



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: 2/15/2023
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: Teleconference and
City Hall Downtown Conference Room, 1st Floor
701 Laurel St., Menlo Park. CA 94025

A. Call To Order

Chair Kabat called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Elkins, Evans (exited at 8:04 p.m.), Hedley (Vice Chair), Kabat (Chair), Lin (exited at 7:39 p.m.), McKenna, Schmidt
Absent: None
Staff: Sustainability Manager Rebecca Lucky, Management Analyst II Ori Paz

C. Public Comment

- Pam Jones spoke in support of the Environmental Quality Commission attending the community meeting regarding the environmental justice (EJ) element.

D. Regular Business

- D1. Approve the January 18, 2023 Environmental Quality Commission regular meeting minutes (Attachment)

ACTION: Motion and second (Hedley/ Elkins), to approve the January 18, 2023 Environmental Quality Commission regular meeting minutes, passed unanimously.

- D2. Review and discuss proposed changes to garage and side and rear yard rules to facilitate electrification for existing single-family homes

Chair Kabat introduced the item.

Management Analyst Paz gave the presentation (Attachment).

- Jen Today shared spoke on concerns related to challenges with existing requirements.
- Diane Bailey spoke in support of streamlined permitting for electrification.

ACTION: Motion and second (McKenna/ Evans), to recommend the following to the City Council:

- Eliminate restrictions in the garage for car space for electrification projects, with fallback to 9 feet by 17 feet standard, reduced to 9 feet by 16.5 feet for homes with driveways,
- Allow outdoor enclosure for electrification of any footprint shape provided it does not impose on egress, or exceed 15 square feet in area or exceed the height of the first floor,

- Adjust the Noise Ordinance limitations for electrification equipment to remove 50 decibel (dB) limit at nighttime and set to 60 dB regardless of the time of day,
- Explore providing a financial incentive for quieter equipment,
- Allow heat pump equipment in the front yard in a screened enclosure if side and rear yards are not viable, passed unanimously.

D3. Review and discuss a collaboration model proposed by the outreach and engagement subcommittee (Attachment)

Chair Kabat introduced the item.

Commissioner Schmidt gave the presentation.

- Pam Jones spoke in support of the Commission.
- Ezio spoke in support of accessible outreach materials.

The Commission discussed a model to identify organizations and attend public meetings as individuals and report back to the Commission.

The Commission directed the outreach and collaboration subcommittee to research organizations and return with a full presentation on the proposed model for attending and reporting on other groups through consensus.

D4. Review and assign commissioners to current subcommittees (Attachment)

ACTION: Motion and second (Hedley/ McKenna), to add Commissioners Lin and McKenna to the Climate Adaptation subcommittee and Commissioner McKenna to the Transportation Decarbonization Subcommittee, passed 5-0 (Evans and Lin absent).

E. Reports and Announcements

E1. Reports and Announcements from staff and commissioners

Sustainability Manager Lucky provided updates regarding:

- Outreach for the Zero Emission Landscape Equipment discount program
- City Council approval of Environmental Quality Commission workplan

Management Analyst II Paz provided an update on climate action plan (CAP) No. 5 efforts to eliminate fossil fuel from city operations, highlighting the Peninsula Clean Energy (PCE) solar and battery program site walks, water heater electrification for City facilities, Tesla Pilot update, and PCE fleet program for fleet EV charging.

Commissioner Schmidt provided updates on the efforts of the outreach subcommittee, Environmental Justice Element meetings, and the tree meetings on the urban forest master plans.

Vice-Chair Hedley reported on community events.

Commissioner Elkins provided an update on the Environmental Justice Element.

Commissioner McKenna provided an update on the Love Our Earth festival planned for April 22,

2023, and requested additional community engagement for the Climate Action.

F. Adjournment

Chair Kabat adjourned the meeting at 8:04 p.m.

Ori Paz, Management Analyst II

Minutes approved at the April 27, 2023 Environmental Quality Commission meeting.



