

From: [Donald Zeigler](#)
To: [CityClerk](#)
Subject: Comments for City Council Meeting
Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 2:37:46 PM



These comments are in reference to Item 13i in the Consent Calendar for the meeting of March 27, 2025.

The agenda item calls for the approval of the Status Update to the city's General Plan. The plan includes several policies that concern the city's response to the extreme heat experienced by the city in the summer months. Those policies, if fully implemented, would go a long way to adequately protect city residents from the impact of extreme summer heat.

Page 42: Policy 5.8 and 5.9

Page 43: Policy 6.1, 6.2 and 6.9

Page 48: Policy 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3

Page 58 Three action items referring to risk of extreme heat and need for backup power supplies

Page 61: Several action items referring to emergency responses to extreme heat events.

Page 63: Several action items related to the need to coordinate with other agencies to respond to emergencies.

The only serious gap in this plan is on Page 51, in reference to Goal 5 regarding Utilities, where there is no mention of electricity as a vital utility that needs to be reliable in extreme heat situations. Future updates need to add electricity as a critical utility.

My concern therefore in these comments is that, while there are serious policies in place to protect citizens from extreme summer heat, not enough is being done to implement these policies. The risk of a power outage in the summer here is very high and the consequences of an outage lasting for more than a day, or even less, would be catastrophic. The city's reliance on the SCE grid is a bad gamble and other sources of power need to be urgently explored. Just in the last few weeks, there was a massive power outage at Heathrow Airport because of a substation fire that lasted for hours. We have also learned of Volt Typhoon, which the federal government knows exists where foreign governments can shut down electrical grids at a time of their choosing. Also, we are learning that the Federal Government is proposing to shut down FEMA. If a sustained power outage in the summer were to occur in Southern California, without FEMA there would be no help coming. We are expected now to prepare ourselves for that contingency and to respond with our own resources. These are just the most recent examples from the news of the risks that we face as a city from sole reliance on the SCE grid.

So, my request to the council as you approve this status update is that you carefully look at the policies in it related to the dangers inherent in living here in the summer and follow up with the appropriate staff to make sure they are urgently implemented.

Donald Zeigler

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Palm Desert