

Environmental Quality Commission

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA



Date: 10/15/2025
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: [Zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join) – ID# 879 3070 9093 and
City Hall Downtown Conference Room, 1st Floor
701 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

Members of the public can listen to the meeting and participate using the following methods.

- How to participate in the meeting
 - Access the meeting, in-person, at the Downtown Conference Room
 - Access the meeting real-time online at:
[Zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join) –Meeting ID 879 3070 9093
 - Access the meeting real-time via telephone at:
(669) 900-6833
Meeting ID 879 3070 9093
Press *9 to raise hand to speak

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Regular Session

A. Call To Order

B. Roll Call – Angiel, Hedley, Hernandez, Hill, Kissel, Chair McKenna, Vice Chair Meyer

C. Public Comment

Under “Public Comment,” the public may address the Commission on any subject not listed on the agenda. Each speaker may address the Commission once under public comment for a limit of three minutes. You are not required to provide your name or City of residence, but it is helpful. The Commission cannot act on items not listed on the agenda and, therefore, the Commission cannot respond to non-agenda issues brought up under public comment other than to provide general information.

D. Regular Business

- D1. Approve the September 17, 2025 Environmental Quality Commission meeting minutes ([Attachment](#))
- D2. Review and discuss existing building electrification permit fee waiver program ([Attachment](#))
- D3. Review and discuss approach for the 2026 Love Our Earth festival ([Attachment](#))

D4. Receive and file work plan and form ad hoc subcommittees ([Attachment](#))

E. Reports and Announcements

E1. Reports and announcements from staff and Commissioners

G. Adjournment

At every Regular Meeting of the Commission, in addition to the Public Comment period where the public shall have the right to address the Commission on any matters of public interest not listed on the agenda, members of the public have the right to directly address the Commission on any item listed on the agenda at a time designated by the Chair, either before or during the Commission's consideration of the item.

At every Special Meeting of the Commission, members of the public have the right to directly address the Commission on any item listed on the agenda at a time designated by the Chair, either before or during consideration of the item.

For appeal hearings, appellant and applicant shall each have 10 minutes for presentations.

If you challenge any of the items listed on this agenda in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Menlo Park at, or before, the public hearing.

Any writing that is distributed to a majority of the Commission by any person in connection with an agenda item is a public record (subject to any exemption under the Public Records Act) and is available by request by emailing the city clerk at jaherren@menlopark.gov. Persons with disabilities, who require auxiliary aids or services in attending or participating in Commission meetings, may call the City Clerk's Office at 650-330-6620.

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Environmental Quality Commission



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – DRAFT

Date: 9/17/2025
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 McKenna called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Angiel, Hedley, Hernandez, Hill, Kissel, Chair McKenna, Vice Chair Meyer
Absent: None
Staff: Sustainability Manager Rachael Londer, Management Analyst II Liz Tapia

C. Public Comment

- Brian Schmidt spoke on electric vehicles rebates.

D. Regular Business

D1. Approve the August 20, 2025 Environmental Quality Commission meeting minutes (Attachment)

ACTION: Motion and second (Hill/ Kissel), to approve the August 20, 2025 Environmental Quality Commission meeting minutes, passed 6-0-1 (Hedley abstaining).

D2. Update on building electrification outreach and the Home Upgrade Services (Attachment)

Chair McKenna introduced the item.

Sustainability Manager Rachael Londer made the presentation.

The Commission received clarification on Home Upgrade Program Services program budget, qualifications, completed projects and equipment included.

- Brian Schmidt spoke on rental electrification bundles, program marketing and program data.

The Commission discussed improving outreach by evaluating past outreach activities, creating a referral list of those with completed projects and offering referral bonuses, following up with people who dropped from the program, inviting those with completed projects to join outreach efforts and compensating them, leveraging community-based organizations, presenting to seniors at Belle Haven Community Campus and families at local schools, connecting with churches, hosting additional events and potential program enhancements including helping small businesses, multifamily buildings and churches to electrify, supporting workforce development programs and expanding the program to all of Menlo Park.