GARAGE AND SETBACK RULE CHANGES TO HELP EXISTING BUILDINGS ELECTRIFY

February 15, 2023 Environmental Quality Commission – Presented by Ori Paz



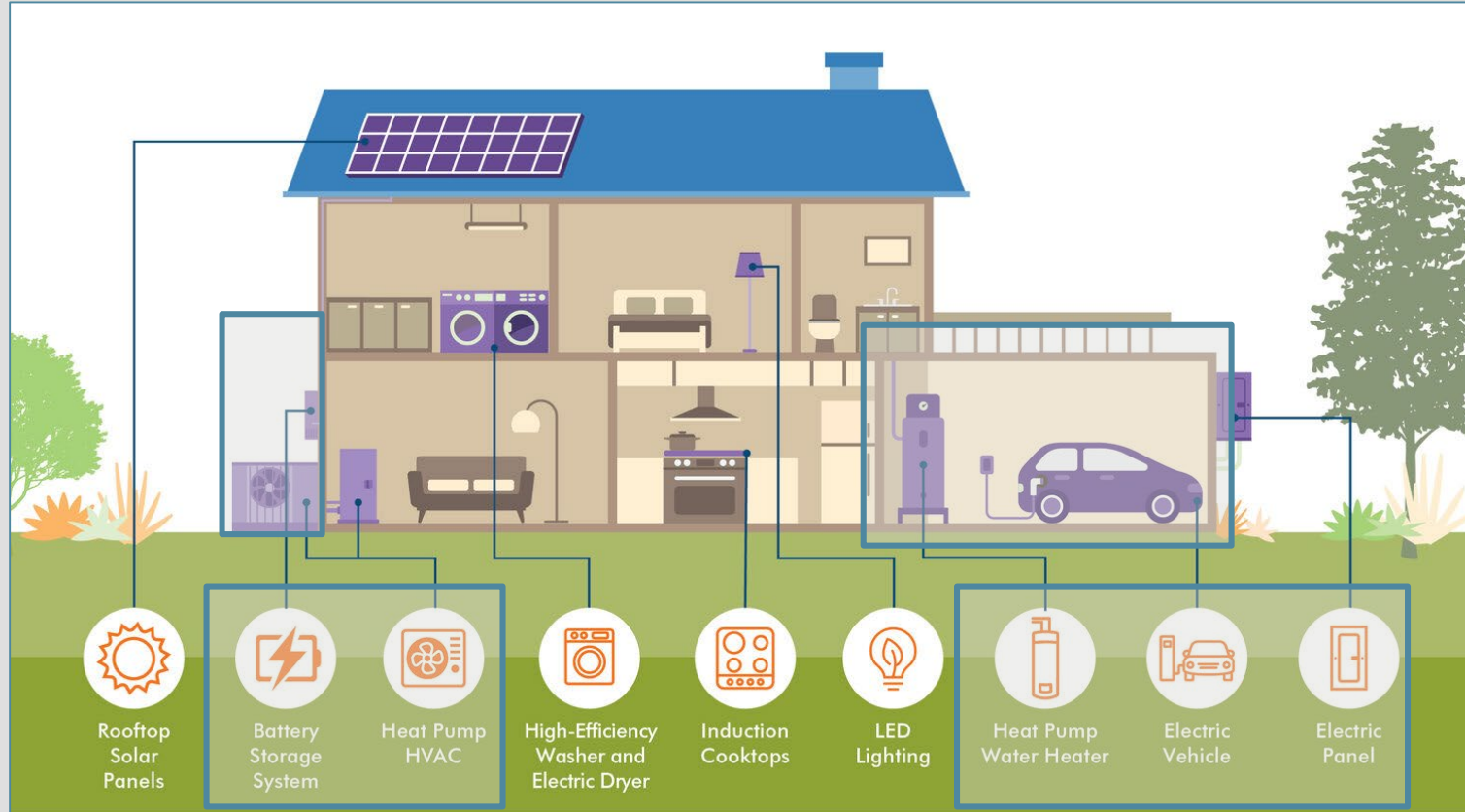


AGENDA

- Background
- Why change garage and setback rules?
- Overview of recommended changes
- Next steps
- Questions/discussion



