



2022 City Council Candidate Questions

CITY OPERATIONS

If you had to prioritize funding either to upgrading our city's electrical grid to support phasing out gas including adding a second electric power line of electricity geographically redundant or having the Palo Alto Utilities provide a competing fiber to home service, which would you choose?

ALEX COMSA

Per the above, I would prioritize funding to upgrade our city's electrical grid to support phasing out including adding a second electric power line of electricity geographically redundant. We NEED a secondary power source. This is a SAFETY issue, and as we deal with increasing risks of wildfires and others, we need redundancy in place, again, for the safety of our community members that may not be in a position to deal with a power shortage due to medical conditions or similar

LISA FORSELL

My first priority is maintaining a safe, reliable, cost-effective and sustainable electric utility. We need to modernize our local electric grid, replace aging equipment, and upgrade infrastructure. This will be needed to meet the additional load that we anticipate due to increased EV charging and replacement of gas appliances with electric.

BRIAN HAMACHEK

I would choose to prioritize the fiber-to-home service

ED LAUING

The grid upgrade is expensive and essential. It gets top priority.

JULIE LYTHCOTT-HAIMS

To be clear, I think it is the role of the city council to raise sufficient money to fund both projects. We need faster wi-fi, but the truth is we also need to reduce our dependence on gas fossil fuels; climate change is one of the greatest existential threats facing the world today, and I believe that every community is responsible for reducing its greenhouse emissions to the greatest extent possible. That being said, in a situation where one project must be chosen, I would have to support phasing out gas over the fiber project. We have only a limited time to act to reduce our greenhouse emissions; we need to start now.

DORIA SUMMA

I am not sure at this point.

VICKI VEENKER

This is not a choice that the city should face. The funding for fiber to the premise is planned to come through accumulated profits from the Commercial Fiber fund.

My understanding is that phasing out gas is not dependent on a second redundant electric power line. Upgrading the capacity of our grid for electrification of transportation and buildings is not constrained by the size of the current power line. That said, a separate power line is an important consideration for the city to improve resiliency and function as a back-up for our electric supply rather than to meet capacity needs.

While I don't think we have to choose, if forced, I would choose upgrading our power grid.