D3. Presentation from Matching Rebates ad hoc subcommittee (Attachment)

Chair McKenna introduced the item.

Chair McKenna and Commissioner Hernandez made the presentation (Attachment)

The Commission received clarification on use of grant funds.

- Brian Schmidt spoke in support of electrification education, using grant funds to offer heat pump water heater (HPWH) rebates city-wide and renter program.

The Commission discussed recommending a rebate program to City Council.

ACTION: Motion and second (McKenna/ Kissel), to recommend that the City allocate \$250,000 of the California Energy Commission communitywide electrification grant funds to a matching rebate program available citywide, regardless of income, to start as soon as possible, offering \$1,500 for converting from gas water hear to HPWH, \$500 for converting from electric resistance to HPWH and \$3,000 to install a heat pump heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems (HVAC) system, passed unanimously.

E. Reports and Announcements

E1. Reports and announcements from staff and Commissioners

Commissioner Hedley spoke on Silicon Valley 350 being awarded a City grant for party packs and the Green@Home tour through Acterra.

Management Analyst Liz Tapia reported out on the heritage tree scavenger hunt.

Sustainability Manager Rachael Londer reported out on the home upgrade progress report to City Council on Sept. 30 and zero emission landscape equipment ordinance enforcement.

F. Informational Items

F1. 2025-26 Environmental Quality Commission work plan (Attachment)

The Commission discussed moving the Emissions Reductions Impact Study ad hoc subcommittee presentation to February 2026.

G. Adjournment

Chair McKenna adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Management Analyst II Liz Tapia



Review and discuss existing building electrification permit fee waiver program

Presented by Sustainability staff

Agenda



- Background
- Revenue forfeited
- Permit trends
- Discussion

Background

- **Climate Action Plan (CAP) Goal No. 1:** Explore policy/program options to convert 95% of existing buildings to all-electric by 2030.
- **August 2022:** The City Council approved a permit fee waiver for electrification permit fees with the Master Fee Schedule.
 - Council directed staff to return to City council when approximately \$150,000 in permit fees had been waived.
- **May 2024:** The City Council approved to continue the building permit fee waiver program until the next annual master fee schedule amendment.

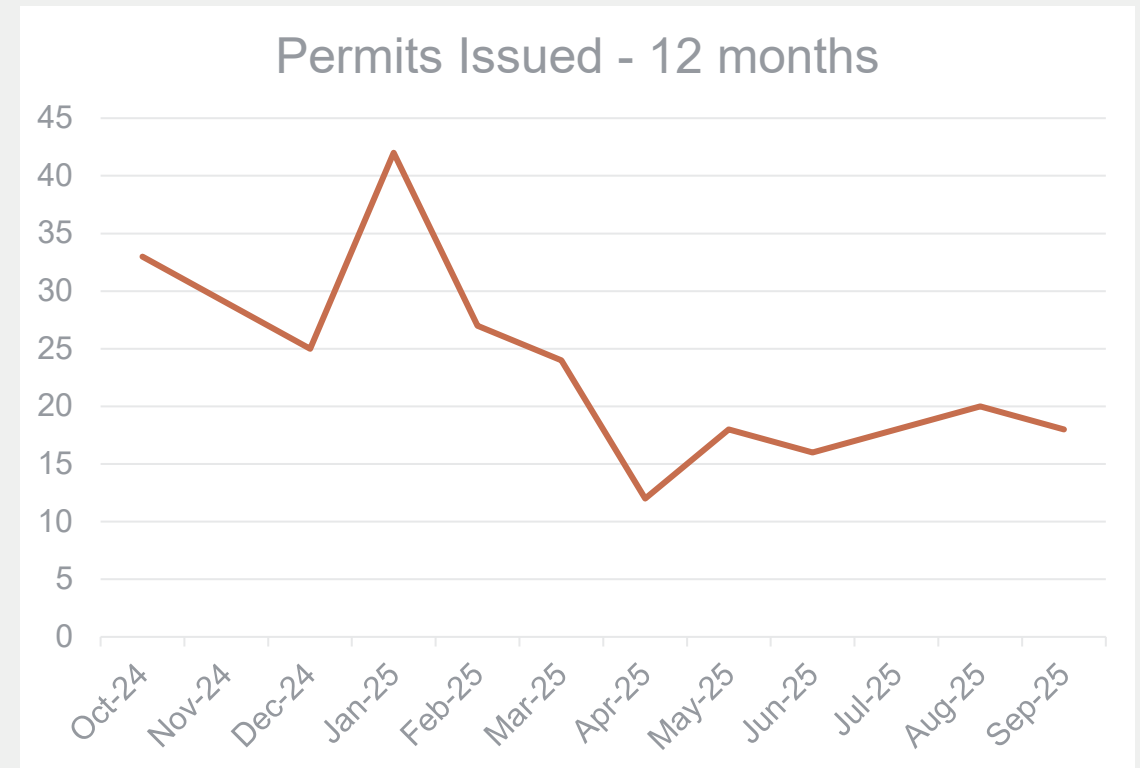
Permit waiver forfeited revenue Oct. 2022 to Sep. 2025