BACKGROUND: WHAT IS ELECTRIFICATION



Tonight's
Topic
Items

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF CITY OF PALO ALTO UTILITIES

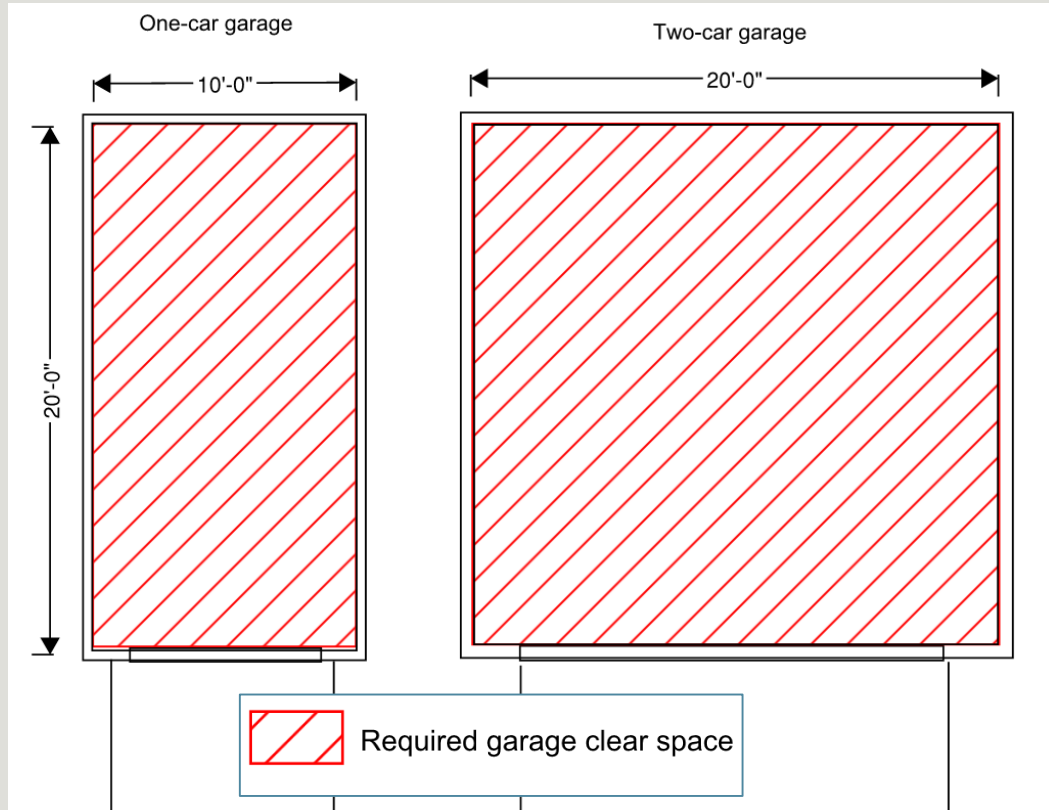


BACKGROUND

- Electrification replaces fossil fuel-burning appliances with electric options
- Heat pumps work best inside the home where they can use the existing warmer air
- Heat pump water heaters replacing gas equipment are often upsized to buffer slower heating time and cannot fit in the same place as the old equipment (e.g. 50 gal HPWH for 30 gal gas WH)
- Garages and weatherproof enclosures are suitable heat pump locations, but current garage and side/rear yard rules may prevent using these options
- Met with Building Decarbonization subcommittee and Planning and Transportation staff to discuss rule changes

