

MOTION

Buildings are the largest source of carbon emissions across Los Angeles, and they account for 32% of the City of Los Angeles' emissions within our municipal sector. If we are to become a carbon-neutral city, then we must begin the process of implementing an aggressive decarbonization and electrification program for our municipal buildings now.

Building decarbonization includes the implementations of energy efficiency measures, the electrification of gas-powered building systems, and generation of renewable energy. By undertaking multi-pronged, complementary decarbonization strategies in our municipal buildings, we can reduce operational costs, improve local air quality, and demonstrate solutions that can be replicated in the private sector and in other cities throughout Los Angeles County and beyond.

As our electric grid has shifted to cleaner, renewable energy sources, the electrification of previously gas-powered systems within our City buildings, in particular, has become an increasingly critical step to reduce the City's total carbon emissions. From 2008 to 2017, municipal building emissions from electricity sources fell 44% due to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's evolving electrical energy-generation mix. In the same time period, however, power that was used on-site by gas-powered equipment like HVAC systems, chillers, and boilers, only saw a 3% emissions reduction.

Fully electrifying our City buildings will also have significant health benefits for our communities. Burning combustible fuels in buildings produces air pollutants indoors as well as outdoors. The negative health impacts that result from these air pollutants are disproportionately felt by vulnerable, frontline communities. To reduce and reverse these impacts, it is critical that the City lead by example in reducing emissions from municipal assets that contribute to this pollution.

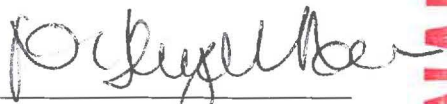
Fortunately, some of the initial steps that will allow the City to begin this work in earnest have already been taken. In the course of complying with the Existing Building Energy and Water Ordinance, the General Services Department has already commissioned over 100 energy and water building audits. These audits have served as a valuable first step, indicating which buildings are our highest energy consumers and offering insights into interventions that will help reduce energy consumption. Now, these audits can also be used as the basis for preparing building decarbonization/electrification plans. In addition, the LA100 study has already demonstrated that as we decarbonize our energy grid, there will be substantial opportunities to decarbonize our building sector as well—and that in doing so, health benefits will rise as costs fall.

Los Angeles has no path to becoming a carbon-neutral city without a bold and robust building decarbonization effort. We know our goal, and we know that it has never been more urgent. The time to begin the hard work of getting there is now.

JUN 16 2021

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council direct the General Services Department, working with the Bureau of Engineering, the Recreation and Parks Department, the Los Angeles Public Library, the City Administrative Officer, and any other City departments as needed, to report back within 60 days with an assessment that will identify the staffing and/or contractual services needed to develop a full cost-estimate, timeline, and plan to retrofit prioritized municipally-owned buildings to achieve net-zero energy. The assessment should build upon the previously performed energy and water audits and account for the development of: (1) a prioritization methodology to identify buildings with maximum projected benefits of retrofits; and (2) a procurement/funding plan for immediate retrofitting of the top-ten high-priority buildings to serve as a model for the process of decarbonizing/electrifying the remainder of the City's municipal buildings going forward. Finally, the assessment should consider the advantages of pursuing a contract for retrofits through an energy service contract, a Request for Qualifications process, and a Request for Proposal process, making a recommendation on which type of procurement process the City should pursue in order to retrofit the entire municipal building portfolio.

PRESENTED BY:


NITHYA RAMAN
Councilmember, 4th District

SECONDED BY:



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