- Over 36 months, there have been 906 total electrification projects and \$348,966 waived.
- 53% of waivers were issued for projects with multiple permits.

Permit type	Number of permits	Total amount waived
Electrical panel upgrade	33	\$5,697
EV charging infrastructure	6	\$1,909
Heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC)	245	\$117,608
Multiple permits for electric equipment including additions, alterations, and remodels	482	\$188,405
Water heater	140	\$35,346
TOTAL	906	\$348,966

Permit trends

- There has been a 15% decrease in waivers and credits issued from fiscal year 2023-2024 to fiscal year 2024-2025.
- The graph shows a gradual decline in electrification permits over the last 12 months.



Discussion



- Implemented pilot program December 2022 and operated for 1.5 years.
- Staff recommendation is to discontinue program and not extend for next Master Fee Schedule amendment.





Review and discuss approach for the Love Our Earth festival

Presented by Sustainability Staff

Agenda

- Love Our Earth overview
- Background
- 2026 resources
- 2026 event options
- Discussion



Background

- Event started as the *We Love Earth Festival* at Flood Park in 2022.
- Purpose of event is to promote climate awareness and sustainability through family-friendly activities.
- Festival has featured educational exhibits on eco-friendly practices, live entertainment, EV showcase, plant-based market and food trucks, and interactive demonstrations on climate action.
- Event name changed to *Love our Earth Festival* in 2023.



Background

- The Love our Earth Festival has been planned and implemented with community partners since 2022. Total budget for 2025 was approximately \$12,000.
- Previous locations:
 - Flood Park, 2022
 - Menlo-Atherton High School, 2023
 - Bloomhouse, East Palo Alto, 2024
 - Belle Haven Community Campus (BHCC), 2025
- 2025 partners:
 - Acterra, City of East Palo Alto, Menlo Spark, Peninsula Clean Energy, 350 Silicon Valley

Background

2025 event highlights

- 389 registered attendees
- 60 local community-based organizations and businesses
- 6 plant-based food vendors
- Activities:
 - Interactive environmental education exhibits
 - Native plant workshop
 - Herbalism workshop
 - Children's activities and story times
 - Live entertainment
 - Plant-based food market featuring local cuisine
 - Organic compost giveaway
 - T-shirt screen printing
 - Bike repair station
 - EV display



2026 event resources

- \$5,000 budget from the City
- Approximately 4 hours per week of staff time until the event
- If East Palo Alto cannot host:
 - Use of BHCC and facility equipment (including tables, chairs, canopies, etc.)