CURRENT GARAGE RULES EXAMPLE

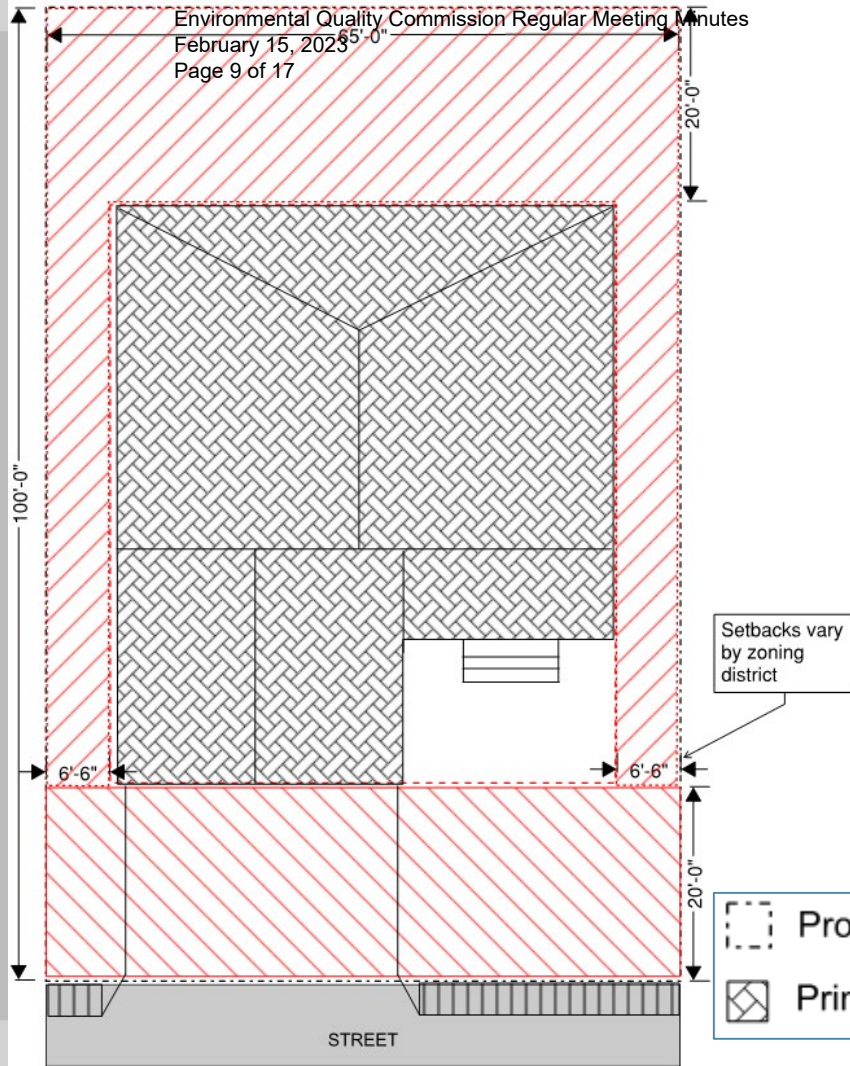
- Two on-site parking spaces are required (minimum one covered and one uncovered) for a single-family home
 - The covered space(s) must be 10 feet by 20 feet per vehicle
- Only vehicles are allowed within the required clear parking areas





REQUIRED YARDS SPACE:

- Every property has required yard space (setbacks) that limit how close buildings and structures can be to the property lines
- Certain equipment is allowed within the required yards but enclosures are not currently allowed





CURRENT RULE CHALLENGES

- Covered parking must be clear of obstructions/intrusions within the required parking areas
- Certain equipment is allowed within the required yard space but enclosures are not currently allowed
- Implementing potential rules for existing building to electrify (Reach Codes 2.0) may be impacted if garage space and required yard flexibility is not modified to allow some level of use for electric equipment.
- Staff recommends modifying these rules for existing single-family homes



