

RESOLUTION FOR A FUTURE WITHOUT GAS AND FOR CLEAN HEAT

Councilors Leary, Kalis, Humphrey, Bowman, Downs, Crossley, Greenberg, Lipof, Ryan, Lucas, Kelley, Wright, Norton, and Albright support the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, we are in a climate emergency that is increasing the social and financial costs of extreme weather damage; the cost of fossil fuels is volatile and rising; and the most effective way to protect the health, public safety and economic security of all members of our community is to stop burning fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, the decades-long amortization of extensive, unnecessary, and counterproductive pipe replacement will be a rate burden on those without the assets or authority (e.g. renters) to electrify their homes; and,

WHEREAS, we want to align our policies and practices with the goals of Newton's Climate Action Plan and the Commonwealth's Climate goals:

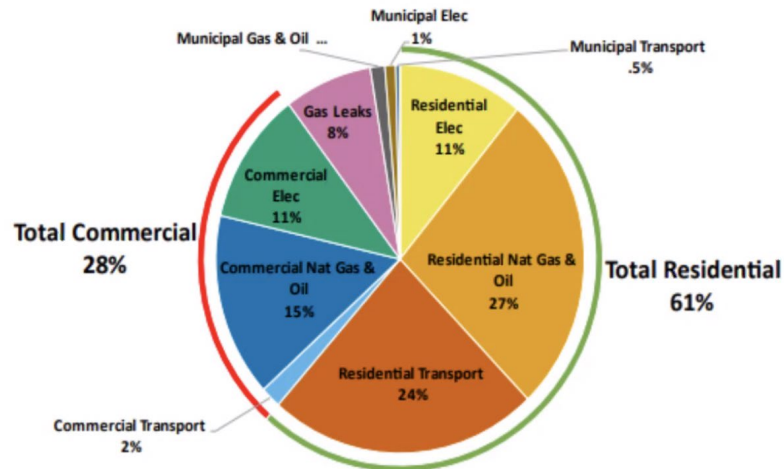
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

The City of Newton acknowledges the urgency of reducing the enormous cost to ratepayers and risks of our gas infrastructure. Therefore, Newton commits to creating a [city-wide plan](#) to equitably achieve optimal efficiencies and reduce emissions and risks by accelerating the retirement of the gas infrastructure through triage and repair of gas leaks and to expedite the electrification of residences and businesses.



REASONS:

- The gas network is old, leaky and increasingly vulnerable to freezing, thawing, and water infiltration from a rising water table and more intense precipitation due to global warming. See [City of Newton Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation and Resiliency Action Plan | Mass.gov](#)
- Hundreds of gas leaks cause at least 8+% of Newton’s GHG emissions. We can achieve the biggest reduction in emissions from lost and unaccounted for gas by **retiring** leaking and leak-prone pipes.



- The intent of the 2014 [Gas System Enhancement Program \(GSEP\)](#) legislation was to reduce emissions and improve safety. National Grid has not achieved those goals; [GSEP](#) does not explicitly authorize installing new high pressure, hydrogen ready pipes.
- If National Grid is allowed to implement its plan, Massachusetts will spend an estimated \$40+ billion on pipe replacement that extends the pipeline infrastructure at rate payers’ expense long after its useful life rather than funding effective, less costly repairs of gas leaks and retrofitting buildings for clean renewable energy.
- We can avoid squandering these funds on dangerous, wasteful, obsolete fossil fuel infrastructure and instead use them for effective trenchless, durable, as-safe, less disruptive and lower cost pipeline maintenance methods** and to also install solar, networked geothermal and “clustered electrification” (block conversions from gas to heat pumps.)
- It is in the best interest of our families and neighbors to reduce risk of explosion, and fire, to reduce sources of indoor and outdoor air pollution from gas, and to ensure that the utility companies will not introduce fuels blended with [hydrogen](#) into the gas distribution pipelines.

[Proposal for changes to National Grid's application for Grants of Location for pipeline replacement projects and a City-wide Plan 10/7/22](#)

[**Letter to Public Facilities about an alternative, trenchless, durable, as-safe, less disruptive and lower cost alternative pipeline maintenance method 9/17/22](#)

[Geohazard Concerns](#)

[GSEP At The Six-Year Mark A Review Of The Massachusetts Gas System Enhancement Program](#)
(<https://www.gastransitionallies.org/gsep>)

[Letter to Healey's Climate Transition Committee; GTA meeting Thurs Dec 15](#)

Recommendations_from_Gas_Transition_Allies_Strategic_Initiatives_Committee_12-15-22 We hope this document is useful as a beginning place and as a compass to help us row together in the same direction.

[Massachusetts Commission on Clean Heat Final Report](#)