Inland Regional Energy Network
I-REN Executive Committee

AGENDA

Tuesday, August 15, 2023
2:00 PM

WRCOG
3390 University Avenue
Suite 200, Citrus Conference Room
Riverside, CA 92501

Remote Meeting Location:

CVAG
74-199 El Paseo
West Building, Suite 100
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Committee members are asked to attend this meeting in person unless remote accommodations have previously been requested and noted on the agenda. The below Zoom link is provided for the convenience of members of the public, presenters, and support staff.

Public Zoom Link
Meeting ID: 896 9280 6132
Passcode: 046802
Dial in: (669) 900 9128 U.S.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Government Code Section 54954.2, if special assistance is needed to participate in the I-REN Executive Committee meeting, please contact

WRCOG at (951) 405-6702. Notification of at least 48 hours prior to meeting time will assist staff in assuring that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility at the meeting. In compliance with Government Code Section 54957.5, agenda materials distributed within 72 hours prior to the meeting which are public records relating to an open session agenda item will be available for inspection by members of the public prior to the meeting at 3390 University Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside, CA, 92501.

In addition to commenting at the Committee meeting, members of the public may also submit written comments before or during the meeting, prior to the close of public comment to jleonard@wrcog.us.

Any member of the public requiring a reasonable accommodation to participate in this meeting in light of this announcement shall contact Janis Leonard 72 hours prior to the meeting at (951) 405-6702 or jleonard@wrcog.us. Later requests will be accommodated to the extent feasible.

The Committee may take any action on any item listed on the agenda, regardless of the Requested Action.

1. CALL TO ORDER (Crystal Ruiz, Chair)

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

At this time members of the public can address the Committee regarding any items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Committee that are not separately listed on this agenda. Members of the public will have an opportunity to speak on agendized items at the time the item is called for discussion. No action may be taken on items not listed on the agenda unless authorized by law. Whenever possible, lengthy testimony should be presented to the Committee in writing and only pertinent points presented orally.

5. SELECTION OF I-REN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR, AND 2ND VICE-CHAIR POSITIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023/2024

A. Selection of I-REN Executive Committee Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair Positions for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

Requested Action(s):

1. Select leadership positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair for Fiscal Year 2023/2024.
2. Determine ranked voting order for COG member agency representatives.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

All items listed under the Consent Calendar are considered to be routine and may be enacted by one motion. Prior to the motion to consider any action by the Committee, any public comments on any of the Consent Items will be heard. There will be no separate action unless members of the Committee request specific items be removed from the Consent Calendar.

A. Summary Minutes from the May 16, 2023, Executive Committee Meeting

Requested Action(s):

1. Approve the Summary Minutes from the May 16, 2023, Executive Committee meeting.

B. I-REN Regulatory and Reporting Update

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

7. REPORTS / DISCUSSION

Members of the public will have an opportunity to speak on agendized items at the time the item is called for discussion.

A. Discussion of I-REN Executive Committee Meeting Schedule for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

Requested Action(s):

1. Determine and approve a Fiscal Year 2023/2024 I-REN Executive Committee meeting schedule.

B. I-REN Branding and Marketing Update

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

C. Update on California Public Utilities Commission Final Decision (D.23-060-055) and True-up Advice Letter

Requested Action(s):

1. Authorize the submittal of the True-Up Advice Letter to the California Public Utilities Commission.

D. I-REN Strategic Planning Update

Requested Action(s):

1. Option 1 - Approve the draft Strategic Plan and direct the Executive Director to provide a final version for approval at the next meeting.
2. Option 2 - Direct the Executive Director to revise the draft Strategic Plan and return at a later date for consideration.

E. California Energy Commission Equitable Building Decarbonization Grant Program

Requested Action(s):

1. Authorize staff to provide a letter of commitment, on behalf of I-REN, to partner with SoCal REN / Los Angeles County in applying for the California Energy Commission Equitable Building Decarbonization Grant Program.

8. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR
Crystal Ruiz, WRCOG

9. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS
Members are invited to suggest additional items to be brought forward for discussion at future Committee meetings.

10. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS
Members are invited to announce items / activities which may be of general interest to the Committee.

11. NEXT MEETING
The next I-REN Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 19, 2023, at 2:00 p.m., location to be determined.