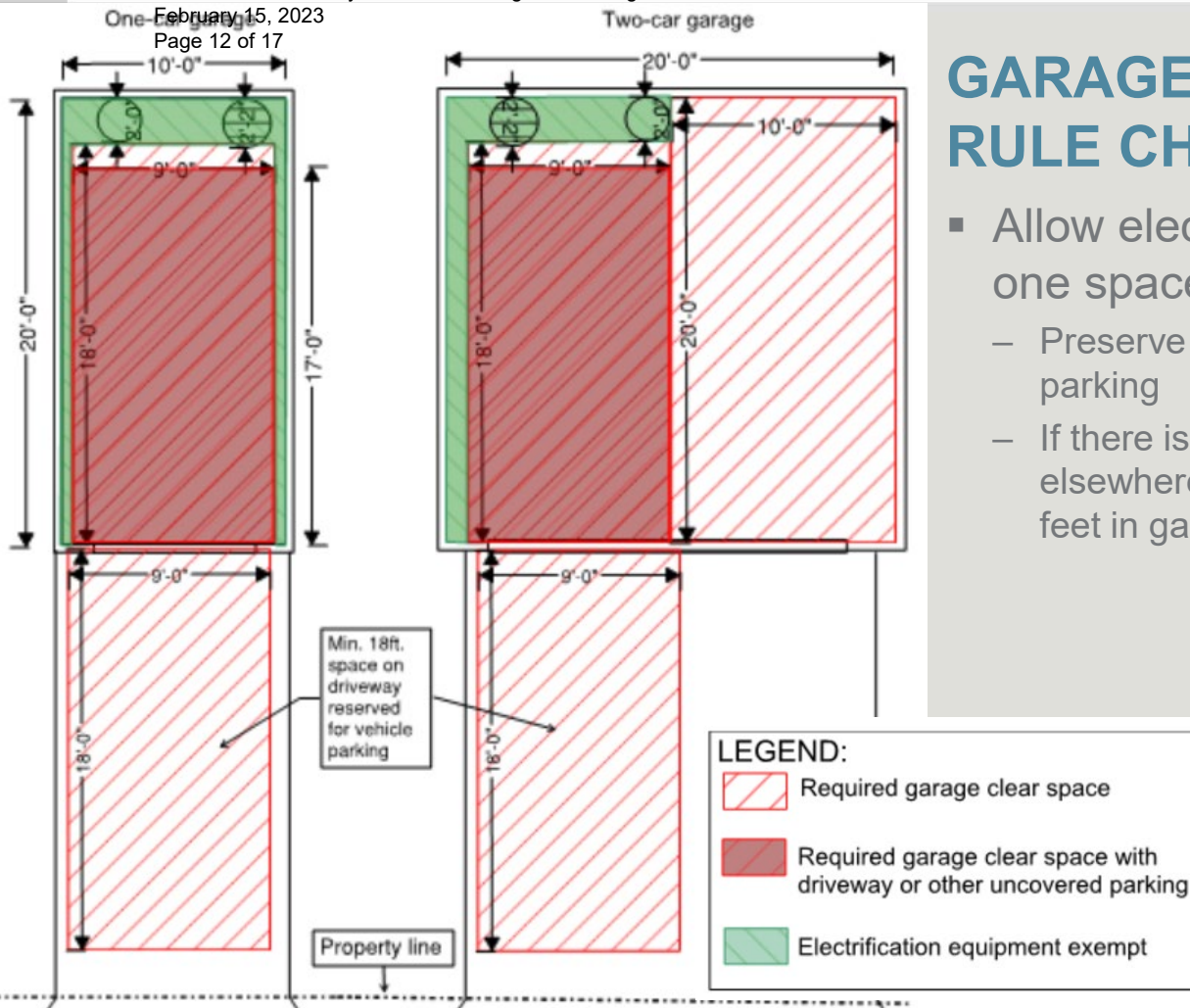
STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Current rules	Proposed rule change	Effect of change
Only cars allowed in the 10-ft.-by-20-ft. required garage clear area	Allow electrification equipment in garage clear space if 9-ft.-by18-ft. space kept for parking (9ft. by 17ft. OK with 18ft. driveway space)	Preserves area for parking in garage or driveway, but allows heat pumps, EV chargers and batteries in garage
Compressor units allowed within the side and/or rear yard provided they meet the Noise Ordinance limits	Allow setback enclosures for electrification equipment	Allows 3-ft.-by-3-ft. protective enclosures for heatpumps, EV chargers and batteries in side or rear setbacks provided egress requirements are met



