

**City of Arcata Energy Committee  
Annual Report to the City Council  
Presented July 2021**

The Energy Committee meets on the third Monday of odd-numbered months and serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council, City Manager and City staff in energy matters related to policies, management and projects. The Committee held three meetings during 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**2020 Committee members include:**

George Williamson, Chair

Gwelen Paliaga

Mahayla Slackerelli, Vice Chair

Andrea Alstone

Scott Coss (January - September)

Mike Kowalski

Jim Zoellick

**Committee Staff**

Julie Neander, Staff Liaison

Emily Benvie, Staff Liaison

**I. ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Energy Committee was involved in the following activities in 2020:

George Williamson was re-elected to serve as Chair and Mahayla Slackerelli was re-elected to serve as Vice Chair. The Committee confirmed their meeting schedule, in which they hold regular meetings on odd-numbered months only.

**Arcata All Electric Initiative** – Continued work to develop a 15-year plan to phase out Natural Gas City-wide including looking at strategies to require and/or incentivize private development to utilize all electric construction, electrification reach codes, and natural gas prohibition for new construction. The Energy Committee's overall strategy for developing recommendations for the 15-year plan for electrification includes:

- 1) Review new construction electrification options to consider and recommend
- 2) Review options for retrofitting existing buildings to reduce dependence on natural gas and promote electrification (ongoing energy efficiency upgrade options as well as reach codes or other code modifications for existing buildings)
- 3) Review options for gas appliance replacement to electric opportunities to encourage/require electric appliances
- 4) Consider equity issues related to the above as upfront and ongoing financial costs can be higher
- 5) Consider the need for resiliency in power sources as evidenced by recent Public Safety Power Shutdown events

**City Facilities** – The Committee received reports from staff about electric vehicles charging stations within the City as well as battery storage grant opportunities for the Wastewater Treatment Plant, pump stations, City Hall, and Community Center.

**Collaboration with Local Agencies** – The Committee continues to consult and work collaboratively with Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) and other Humboldt County municipalities on numerous energy and climate-related issues.

**Reach Codes** — Reach Code Subcommittee researched Reach Codes and natural gas moratoriums for improving building energy efficiency/reducing Greenhouse gases. This includes exploring all electric options for new construction and remodels. .

**Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA)** — This past year, the committee received regular reports from RCEA on potential new local renewable energy sources such as offshore wind and local microgrids, power storage and long-term resiliency, and other RCEA initiatives.

**Transportation Mode Shift** - This area has been incorporated into the analysis options for the Regional Climate Action Plan.

## **II. GOALS FOR COMING YEAR**

At their 3/15/2021 meeting, the Energy Committee approved the following Goals for the 21/22 Fiscal Year.

- 1) **Arcata Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan/Climate Action Plan** - Continue to work with the County to develop a regional plan and update the City's current plan with consideration of adopting thresholds of significance for Arcata.
- 2) **Transportation Mode Shift** - Consistent with the Climate Action Plan - continue work related to shifting transportation toward walking, biking, public transportation and electric modes of transport - including outreach projects on walking/biking maps, walkability.
- 3) **Arcata All Electric Initiative** - Continue work to decarbonize and electrify buildings using a range of options, and investigate options to increase equity and affordability of electrification.
- 4) **Explore low carbon options for community resiliency** - Explore the benefit of solar with battery backup options.