

Date: May 16, 2012

To: Albany City Council

From: Sustainability Committee

RE: Request to Encourage Continued Clean Energy Research by EBMUD

The City's Climate Action Plan (CAP) includes policies to increase the use of renewable energy. In order to reach the greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals stated in the CAP, the Committee has been researching sources for renewable energy. In this regard, the Committee is exploring the feasibility of using Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) for the acquisition of renewable energy.

As stated in Measure BE 4.3 of the CAP, CCA enables cities and counties, either individually or as groups, to supply electricity to customers within their borders. In April, a presentation was made to the Sustainability Committee by LEAN Energy, a national network organization formed to support the accelerated expansion and competitive success of clean energy CCAs nationwide. According to LEAN Energy:

CCA allows cities and counties to pool the electricity demand of their residential, business, and municipal accounts in order to purchase or develop power on their behalf. Energy transmission, distribution, repair and customer service functions remain with the incumbent utility.

The benefits of a CCA are directly relevant to GHG reduction efforts because communities are able to proactively determine the amount of GHG-free energy (e.g., renewable, hydro-electric, nuclear) they purchase. For instance, if the CCA purchased 100% of its electricity from GHG-free sources, this approach alone would achieve a 25% reduction of GHG by 2020, based on 2004 levels. CCA may impact the cost of utilities. Therefore, residents would be allowed to 'opt out' of the program before implementation.

Recommendation:

It has come to the attention of the Committee that the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) is currently looking into the use of CCA for the same purpose. They have met with several cities in the region to discuss the feasibility of CCA, including Berkeley and Richmond.

The Sustainability Committee therefore requests that the City Council inform the East Bay Municipal Utility District Board of Directors and General Manager Alexander R. Coate that the City of Albany encourages them to continue work toward a determination on Community Choice Aggregation as a method of purchasing renewable energy, and state the City's interest in discussing a potential collaboration.

Sincerely,

Thomas Cooper, Chair

Sustainability Committee