GARAGE: PROPOSED RULE CHANGE

- Allow electrification equipment in one space in the garage
 - Preserve 9 feet by 18 feet in garage for parking
 - If there is room on the driveway or elsewhere on site, preserve 9 feet by 17 feet in garage for parking



LEGEND:



Required garage clear space



Required garage clear space with driveway or other uncovered parking



Electrification equipment exempt



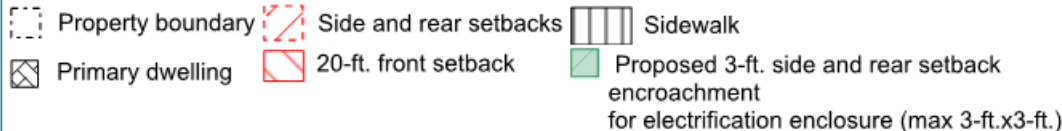
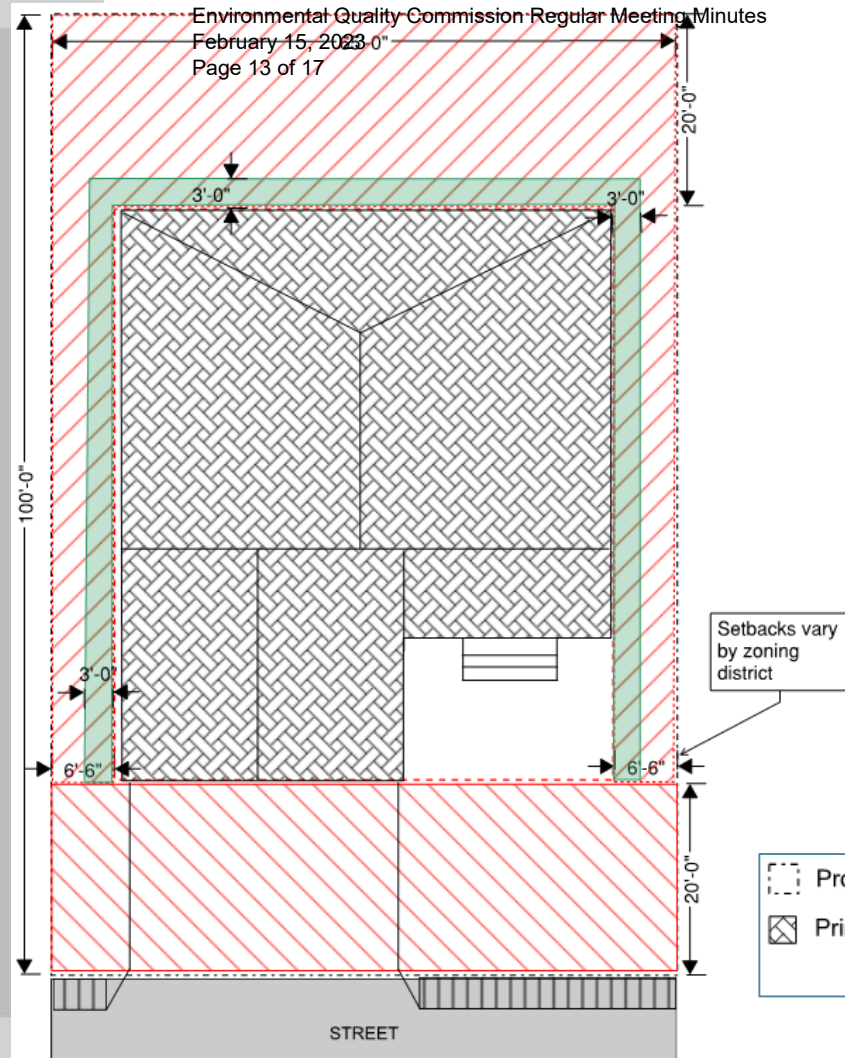
40-gal heat pump water heater



