A potential “Tillamook Negawatt” project we're exploring with the Tillamook Public Utility District and Tillamook County Commissioners:

Combining Net-Zero-Energy retrofits of existing homes with accessory dwelling unit ordinances can permit easy partition of the oversized three-bedroom ranch houses that make up the majority of our housing stock and energy demand. That makes possible a win-win-win strategy:

• "Negawatts" for the electric utility (ie. us) at a fraction of the cost of any new generation, cutting fossil fuel use, global warming, and foreign debt.

• "Storm-proof" homes for residents, who can stay warm in power outages or whatever economic collapse occurs.

• Affordable housing at a fraction of the cost of construction.

• Potential income to retirees who have lost income from the stock market crash.

• Enhanced ability of existing utility infrastructure to serve twice as many residents.

• Local-employment-intensive investments, 100-year returns.

• Better transportation and community from improved housing density with very little investment.

• Capacity for electric vehicle transportation within our renewable hydro-based electrical allotment.

* Net-Zero-Energy upgrades of existing homes can cut their energy use by 80%.
* ADU ordinances allow those homes to accommodate two families instead of one, cutting per-family energy use in half again!
* Together, they can improve our efficiency of energy use by 90%!

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT ORDINANCES – The Second Half of the Story: “ADUs” are a mechanism to create an additional dwelling from a portion of an existing single-family residence, without some of the costly requirements of the Building Code.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS OF ADUs
• Very affordable housing without government subsidies.
• Efficient use of existing housing and infrastructure.
• More density to support transit, neighborhood stores.
• Income for homeowners.
• Better maintenance and neighborhood stability.
• More housing opportunities within existing communities.
• Energy and resource efficiency.

HOMEOWNER BENEFITS OF ADUs:
• Care and support of elderly residents.
• Income allowing people to remain in neighborhood longer, meet rising costs.
• Increased security and companionship.
• Help first-time homeowners meet payments, qualify for mortgages.
• Easy “oversight” of rental property.
• Ability to make best use of existing home after children grow up.

ADU ordinance can be done quickly the way Washington State did – adopting an overall ordinance [for the county] with provision for local areas to “tune” SOME elements of it.

Details of ADU ordinances vary to meet local preferences in areas such as:

• More building on a lot vs. splitting existing
• Building size and lot coverage limitations.
• Parking, and energy upgrade requirements
• Owner-occupancy requirements
• Number of occupants, handicapped access
• Design/appearance requirements
• ADU Occupant requirements, home occupations
• Attached vs. detached ADUs
• Lot size, density, # of ADUs per lot
• Utility service, registration of ADUs

Some elements of an ADU ordinance that should probably NOT be changeable:

• Units must be registered.
• Rents not to exceed affordable by 80% of AMI.
• Energy upgrades required.
• Permanent resident only, not “motel” short-term rentals.

Elements to consider re the upgrades:

• Require upgrades on all home sales. That is an easy time for doing construction work, and $$$ are available for any owner portion of costs.
• Require NZE on all new home construction (this is not far above the state’s “High Performance Home” program and incentive $$. This will significantly lower TPUD energy demand projections.
• Couple with “tiered” rate structure, to encourage good energy habits.
• Work with cities to adopt similar ADU ordinances and join the program.
• The retrofit program for existing homes would go somewhat beyond the state HPH program, and be tuned to specific coastal conditions.

TillaWatts: Possible Funding Sources

• Federal Tax Credits
• State Tax Credits
• TPUD 10% discount $$
• TPUD tiered rate structure
• BPA Conservation $$ pass-through
• Low-income weatherization $$$
• Homeowner reduction of energy bills
• SB201 “Energy Matchmaker” funds

Affordable Comfort, Inc website has huge resources. There is a conference in PDX in early Feb which should be very interesting, and a pilot program nationally that we could get in on.