


Agenda Report Reviewed by:
 City Manager: 

**CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
 CITY COUNCIL
 AGENDA ITEM**

Meeting Date: September 5th, 2023
To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Climate Action Committee / Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director
Subject: Consider and Discuss the Climate Action Committee’s survey
Recommendation: Discussion of Electrification Survey Results.
Funding: Currently Budgeted: Yes No Not Applicable

Account Code: N/A

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: Yes (Finance Initialed _____) No (Finance Exempt)

INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE:

This item is for the City Council to Discuss and Consider the Electrification Survey results published by the Climate Action Committee.

BACKGROUND/ DISCUSSION:

The Climate Action Committee conducted a brief survey in March and April 2023 to learn more about the residents of Sebastopol’s views regarding switching from natural gas to electricity in their homes. The intention of the survey was to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality in Sebastopol. Below is the outline is how the survey was developed and administered by the Climate Action Committee.

Electrification Survey Results

Why

The survey was undertaken to help the Climate Action Committee to make informed recommendations to the City as to how to increase residential electrification. The Climate Action Committee wanted to measure public awareness and interest in the new highly efficient electric appliances. The survey was also intended to help capture the awareness of the available electrification incentives and the barriers to installation. The idea of the survey was to use results to help the committee and other organizations target education efforts and design programs to help residents in their electrification efforts.

Background

The survey was conceived by, written by and the results interpreted by the volunteer Climate Action Committee Energy Working Group. The Climate Action Committee and staff gave suggestions on the survey questions. Survey feedback was also given by the [Building Decarbonation Coalition](#) and Sonoma Clean Power.

Timeline

Presented first draft in September 2022 included survey draft and equity matrix

CAC approved survey in December 2022
Updated CAC in January 2023
Survey started March 1 ended April 30
Results presented to CAC in July 2023
Presentation of results and follow up from CAC to Council – pending (likely October 2023)

Methodology/Participation

The survey was performed entirely online. It was publicized in the City’s digital newsletter, some posts on social media, flyers around town, and tabling efforts at various events. The survey received 515 responses of which 327 were within the city of Sebastopol.

Key Points

The following conclusions summarize the takeaways to the responses received:

- Awareness that new technologies exist is fairly high but the details about them are not well understood.
- Cost is the primary barrier to implementing electrification.
- Reliability of the electrical grid, especially during power shut-offs, is a concern. Dependable electricity supply needs to be assured.
- Contractors and installer acceptance are the key to selling the change.
- Consumers confuse the cost of electric appliances of the past with the new electric options. These new options are four times the efficiency of standard electric resistance heating and twice the efficiency of air conditioning units from twenty years ago, thereby reducing operating costs considerably.
- Financial options to help consumers are not easily accessed.
- Many responses suggest that citizens believe that the City of Sebastopol is the initiator of retiring the gas infrastructure

The report of the Electrification Survey results is informational and there will be a future presentation and discussion brought forward to the City Council at a later date.

GOALS:

This action supports the following General Plan Actions and City Council Goals:

Goal 1: Maintain the Long Term Financial Stability and Sustainability of the City of Sebastopol and Operate City Government in a Fiscally Responsible Manner

Goal 2: Maintain, Improve and Invest in the City’s Infrastructure (Water, Streets, Sewers, Parks, Storm Drains and Public Facilities)

PUBLIC COMMENT:

As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment. However, if staff receives public comments 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 the scheduled meeting date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the recommended action tonight. However, the City could see a revenue generation through Building permit fees.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive the Electrification Survey results. The Climate Action Committee will provide a presentation and discussion of the results and follow-up actions at a future City council meeting il to discuss.

ATTACHMENTS:

Link for more information:

<https://ci.sebastopol.ca.us/our-community/sustainability-conservation-measures/>

Look for the Electrification Survey tab to find related documents.

Electrification Survey Results August, 2023

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