50+-gal heat pump water heater

REQUIRED YARD SPACE: PROPOSED RULE CHANGE

- Allow electrification equipment enclosures in the required side or rear yard space
 - Max size 3 feet by 3 feet by the height of the first floor
 - Must preserve required emergency access route requirements
 - Must comply with Noise Ordinance limitations of 50 dBA at the residential property line during the night, 60 dBA during the day





PROCESS AND NEXT STEPS

- Garage and required yard rule changes require Planning Commission recommendation to the City Council for action (Spring 2023)
- EQC is advisory body to the City Council on Climate Action Plan (CAP) goals
 - May want to consider providing advice on this recommendation to the City Council
 - The Planning Commission would also review EQC advice
- City Council approval at two meetings is required (Spring 2023)



DISCUSSION

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT TABLE



Table 1: Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment Overview

Amendment action Enable specified intrusions in garages Specify electrification equipment and anything mounted 48 inches above the slab as allowable garage intrusions Allow building coverage exclusion for electrification equipment Allow floor area exclusion for electrification equipment Allow side and rear setback encroachments for electrification equipment	Municipal Code section	Description of change
	16.04.320 Garage or Carport definition	Modify garage definition to include mention of allowable exceptions to 10ft. x20ft. interior dimensions
	16.72.010 Off-street parking requirements generally	Modify off-street parking to list electrification equipment (e.g. air source heat pumps to replace natural gas water heaters and/or furnaces, EV chargers, battery storage systems) as an allowable exception to the 10-ft.-by-20-ft. clear space for one parking space, provided 9-ft.-by-18-ft. is preserved for vehicle parking; include an allowance for an additional one-foot encroachment into the required 10 feet by 20 feet clear space if an uncovered parking space can be located on site that complies with the City's parking stalls and driveway design guidelines or the driveway could be used for the parking space and is a minimum of 18 feet from the property line to the garage entrance; and allow EV Chargers and tankless water heaters mounted 48 inches above the slab, and cantilevered into the clear space, to encroach into the 10-ft.-by-20-ft. clear space.
	16.04.120 Building coverage.	Modify building coverage definition to exclude enclosures up to 3-ft. by 3-ft. in area dedicated to electrification equipment (e.g. air source heat pumps to replace natural gas water heaters and/or furnaces, battery storage systems) for existing buildings.
	16.04.313(c) floor area definition	Modify floor area definition to exclude enclosures up to 3-ft. by 3-ft. in area dedicated to electrification equipment (e.g. air source heat pumps to replace natural gas water heaters and/or furnaces, battery storage systems) for existing buildings.
	16.60.010 permitted into yards	Modify encroachments and balconies to include mention of allowable encroachments up to 3-ft. by 3-ft. in area for electrification equipment enclosures (e.g. air source heat pumps to replace natural gas water heaters and/or furnaces, battery storage systems) for existing buildings.

