

Legislation Text

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Energy Resilience Study Session. (Mayor, Jones, Jimenez, Peralez, Foley)

At the earliest opportunity, convene a Council study session to inform the Council and educate the public about the serious challenges that San José - and other Northern California cities - face regarding maintaining electric reliability and resilience in light of recent events. The study session should focus on the impacts of recent and pending California Public Utilities Commission decisions authorizing utilities to unilaterally implement sudden de-energization (shutdowns) of transmission lines and subsequent regional power outages, in the wake of Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) safety failures. The study session should offer at least a preliminary evaluation of options to boost the resilience to blackouts of San Jose's critical operations, residents, and businesses, including but not limited to:

1. Ensuring rapid and effective notification of residents-particularly those who have medical vulnerabilities (EG., dependence on dialysis, breathing assistance devices, etc.), senior citizens and non-English speakers-of expected outages as soon as the City learns from PG&E of warnings of imminent de-energization to supplement PG&E's required notification of all residents;
2. Assessing the ability of the City to make short-term and medium-term investments in energy storage, fuel cells, and backup generation that could provide sufficient resilience for critical operations, such as hospitals, emergency responders, the Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the Airport;
3. Identifying other investments that can hasten the creation of micro-grids and islanding in the medium & long-term;
4. Identifying alternatives to PG&E electric service, including:
 - a. Evaluating municipal purchase of PG&E's distribution assets in San José;
 - b. Forming a regional publicly owned municipal utility district;
 - c. Other alternatives that would improve electric service reliability, safety, resiliency, affordability, and expand clean energy options for San José.
5. Coordinating with the County and other agencies to protect vulnerable populations, including dialysis patients, seniors needing air conditioning on hot days, etc.;
6. Assessing next steps for the City to align public resources needed to move forward with any of these options to protect our community, including ballot measures, bond issuances, state grants, legislative advocacy, and the like.