

**From:** Velvet Kitty <velvetkittytattoo@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 24, 2026 3:47 PM  
**To:** City Clerk  
**Subject:** Tattoo Zoning Proposal

Good afternoon council members!

My name is Breezy Barendt and I've been a tattoo artist/business owner in San Luis Obispo County for 30 years. I am writing you today to propose an exception on the zoning changes that will be discussed on Tuesday. I propose that in these zoning changes that downtown will allow tattooing and piercing parlours as long as they acquire a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) or an Acceptable Usr Permit (AUP). I hope that we can discuss this further on Tuesday, looking forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,  
Breezy Barendt  
[www.velvetkittytattoo.com](http://www.velvetkittytattoo.com)

**ATTENTION: EXTERNAL SENDER. Use caution when opening links and attachments.**

**From:** Eric Veium <eric@sloclimatecoalition.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 8:35 AM  
**To:** City Clerk <cityclerk@atascadero.org>  
**Subject:** Re: April 28, 2026 — Item G1 — Zoning Code Update, Commercial Zones and Uses (Electricity Generation and Storage Facility)

City Clerk,

Please see the attached comment letter regarding Item G1 - Zoning Code Update on today's Council agenda.

Please share with Council members, staff, and make available for public review.

Thank you.  
Eric



**Eric Veium, MPP**

he | him ([why do pronouns matter?](#))

Board Chair

Home Energy Advising Service Director

Co-Director, CCA Workforce & EJ [Alliance](#)

805.835.3669

[eric@sloclimatecoalition.org](mailto:eric@sloclimatecoalition.org)

[www.sloclimatecoalition.org](http://www.sloclimatecoalition.org)

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Central Coast

April 28, 2026

Mayor Bourbeau and Members of the City Council

City of Atascadero · 6500 Palma Avenue · Atascadero, CA 93422

*Submitted via: [cityclerk@atascadero.org](mailto:cityclerk@atascadero.org)*

**Re: April 28, 2026 – Item G1 – Zoning Code Update, Commercial Zones and Uses  
(Electricity Generation and Storage Facility)**

Dear Mayor Bourbeau and Members of the Council:

On behalf of the SLO Climate Coalition, I write regarding the Commercial Zones and Uses portion of the Zoning Code Update, and specifically how the proposed code treats Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) under the "Electricity Generation and Storage Facility" definition. We have not previously commented on land use matters in Atascadero, and we appreciate the opportunity to share our perspective.

The Commercial Innovation (CI) district, as described in the staff report, is intended to "promote opportunities for startup businesses and head-of-household jobs" and to be "adaptable to a variety of compatible uses as workforce trends evolve." Energy storage is exactly that kind of use. It is one of the fastest-growing segments of California's clean-economy industrial base, it represents skilled trade jobs, and it provides direct local benefits – distribution-grid resilience, support for Central Coast Community Energy procurement, and faster recovery during PSPS or disaster-driven outages. We respectfully ask the Council to direct staff to make BESS a Conditionally Allowed use (CUP) in the Commercial Innovation district in addition to Industrial – keeping every safeguard in the proposed code intact.



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**1. Energy resilience is foundational to the innovation economy the CI district is designed to attract.**

The businesses the CI district is intended to recruit – research and development, light manufacturing, food and beverage production, artisan production, maker spaces, data and computer services, and similar uses already named in the proposed Land Use Table – share a common dependence: continuous, high-quality electrical power. A spoiled fermentation run, a halted CNC job, an interrupted lab process, or a server outage during a PSPS event is not just an inconvenience. It is lost product, lost revenue, and in some cases lost contracts. For the kinds of tenants Atascadero hopes to attract to the CI district, power reliability is a site-selection criterion, not an afterthought.

North County San Luis Obispo, including Atascadero, has experienced multi-day PSPS events during high-wind, high-fire-risk conditions – including the June 2025 event that affected North County customers for several days. Climate-driven fire weather is increasing the frequency and duration of these events, and the businesses the CI district is meant to attract are the businesses least able to absorb them.

BESS is the infrastructure that addresses this directly. A battery storage facility sited in or near the CI district can support distribution-level resilience for the cluster of innovation tenants the district is built to host, shorten outage exposure during PSPS and wildfire-driven events, and give Central Coast Community Energy a local procurement option that keeps clean-energy investment dollars circulating in Atascadero. Allowing BESS as a CUP-permitted use in CI is not a departure from the district's economic development purpose – it is a way of underwriting it. Restricting BESS to the Industrial zone alone, which under the proposed map covers only the Traffic Way and Sycamore Road areas, severs the resilience asset from the innovation tenants who most need it.