Building Decarbonization	Transportation Decarbonization	Climate Adaptation	Climate Outreach	Trees & Sustainable Initiatives
<p>This subcommittee of 2-3 people will assist staff in developing policies and plans to convert 95% of Menlo Park's existing buildings to all-electric by 2030.</p> <p><u>Work will include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researching the technical and financial feasibility of converting the City's existing building stock to all-electric • Researching financing options available to assist community members with conversions • Researching policy and funding mechanisms to assist low-income households with conversions • Reviewing legal frameworks for key policies • Facilitating City collaboration with key regional agencies and nonprofits, such as Peninsula Clean Energy • Collaborating with City staff and contractors in drafting key policies • Preparing materials to help educate the public about building electrification • Assisting City staff in completing electrification of municipal buildings • Developing Council recommendations for 2021 CAP actions related to building decarbonization 	<p>This subcommittee of 3 people will assist staff in developing policies and plans to eliminate the use of fossil fuels in transportation in Menlo Park by 2030.</p> <p><u>Work will include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researching the technical and financial feasibility of policies and programs to increase access to EV charging, especially during the day and for residents of multi-family housing • Reviewing the offerings of service providers who may be able to assist the City and community members in building out its EV charging network • Reviewing legal frameworks for proposed policies • Serving as a liaison to the Complete Streets Commission in developing and achieving a City goal to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled by 25% through 1) rezoning to support increased housing density near transit and 2) the build out of a network of connected bike/ped paths throughout town • Tracking and promoting the City's goals of 1) making all new vehicles be electric by 2025 and 2) reducing gasoline sales each year by 10% • Assisting City staff in converting the municipal vehicle fleet to all-electric by identifying new electric vehicle offerings for staff and Council consideration • Developing Council recommendations for 2021 CAP actions related to transportation decarbonization • Facilitating City collaboration with key regional nonprofits and agencies 	<p>This subcommittee of 2 people will research and inform City staff and Council on strategies for preparing the City for the effects of climate change.</p> <p><u>Work will include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending meetings of the San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District Board and reporting back to EQC • Working with staff and Council members to engage community members who will be most affected by sea level rise to educate them and take their input on how best to address the issue • Tracking Menlo Park's plans for sea walls and/or levees to protect the community against sea level rise and keeping the EQC apprised of those plans • Making recommendations to City Council on proposed development in the City's future flood zones • Researching other potential effects of climate change on the City, including wildfire, drought and heat waves, and identifying plans to address those effects • Developing a proposal for capturing 10% of the City's 2005 greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 through direct carbon removal • Facilitating City collaboration with key regional nonprofits and agencies 	<p>This subcommittee of 3 people will devise strategies for educating members of the public about Menlo Park's climate action plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 90% by 2030.</p> <p><u>Work will include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying opportunities for Staff and the EQC to educate the public about climate change and Menlo Park's climate action plan • Preparing educational materials and promoting them, either in conjunction with Staff or as private citizens with a focus on student/teacher/school outreach • Devising a plan, including proposed venues, for regularly presenting the public with information about ways to electrify buildings, decrease gasoline consumption, reduce vehicle miles traveled and prepare for climate-related emergencies • Relaying to EQC any public feedback on the CAP and related policy proposals • Supporting the City's formal outreach effort on climate policies, as directed by Staff • Facilitating City collaboration with key regional nonprofits and agencies 	<p>This subcommittee of 2 people will support Staff in addressing all sustainability matters not addressed by the Climate Action Plan.</p> <p><u>Work will include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing the City's Arbor Day Tree Planting event • Assessing the effectiveness of the City's new Heritage Tree Ordinance and making recommendations to EQC for any changes needed • Supporting Staff in development of an inventory and catalogue of the urban tree canopy • Receiving public concern related to non-climate sustainability concerns, including: habitat protection, healthy ecology, environmental health protection, healthy air, surface water runoff quality, water conservation and waste reduction • Recommending appropriate responses or programs to address public concerns about non-climate sustainability matters • Facilitating City collaboration with key regional nonprofits and agencies
<p>This subcommittee supports CAP actions #1 & 5</p>	<p>This subcommittee supports CAP actions #2, 3, 4 and 5</p>	<p>This subcommittee supports CAP action #6</p>	<p>This subcommittee supports CAP action #1, 2, 3, 4 and 6</p>	<p>This subcommittee supports EQC goals for Urban Canopy Preservation and Green and Sustainable Initiatives not related to the Climate Action Plan</p>
<p>Current members: Evans, Kabat, and McKenna</p>	<p>Current members: Schmidt and McKenna</p>	<p>Current members: Elkins, Lin, and McKenna</p>	<p>Current members: Kabat, Hedley and Schmidt</p>	<p>Current members: Elkins Hedley and Schmidt</p>

Exploring Collaborative Opportunities subcommittee consisting of Commissioners Elkins, Evans and Schmidt, with the charge of updating the Commissions roles and responsibilities, exploring collaboration with community partners, and presenting a draft 2023 work plan to the full Commission at a later meeting this year.