

Legislation Text

File #: ROGC 19-398, **Version:** 1

Public Safety Power Shutoffs: Making San José Grid-Resilient. (Mayor)

1. After-Action Report: Return to Council with a verbal after-action report outlining the measures taken by City staff and partners to prepare residents for the Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS), and what lessons might be drawn from our experience. Further:

- a. Identify the public cost of the City's response to the PSPS.
- b. Identify those resources - from PG&E, the state of California, or other sources - that could compensate San Jose taxpayers for that expenditure, including the \$75 million PSPS preparedness funding from last year's State budget.
- c. If any private cost data becomes available, provide an estimate of losses incurred by San Jose residents and business as a result of the PSPS, and any means for families to recover for those losses.
- d. Identify the recorded wind speeds, humidity, and temperature at the time that power on distribution lines was shut off in relevant neighborhoods in Alum Rock, Evergreen, and Almaden, and how those measurements compared to thresholds announced by PG&E in California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) filings for PSPS events.
- e. Showcase the unique tools and methods that City staff developed in preparation for a PSPS event, particularly the crowd-sourcing app that provided highly accurate real-time information about outages, and the map-based data-sharing tool that identified such elements as potential and actual outage areas, medically vulnerable residents, and critical facilities for responders and other agencies.

2. Targeted Municipalization: Return to Council to identify the steps required for the creation of a municipal utility for the purposes of strategic development of microgrids in key locations throughout our city, with particular emphasis on critical infrastructure and areas requiring high levels of redevelopment and infrastructure investment.

3. Microgrids and Related Resiliency Investments: Explore the role that San Jose Clean Energy and City partners can play a role in helping residents "get off the grid" during a blackout by installing infrastructure necessary to create hybrid off-grid solar systems with backup utility power, by assessing the feasibility of:

- a. Developing islands of "energy resiliency" within residential neighborhoods that can provide support to neighbors during PSPS events;
- b. Supporting efforts of low-income residents to purchase solar panels and storage with the benefit of generous subsidies created by the California's Self-Generation Incentive Program;
- c. Partnerships that could engage residents in group purchases of off-grid inverters, solar charge controllers, and battery storage at a bulk discount; and/or
- d. Information campaign from SJCE to homeowners willing to commit to opening their homes to neighbors in the event of a power shut-down.

4. Voter Support for Bonds: In Fall polling for potential ballot measures, include questions that will enable the Council and Staff to evaluate voter support for:

- a. Acquisition of all electrical distribution infrastructure currently owned by PG&E necessary to municipalize the local electrical utility; and
- b. Bond financing to develop renewable energy storage and generation facilities (such as microgrids) that can insulate critical city facilities, or even participating neighborhoods, to improve energy resilience, reliability, and costs.

5. Full Municipalization: If polling reveals substantial support for acquisition of PG&E infrastructure, then:

- a. Return to Council with a draft scope and cost estimate for a feasibility study;
 - b. Provide Council with any preliminary findings from staffs ongoing exploration of municipalization regarding issues such as: the cost of infrastructure acquisition, any estimates of capital repair and replacement, the legal obstacles to municipal purchase of the assets, taxpayer liability for infrastructure failures, and anticipated operational issues; and
 - c. Communicate with the leadership of the local IBEW to assure them that in the event of municipalization, the City of San Jose will not undercut established commitments on pay, benefits, or representation.
- 6. Legislative Advocacy:** Advocate with the CPUC and state legislature to:
- a. Authorize appropriately trained City and County staff to supplement PG&E inspection teams during a PSPS event-such as by taking geo-tagged photos of distribution lines-to accelerate the restoration of power to affected residents.
 - b. Require PG&E to clearly disclose the specific conditions (wind speed, temperature, humidity, etc.) that triggered any specific PSPS at the time of the deenergization decision.
 - c. Require PG&E to share all data they hold regarding areas potentially affected by a PSPS with relevant public agencies, including cities, to enable those agencies to “scrub” the data to better protect vulnerable populations and critical facilities.
 - d. Ensure medical baseline data is shared with the Cities and Counties of affected PSPS areas.
 - e. Expand the funding for the Self-Generation Incentive Program or other programs that offer financial incentives to install distributed resources including solar and storage.
 - f. Provide state funding and eliminate barriers to the establishment and feasible operation of microgrids, restricting discriminatory fees imposed by utilities, and streamlining the regulatory approval processes.