**2. California's BESS safety framework has been substantially strengthened, including new requirements effective this January.**

Concerns about battery storage are understandable, particularly following the January 2025 Moss Landing fire. The regulatory framework has been materially upgraded since that incident, and several requirements took effect on January 1, 2026:

- SB 283 (Laird, 2025) – effective Jan. 1, 2026. Applicants must certify they met and conferred with the local fire authority at least 30 days before submitting an application, covering facility design, fire mitigation, and emergency response. The City cannot approve a project without a post-installation, pre-operation fire inspection paid for by the applicant. SB 283 puts Atascadero Fire at the table from the first conversation and again before any battery is energized.
- SB 38 (Laird, 2023). Every BESS facility must maintain a site-specific Emergency Response and Emergency Action Plan, coordinated with local fire and emergency management and filed with the City.
- CPUC General Order 167 (modified March 2025). Maintenance, operation, training, and incident-reporting standards now apply to all BESS in the state, not only investor-owned utilities.
- NFPA 855 + UL 9540 / 9540A + California Fire Code Ch. 12. Equipment must be listed and large-scale fire tested; the State Fire Marshal adopted the latest NFPA 855 in March 2025 with effect on January 1, 2026, adding mandatory Hazard Mitigation Analysis.

Recent California experience also shows that modern, well-designed BESS performs very differently from older systems. The 2024 Gateway/Otay Mesa incident reportedly required ~17 days and roughly 8 million gallons of water to clear, while the 2024 Valley Center incident was reportedly extinguished in about 45 minutes by the site's internal fire-prevention system, with the facility back in operation the next day. The state safety stack – combined with the CUP process – is how the City ensures any BESS built in Atascadero looks like Valley Center, not Otay Mesa.

### **3. The City can require qualified workforce credentials and emergency planning as CUP conditions.**

Who installs and maintains a BESS materially affects its safety. As a condition of any BESS Conditional Use Permit, we recommend the City require:

- All installation, maintenance, and decommissioning work performed by C-10 licensed electrical contractors;
- A defined percentage of onsite electrical workers holding Energy Storage and Microgrid Training and Certification (ESAMTAC) credentials – a safety credential developed through a Penn State–led collaborative including NFPA, EPRI, NECA, IBEW, NAATBatt, GridSTAR, CalCEF, and CalCharge;



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- A site-specific Emergency Response Plan reviewed annually and updated whenever facility design, operations, or surrounding conditions change.

As a starting point, we suggest 15% of onsite electrical workers hold ESAMTAC certification, with the exact threshold and implementation refined in consultation with Atascadero Fire and the local IBEW. The Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) has also published a model BESS permitting ordinance that may be a useful reference as staff develops CUP findings.

### **Closing**

We are not asking the Council to weaken any safety standard or eliminate review. We are asking the Council to direct staff to add CI to the row currently showing CUP only in I – keeping the full state safety stack and CUP discretion in place, and giving the CI district the flexibility its General Plan vision calls for.

Thank you for your consideration, and for the careful work the Council and staff have put into this code update.

Respectfully,

*Eric Veium*

Eric Veium  
Chair of the Board

**From:** Max Zappas <max@zvillages.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 2:44 PM  
**To:** City Clerk <cityclerk@atascadero.org>  
**Subject:**

Hello,

I am writing to express my support for allowing tattoo businesses in the downtown commercial zone through a Conditional Use Permit or Administrative Use Permit. Tattoo studios are already permitted in other commercial zones, and extending this allowance to downtown would be a logical and positive step forward. Doing so would help modernize the area, encourage a broader mix of business types, and make downtown more reflective of current cultural and economic trends.

Tattoo businesses are part of the creative economy and contribute to the arts, tourism, and local identity. Allowing them downtown would support artistic expression while attracting visitors and increasing foot traffic for surrounding businesses.

I respectfully ask that you consider updating the zoning regulations to include tattoo studios in the downtown commercial zone, ensuring consistency across commercial areas and supporting a more vibrant, inclusive business environment.

Thank you for your time and consideration.




Max Zappas

Z Villages Real Estate

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**From:** Cory Black <Cory@centralcoasttrades.com>

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 6:21 PM

**To:** City Clerk <cityclerk@atascadero.org>; Charles Bourbeau <cbourbeau@atascadero.org>; Mark Dariz <mdariz@atascadero.org>; Susan Funk <sfunk@atascadero.org>; Heather Newsom <hnewsom@atascadero.org>; Seth Peek <speek@atascadero.org>

**Cc:** Mark Simonin [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Energy Storage Zoning in Atascadero

April 28, 2026

Honorable Mayor Charles Bourbeau  
Atascadero City Council  
6500 Palma Avenue  
Atascadero, CA 93422

I am writing on behalf of the working men and women of IBEW 639 to urge the Atascadero City Council not to restrict Electrical Storage Facilities to properties zoned industrial. While those facilities are not appropriate on all properties zoned commercial, there is a possibility that they might be feasible on some properties zoned commercial. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Mark Simonin  
Business Manager

CC: Atascadero City Clerk & Members of the Atascadero City Council

Cory Black  
Central Coast Construction Trades  
805-225-3910  
916-801-0551 cell  
centralcoasttrades.com



6363 Edna Road, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

April 28, 2026

Honorable Mayor Charles Bourbeau  
Atascadero City Council  
6500 Palma Avenue  
Atascadero, CA 93422

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Simonin', is located below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Mark Simonin  
Business Manager

CC: Atascadero City Clerk & Members of the Atascadero City Council