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## 838-2024

Communication

### Request of Diane Meisenhelter to address Council regarding delays on Build Shift

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A brief description of Communication: Delays on Build Shift

#### Document History

Item 838 Communications in [October 9-10, 2024 Council Agenda](#) (<https://www.portland.gov/council/agenda/2024/10/9>)

City Council

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#### Requested Agenda Type

Communications

#### Date and Time Information

Requested Council Date

October 9, 2024

Diana Meisenhelter, testifying on behalf of Extinction Rebellion, a global and local climate justice movement. We are in the midst of a climate emergency needing to cut emissions in half by 2030 or experience ever growing unthinkable consequences. Greenhouse gas emissions from the Building Sector are close to 40% of overall emissions- equivalent to the Transportation sector.

This summer, many testified about MERTN, which was supposed to be Phase I of the City's Building Decarbonization campaign. **Over 70% of those who testified favored moving forward with plans for gathering baseline data on energy use for large residential buildings and for tenant notifications on indoor air quality, cooling options, and energy costs for renters in multifamily dwellings.** Despite this overwhelming public support, the city appears to have listened to the few voices of NW Natural, large landlords and multifamily housing owners' associations, and decided not to start Phase I, but rather try a small non-detailed pilot program utilizing PCEF funds.

Many low-income and BIPOC folks were involved in organizing and generating comments on the Build Shift proposal. The City's MERTN proposal was a very weak first step limited to baseline data collection only on buildings of 20- 50K sf and for tenant education. Numerous cities have taken substantial, bold actions on building decarbonization policies and standards. The tenant notification timeline was far slower than what is needed and equitable for tenants to have critical information for informed decisions. Yet Portland was unwilling to move forward on even these 'baby' steps.

This year's report on the faltering progress on the Climate Emergency Plan is beyond disappointing. Outside of PCEF, very little has been accomplished in terms of strong climate policies and initiatives for the level of emission reductions and climate resiliency efforts needed for the challenges we face. If Portland, of all places, cannot demonstrate the requisite council leadership—what hope is there for the country and the world. I work daily with folks in Africa and Latin America whose inhabitants are being ravaged by climate chaos at levels far beyond what we are seeing here in the States. We ask you to begin by reversing this decision and having the courage to do what is right which is to complete Phase I and move forward on the next phases of actually setting building decarbonization policies and standards in a timely way to meet climate deadlines. We can't afford delays in reducing emissions or in climate justice actions to ensure health and climate resiliency. ACT NOW.

**REDUCE EMISSIONS !  
BUILDINGS AND  
TRANSPORTATION!**

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**EXPEDITE TENANT  
NOTIFICATIONS ON  
HEALTH, SAFETY AND  
COST !**