

August 1, 2022

San Rafael City Council
1400 Fifth Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

RE: Response to Grand Jury on Electrification

Honorable Mayor and Council Members,

On behalf of OFA Marin, I recommend a proactive response to the excellent report from the Marin Grand Jury calling for Electrification of Marin's Buildings. Among the reasons is the likely prospect of considerable funding from Federal and State initiatives to implement building electrification ordinances in the near future.

We urge you to follow Grand Jury recommendations R1 and R2. R1 adopts a reach code requiring new buildings to be all electric while R2 incentivizes electrification when renovating existing buildings. The January 1, 2023 target, set by the Grand Jury, can be met by using the countywide model ordinance recommendations now being finalized by the County, San Rafael and other jurisdictions.

We also urge your continued participation with towns and cities to implement recommendation R3 to develop a comprehensive Countywide Building Electrification Plan by January 1, 2024. See the thoughtful letter submitted to you by the Marin Conservation League. Also, the Grand Jury Report includes a number of economically sound strategies for meeting that challenge.

We appreciate the Staff report findings that all three recommendations require further analysis, which staff is undertaking, and that countywide collaboration is under way. We urge making every effort to meet the Grand Jury Report deadlines.

All three recommendations align with San Rafael Climate Change Action Plan 2022 priority actions, your findings adopting the EIR for General Plan 2040, and the General Plan itself – which calls for “electrification of building systems and appliances in new buildings and those that currently use natural gas . . . by requiring new or replacement furnaces and appliances to be electric.”

Now is an opportune time for implementing a feasible climate solution, like building electrification. If the amazing **Inflation Reduction Act of 2022** becomes law, San Rafael and the County will be in a unique position to take full advantage of the new proposed funding for clean energy and electrification of buildings. Similarly, local government can benefit from California climate change initiatives. New investments in this year’s budget bring California’s multi-year climate commitment to \$53.9 billion. Of this, \$4.3 billion is allocated to support energy reliability, provide relief to ratepayers, create strategic energy reserves and accelerate clean energy projects.

We are appreciative of the City’s continuing climate change leadership.

Sincerely,

Belle Cole, Chair
San Rafael