2026 event options

- Co-host a festival
 - Potential dates:
 - Saturday, Apr 18
 - Saturday, Apr 25
 - Saturday, May 9 (BHCC not available)
 - Saturday, May 16
 - Location options for a large festival:
 - East Palo Alto hosts – pending location and confirmation
 - Host again at BHCC – dependent of availability
- Other options
 - Host smaller Earth Day events throughout Earth Month
 - Additional ideas from the EQC

2026 Love Our Earth Festival discussion

Environmental Quality Commission work plan

City Manager's Office
701 Laurel St., Menlo Park CA 94025
Approved



Work plan goals

1. Provide feedback to staff and advise the City Council on 2025-2030 scope of work implementation for Climate Action Plan (CAP) strategies No. 1 through No. 6
2. Ensure that our most vulnerable communities have a voice in policies and programs to protect their communities from environmental impacts.
3. Leverage best practices to advise/recommend on the preservation of heritage trees, city trees and expansion of the urban canopy; and make determinations on appeals of heritage tree removal permits.
4. Support sustainability initiatives, as needs arise, which may include city-led events, habitat protection, healthy ecology, environmental health protection, healthy air, surface water runoff quality, water conservation and waste reduction.
5. Maintain an annual commission calendar to provide transparency and allow adequate time to prepare agenda items related to the commission's work plan; update and post for public review monthly.
6. Encourage and facilitate robust public comment and participation at Commission meetings.
7. Foster a public meeting environment that is inclusive of all members of the diverse Menlo Park community.
8. Support the filling of openings on the Commission and the effective onboarding of new Commissioners.
9. Participate an ad hoc subcommittee of the Complete Streets Commission comprised of both Complete Streets and Environmental Quality Commissioners to evaluate metrics to measure progress on and set specific long term and annual goals. The subcommittee shall consist of no more than three EQC commissioners and no more than three CSC commissioners so as not to violate the Brown Act.

Work plan history

Action	Date	Notes
Work plan recommended to EQC	August 20, 2025	Commission approved
Work plan recommended to City Council	September 30, 2025	City Council approved

Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) agenda topics fiscal year 2025-26

Agenda schedule may change based on City Council, Chair and Vice Chair and staff requests/direction

Month	Topics	Author/Presenter	EQC role
July 2025	Presentation from annual work plan ad hoc subcommittee	Annual work plan ad hoc subcommittee	Action by Commission
	Review and discuss recommendations to reduce vehicle miles traveled	Transportation ad hoc subcommittee	Provide feedback to staff/possible action by Commission
August 2025	Approve EQC 2025-2026 work plan	Annual work plan ad hoc subcommittee	Action by Commission
	Annual Climate Action Plan progress report	Sustainability staff	Provide feedback to staff/possible action by Commission
September 2025	Existing building electrification outreach and update on Home Upgrade Services Program	Sustainability staff	Provide feedback to staff/possible action by Commission
	Presentation from Matching Rebates ad hoc subcommittee	Ad Hoc Subcommittee	Action by Commission
October 2025	Discuss permit fee waiver program	Sustainability staff	Action by Commission
	Review and discuss approach for the Love Our Earth festival	Sustainability staff	Action by Commission
	Receive and file work plan and form ad hoc subcommittees	Sustainability staff	Action by Commission
November 2025	Discuss options for disbursing the \$4.5 million communitywide electrification grant funds	Sustainability staff	Provide feedback to staff
December 2025 <i>(option to cancel)</i>			
January 2026	Discuss Urban Forest Management Plan and early tree planting action progress	Sustainability staff	Provide feedback to staff
	Presentation from Community Engagement ad hoc subcommittee	Ad Hoc Subcommittee	Action by Commission
February 2026	Discuss City efforts related to Senate Bill 1383 to reduce organic waste	Administrative services staff	Informational/no action

	Presentation from Emissions Reductions Impact Study ad hoc subcommittee	Ad Hoc Subcommittee	Action by Commission
March 2026	Overview of Peninsula Clean Energy programs	Peninsula Clean Energy staff	Informational/no action
	Presentation from Food Systems ad hoc subcommittee	Ad Hoc Subcommittee	Action by Commission
April 2026	Discuss updated CAP dashboard	Sustainability staff	Provide feedback to staff/possible action by Commission
	Discuss progress on CAP No. 6 and potential to form a resiliency and adaptation ad hoc subcommittee	Sustainability staff	Provide feedback to staff/possible action by Commission
May 2026	Presentation from BESO & BPS ad hoc subcommittee	Ad Hoc Subcommittee	Action by Commission
	Zero Emissions Landscaping Equipment (ZELE) Policy progress	Sustainability staff	Provide feedback to staff/possible action by Commission
	Select Chair and Vice Chair	Chair	Action by Commission
June 2026	Annual City Arborist Report	City arborist and public works staff	Provide feedback to staff/possible action by Commission
	Set fiscal year commission agenda calendar (June-August)	Sustainability staff/Chair and Vice Chair	Action by Commission
July 2026	Update on Home Upgrade Services program	Sustainability staff	Provide feedback to staff/possible action by Commission

