

December 10, 2024

To: Ames Mayor and City Council

From: Chuck Winkleblack & Justin Dodge, Hunziker Companies

Re: Additional incentives for all electric homes

Honorable Mayor and Ames City Council:

Thank you for adding additional incentives for all-electric homes within Ames' city limits. Hunziker Construction has built several all-electric homes in recent years, including 13 in the last two years, all of which qualified for the City of Ames Electric Services bonus rebates. The Electric Services rebate program helps buyers considering all-electric homes commit to going fully electric. While the Option 2 incentive supports clients who want to install solar panels immediately, it doesn't provide sufficient incentive for builders to construct such homes as spec projects.

Hunziker Construction is currently working on a spec home in Sunset Ridge North (City of Ames Electric) that will be all-electric, and we intend to make it solar-ready. Due to the higher cost of housing, we would not elect to install solar panels and have the home ready for solar in the future.

After reviewing the staff report, we realized we had misunderstood that the Council could consider only Option 1 or Option 2. Ultimately, the Council moved forward with Option 2, which includes a higher incentive for installing solar panels immediately.

In our experience, clients building a new home typically wait a few years before adding a solar array to their property. Reflecting on the staff report and understanding that staff are revising the abatement program, we couldn't help but wonder: why not include both options?

Incorporating both options into the abatement program could increase the likelihood of clients transitioning to all-electric homes and adopting solar power—whether in two steps, as outlined in Option 1, or all at once, as in Option 2. Thank you for reconsidering this important topic.

Sincerely,

Chuck Winkleblack
Justin Dodge