

From: [Jenna Kay](#)
To: [Cnty 2025 Comp Plan](#); [Jeffrey Delapena](#)
Subject: FW: Climate, Solar and Batteries
Date: Monday, July 6, 2026 9:47:50 AM

For the record

From: Don Steinke <crvancouverusa@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2026 8:26 AM
To: Cascade Chapter Energy Committee <CASCADE-ENERGY-COMM@lists.sierraclub.org>; CASCADE-CONS-COMM@lists.sierraclub.org; Charlee Thompson <charlee@nwenergy.org>; Gordon Mathews <ghmatthews@icloud.com>; Dave Hale <ndhale33@gmail.com>; Small, Rebecca <Rebecca.Small@cityofvancouver.us>; Jenna Kay <Jenna.Kay@clark.wa.gov>; Shari Phiel <shari.phiel@columbian.com>; Nancy Barnes <nbarnes@clarkpud.com>; Jesse Piedfort <jesse.piedfort@sierraclub.org>; Joelle Robinson <joelle@climatesolutions.org>
Subject: Climate, Solar and Batteries

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From Don and Alona Steinke – Climate Action of Southwest Washington
Re: Climate, Solar and Batteries

Hello Everyone,

As we switch to intermittent energy resources such as solar and wind, we need a way to save the energy from midday to times of peak demand.

That means we need grid scale batteries. They save money by increasing grid utilization. They help prevent brownouts. Their cost has plummeted and their safety has improved.

As a result, Texas has installed 15,000 mW of battery capacity and California has installed 14,000 mW. Texas plans to add 12,000 mW this year alone. **Washington has almost none.**

Now General Motors is coming out with grid scale batteries using sodium rather than lithium. Sodium-ion batteries are superior to lithium-ion batteries in stationary applications. They can operate at very cold as well as hot temperatures.

Grid scale batteries are about the size of shipping containers and can store up to 8 Mwh of energy. They can be deployed in church parking lots and on commercial rooftops. Batteries can store surplus solar during the day for use at night. Grid scale batteries are cheaper than substation upgrades.

At a smaller scale, all EVs produced by GM are capable of bidirectional charging. They can serve as backup generators. Alan Webb Chevy in Vancouver carries the needed inverters.

I'm not writing to ask you to do anything. I'm just trying to make the case that we need grid-scale energy-storage. There are many forms of energy storage: Gravitational Potential Energy, Flywheel Kinetic Energy, or electrochemical. Right now, electrochemical is the most readily available and affordable.

I've suggested to Clark County, The City of Vancouver, and to Clark PUD that they develop appropriate regulations to ensure safety.

For more, listen to this David Roberts Podcast: <https://www.volts.wtf/p/americas-flagship-automaker-enters>

It begins with:

In this episode, I talk with GM Energy executive Aseem Kapur about General Motors' move into bidirectional EV charging and home energy management. We dig into the practicalities of turning hundreds of thousands of EVs into mobile backup generators, how to navigate a patchwork of 4,000 different utilities, and what it takes to get everyday consumers to see their cars as grid assets.

Last week, General Motors — America's top automaker, and its No. 2 seller of electric vehicles, behind Tesla — made a [series of announcements](#) that are of great interest to Volts listeners.

The first is the debut of [Energy Pass](#), a collaboration between GM and EV-charging providers that will offer a single account for owners of any GM brand EV (including Cadillac, Chevrolet, etc.) that can access an array of fast chargers from Tesla, Electrify America, IONNA, and more. (Energy Pass currently covers about 70% of existing fast chargers, with more being added soon.) The goal is to simplify the EV-charging experience so that EV owners no longer have to juggle multiple apps and accounts to find a charger when they're on the road. It's a big step toward that much-hoped-for future when EV owners can simply stop at any fast charger they want and begin charging without fuss.

The second is about a new [collaboration between GM and Peak Energy](#), which provides sodium-ion batteries for grid-scale energy storage. Regular Volts listeners are, of course, familiar with Peak Energy and with sodium-ion batteries, as I [interviewed Peak CEO Landon Mossberg](#) on the pod last year. This is a huge boost for the sodium-ion market, which is very cool because sodium-ion batteries contain cheaper and less-toxic materials than conventional lithium-based batteries, work over a wider array of temperatures, and generally last longer, with less need for cooling and maintenance. It is also a battery market that China does not yet dominate and the US still has a chance to compete in. This is part of a broader shift we're seeing as several US automakers pivot into the grid battery space, which is going to be a huge boon to the grid.

And finally, the announcement that is the subject of today's podcast: GM is [investing heavily in bidirectional EV chargers that will enable vehicle-to-home \(V2H\) and vehicle-to-grid \(V2G\) integration](#). GM already has several hundred thousand EVs on the road that are *capable* of bidirectional charging, but of course, getting it to actually work requires homeowners to buy and install home chargers, inverters, and batteries, and for utilities to enable V2G by establishing the right kinds of tariffs and programs.

Thanks for reading

Don Steinke