Regular items

- Climate Action Plan progress report
- Annual selection of Chair and Vice Chair (May)
- Annual City Arborist Report (June)
- Set fiscal year commission agenda calendar (June-August)
- Chair report to the City Council (July/August)
- Annual update of existing building electrification outreach and education
- Zero Emissions Landscaping Equipment (ZELE) Policy progress (requires two years of reporting to the commission directed by the city council starting in 2025)
- Annual update on the permit fee waiver program

Potential topics to add to calendar

- Priorities included in the City Council work plan for fiscal year 2025-26 (Attachment A)
- Heat resiliency
- Community solar and microgrid

- Online electrification education hub

Ad hoc subcommittees (in alphabetical order)

Community Engagement ad hoc subcommittee

- Scope: Research potential engagement with a comprehensive set of stakeholders and explore potential of a community taskforce with purpose of aligning City/communitywide efforts to achieve CAP goals
- Duration: 3 months (tentative report out in January 2026)
- Commissioners: Commissioner Kissel, Chair McKenna, Vice Chair Meyer

BESO and BPS ad hoc subcommittee

- Scope: Research adoption of Building Emissions Savings Ordinance (similar to Berkeley) and how the City can collaborate with state and regional partners to study, adopt, implement, and enforce a Building Performance Standard
- Duration: 3 months (tentative report out in May 2026)
- Commissioners: Chair McKenna, Commissioner Hill, Commissioner Angiel

Emissions Reductions Impact Study ad hoc subcommittee

- Scope: Review bi-annual greenhouse gas emissions inventory and identify opportunities for sharing data with a community facing dashboard
- Duration: 3 months (tentative report out in February 2026)
- Commissioners: Commissioner Kissel, Commissioner Hill

Food Systems ad hoc subcommittee

- Scope: Research ways to engage community and provide more services to community members with goal of promoting more plant-based eating, greater access to high quality and affordable foods, and reduction of food waste
- Duration: 3 months (tentative report out in March 2026)
- Commissioners: Commissioner Hernandez, Commissioner Angiel, Commissioner Hedley

Matching Rebates ad hoc subcommittee

- Scope: Research viability and impact of City matching electrification rebates currently offered by Peninsula Clean Energy in order to assist with transition to electric devices, particularly water heater rebates in light of pending Air District rules scheduled to go into effect in 2027
- Duration: 1 month (tentative report out in September 2025)
- Commissioners: Chair McKenna, Commissioner Hernandez

Vehicle Miles Traveled Metric ad hoc subcommittee (joint with Complete Streets Commission)

- Scope: Form an ad hoc subcommittee of the Complete Streets Commission comprised of both Complete Streets and Environmental Quality Commissioners to evaluate metrics to measure Climate Action Plan progress on Strategy No. 4 to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by 25% or an amount recommended by the Complete Streets Commission and set specific long term and annual goals. The subcommittee shall consist of no more than three EQC commissioners and no more than three CSC commissioners so as not to violate the Brown Act. The subcommittee is tasked to work for a period of up to one year and dissolve upon submitting a report to the CSC.
- Duration: 1 year (tentative report out TBD)
- Commissioners: Vice Chair Meyer, Chair McKenna, Commissioner Hedley

Attachments

- A. Hyperlink – City Council fiscal year 2025-26 work plan, July 8, 2025, Staff Report #25-108-CC:
menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/city-council/2025-meetings/20250708/i2-20250708-cc-cc-fy2025-26-work-plan.pdf