the Menlo Park example, exemptions could be made in some cases. Gas cooktops are dangerous: They are the leading cause of house fires and burns, are the leading cause of carbon monoxide poisoning, and are potent sources of indoor air pollution, emitting fine particulate matter, nitrous oxide, and formaldehyde. Gas cooktops are known to cause and exacerbate asthma and other respiratory diseases. On the positive side, 92% of people who cook on an induction cooktop instantly agree that the experience is as good or better as cooking on a gas cooktop. High end models now exist to appease the more gourmet of home chefs.
- **Ban gas cooktops in commercial cooking, allowing for exemptions in some cases.** Commercial chefs are embracing induction cooking due to the incredible safety benefits provided, the fact that the kitchen remains MUCH cooler (which is better for staff and air conditioning load), and for the ease of maintenance. Some chefs who have embraced this way of cooking are Wolfgang Puck and Thomas Keller.
- **Consider extending the Reach Code to major retrofits, where at least 50% of the house is modified, or to requiring all-electric kitchens if a kitchen is remodeled to the level requiring a permit.**

Additionally, we want Mountain View to consider future measures before the next code cycle in 2022. We ask Mountain View to work on the following:

- A complete ban on gas in new construction.
- Acceleration of the electric retrofit program featured in SAP-4, with emphasis on incentives and extensive public outreach, and establishment of a goal, with intermediate goals, to have all households retrofitted to all-electric by 2040.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'IdaRose Sylvester', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

IdaRose Sylvester
for the Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning

cc:

Dan Rich, City Manager

Shellie Woodworth, Chief Building Official

Juan F. Diaz, Fire Chief

Brian Jones, Deputy Fire Chief

Aarti Shrivastava, Assistant City Manager/ Community Development Director

Steve Attinger, Environmental Sustainability Coordinator

Lisa Natusch, City Clerk

About Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning

The Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning is a group of local volunteers dedicated to making Mountain View as beautiful, economically healthy, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian accessible, and affordable as possible. MVCSP member interest and expertise covers areas such as housing, transportation, the environment, the economy, and beyond!

For more information, see <http://www.mvcsp.org>.

To contact us, send email to mvcsp.info@gmail.com.