



Consent Item 11

To:	Ava Community Energy Authority
From:	JP Ross, VP Local Development
Subject:	Approving a resolution authorizing the CEO to negotiate and execute an Agreement with UC Berkeley to support the Oakland EcoBlock Project
Date:	July 15, 2026

Summary/Recommendation

Approve a resolution authorizing the Chief Executive Officer to enter into an Agreement with the University of California, Berkeley for the EcoBlock neighborhood electrification project (the “project”) for an amount not to exceed \$150,000 to close a critical funding gap, complete building electrification for participating Ava customers, and advance Ava's decarbonization and local development goals.

Financial Impact

Approval would authorize a grant of up to \$150,000 from the Community Grant Funds. This grant aligns with Ava's Community Empowerment and Research & Innovation grant category.

Analysis and Context

EcoBlock is a first-of-its-kind neighborhood-scale electrification and resilience demonstration project led by the California Institute for Energy and Environment (CIEE) at the University of California, Berkeley, in partnership with the City of Oakland and community members in Oakland's Fruitvale District. This pilot research project will retrofit 25 units (24 residential and one commercial) across 15 properties with building electrification, rooftop solar, and resilience improvements designed to create a scalable model for neighborhood decarbonization.

The pilot neighborhood is racially and economically diverse and is located within an AB 1550 Low-Income Community and within one-half mile of an SB 535 Disadvantaged Community. Nearly all participating homes were built before 1910 and largely uninsulated, with many relying on natural gas wall furnaces.

To date, EcoBlock has secured more than \$8.3 million in public and philanthropic funding, which have funded most of the major project improvements, including air sealing, insulation, electrification of space and water heating, upgraded electrical panels for all 25 units, rooftop solar installations on 15 participating properties, and stormwater and urban greening improvements.

However, during final project implementation, the project experienced an unexpected funding gap of approximately \$113,000. This shortfall occurred after a state grant program exhausted its available rebate funding, which EcoBlock was relying on to complete the remaining electrification work. Staff recommends awarding a grant of up to \$150,000 to UC Berkeley to cover the project's funding shortfall.

The Ava grant will directly support induction-related improvements, including induction ranges, induction cooktops, electrical circuit upgrades, induction-compatible cookware, and other electric appliance installations. The grant is expected to directly benefit 15 participating households, six of which are on the low-income CARE rate. Twelve households will receive additional electrification work, while three households will receive induction-compatible cookware. Once completed Ecoblock participants will have the option to discontinue natural gas service.

Additionally, Ava has participated on the EcoBlock Technical Advisory Committee during project development. The project will provide Ava with valuable insight to inform future collaborations with local governments, community-based organizations, and research institutions.

Attachments

- A. Resolution of the Board of Directors of Ava Community Energy Authority Authorizing the Chief Executive Officer to Negotiate and Execute a Grant Agreement with the University of California, Berkeley for the EcoBlock Project

RESOLUTION NO. R-2026-XX

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**OF AVA COMMUNITY ENERGY AUTHORITY AUTHORIZING THE CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A GRANT AGREEMENT
WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY FOR THE ECOBLOCK
PROJECT**

WHEREAS Ava Community Energy Authority (“Ava”) was formed as a community choice aggregation agency (“CCA”) on December 1, 2016, under the Joint Exercise of Powers Act, California Government Code sections 6500 *et seq.*, among the County of Alameda, and the Cities of Albany, Berkeley, Dublin, Emeryville, Fremont, Hayward, Livermore, Piedmont, Oakland, San Leandro, and Union City to study, promote, develop, conduct, operate, and manage energy-related climate change programs in all of the member jurisdictions. The cities of Newark and Pleasanton, located in Alameda County, along with the City of Tracy, located in San Joaquin County, were added as members of Ava and parties to the Joint Powers Agreement (“JPA”) in March of 2020. The city of Stockton was added as a member to Ava in September of 2022. The city of Lathrop was added as a member to Ava in October of 2023. San Joaquin County was added as a member to Ava in July 2024. On October 24, 2023, Ava legally adopted the name Ava Community Energy Authority, where it had previously used the name East Bay Community Energy Authority since its inception; and

WHEREAS, the EcoBlock Project is a neighborhood-scale electrification and resilience demonstration project led by the California Institute for Energy and Environment at the University of California, Berkeley, in partnership with the City of Oakland and community members in Oakland's Fruitvale District; and

WHEREAS, EcoBlock has secured more than \$8.3 million in public and philanthropic funding and has completed substantial building electrification and energy improvements but requires additional funding to complete the remaining electrification work after anticipated rebate funding became unavailable; and

WHEREAS, Ava desires to enter into an Agreement with the University of California, Berkeley for an amount not to exceed \$150,000 to provide funding for the EcoBlock Project; and

WHEREAS, providing grant funding for the EcoBlock Project advances Ava's strategic goals by supporting building electrification, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and demonstrating innovative neighborhood-scale decarbonization strategies within Ava's service territory.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF AVA COMMUNITY
ENERGY AUTHORITY DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. The Board of Directors authorizes the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with staff and legal counsel, to negotiate and execute an Agreement with the University of California, Berkeley, for the EcoBlock Project.

Section 2. The total amount of the Agreement shall not exceed One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000).

ADOPTED AND APPROVED this 15th day of July, 2026.

Betsy Andersen, Chair

ATTEST:

Adrian Bankhead, Clerk of the Board