12. ADJOURNMENT

13. AGENCY ACRONYMS

Inland Regional Energy Network Acronym Guide

3C-REN – Tri-County Regional Energy Network (Counties of Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo)
ABAL – Annual Budget Advice Letter
AHJ – Authority Having Jurisdiction
AVCE – Apple Valley Choice Energy
BayREN – Bay Area Regional Energy Network (nine county REN in Northern California)
BUC – Building Upgrade Concierge
C&S – Codes & Standards
CAEECC – California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee
CalChoice – California Choice Energy Authority
Cal ISO – California Independent System Operator
CARB – California Air Resources Board
CCA – Community Choice Aggregator
CCEC – California Climate & Energy Collaborative
CEC – California Energy Commission
COG - Council of Government
CPA – Clean Power Alliance
CPUC – California Public Utilities Commission
CVAG – Coachella Valley Association of Governments
DAC – Disadvantaged Communities
DACAG – Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group
DCE – Desert Community Energy
DER – Distributed Energy Resources
DOE – U.S Department of Energy
EE – Energy Efficiency
EM&V – Evaluation, Measurement, and Verification
EV – Electric Vehicle
GHG – Greenhouse sas
HTR – Hard To Reach communities
IID – Imperial Irrigation District
IOU – Investor-Owned Utility
I-REN – Inland Regional Energy Network
JCM – Joint Cooperation Memorandum
LGSEC – Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition
LGP – Local Government Partnership
MOA – Memorandum of Agreement
NEBs – Non-energy Benefits
NMEC – Normalized Metered Energy Consumption
NREL – U.S Department of Energy National Renewable Energy Laboratory
PG&E – Pacific Gas & Electric
PA – Program Administrator
POU – Publicly Owned Utility
REN – Regional Energy Network
RMEA – Rancho Mirage Energy Authority
RPU – Riverside Public Utilities
SBCOG – San Bernardino Council of Governments
SCE – Southern California Edison
SCG / SoCalGas – Southern California Gas Company
SDG&E – San Diego Gas & Electric
SJP – San Jacinto Power
SoCalREN – Southern California Regional Energy Network (all of southern California, administered by Los Angeles County)
TA – Technical Assistance
TOU – Time of use

TRC – Total Resources Cost
V2G – Vehicle to Grid
WE&T – Workforce Education & Training
WRCOG – Western Riverside Council of Governments

Inland Regional Energy Network
I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: **Selection of I-REN Executive Committee Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair Positions for Fiscal Year 2023/2024**

Contact: **Casey Dailey, WRCOG Director of Energy & Environmental Programs, cdailey@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6720**

Date: **August 15, 2023**

Requested Action(s):

1. Select leadership positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair for Fiscal Year 2023/2024.
2. Determine ranked voting order for COG member agency representatives.

Purpose:
The purpose of this item is to select Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair leadership positions for Fiscal Year 2023/2024.

Background:
The I-REN Executive Committee is comprised of elected official members from each of the three participating agencies (member COGs): the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG), the San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG), and the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG).

Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair Selection

Per Memorandum of Agreement No. 22-1002767 between CVAG, SBCOG, and WRCOG, entered into on November 28, 2022, each member COG will have three votes on voting matters. Each COG's governing board will determine how its voting power will be exercised. Decisions will be made on a majority of the total votes cast on a matter.

WRCOG has been approved by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to will serve as the administrative lead COG as the fiscal agent, purchasing and contracting entity, and primary regulatory contact manager for I-REN, and as such is responsible for administering I-REN day-to-day operations. However, WRCOG has no more decision-making power than the other agencies and works through the committee structure to ensure equal engagement for the entire region.

The Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair all serve on an annual basis, with a term that runs through the fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). The current Chair is WRCOG member Crystal Ruiz, Vice-Chair is CVAG member Oscar Ortiz, and 2nd Vice-Chair is SBCOG member Art Bishop. This leadership was appointed December 13, 2022.

<u>Ranked Voting Order for COG Representatives</u>

The voting procedures for the I-REN Executive Committee are outlined in I-REN Governance and Operations Rules, included as Exhibit C to Memorandum of Agreement No. 22-1002767, and are evenly distributed with three votes available to each participating COG. In the case where a participating COG is represented by three voting members, each voting member casts a single vote for a total of three for that COG. Those votes are allocated whether or not there are three voting members. In the case where a participating COG is represented by only one voting member, that member is entitled to cast the equivalent of three votes so the COG is still able to capture its full three votes.

After observing an unrelated discussion at a recent meeting, a hypothetical scenario arose in which the current rules could be ambiguous. In the event a COG was represented by two voting members, the rules allow for them to cast a total of three votes. As long as both voting members agree on the vote, no issue is presented. Consequently, if the two members disagree on the vote, staff is seeking clarity for how the votes would be allocated. The Committee is neither required to make a change, nor limited by the proposed options, but three options are listed below for consideration.

<u>Option 1</u>: Status quo with no change.

<u>Option 2</u>: Allocate the votes equally (1.5 and 1.5).

<u>Option 3</u>: Pre-designate the senior member to cast the second vote (2 vs 1).

The Committee is being asked to consider whether or not to amend the voting process and, if so, how.

<u>Prior Action(s)</u>:
<u>December 13, 2022</u>: The Executive Committee selected Crystal Ruiz, City of San Jacinto, as Chair; Oscar Ortiz, City of Indio, as Vice-Chair; and Art Bishop, Town of Apple Valley, and 2nd Vice-Chair, to serve through the end of Fiscal Year 2022/2023.

<u>Fiscal Impact</u>:
The action itself does not make any financial transactions; however, costs related to I-REN are allocated in the WRCOG Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Agency Budget.

<u>Attachment(s)</u>:
None.

Item 6.A

I-REN Executive Committee

Minutes

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the I-REN Executive Committee was called to order by Chair Crystal Ruiz at 2:00 p.m. on May 16, 2023, at WRCOG's office located at 3390 University Avenue, Suite 200, Citrus Conference Room, Riverside.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Committee member Jacque Casillas led the Committee members and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

- CVAG:
  - City of Indio - Oscar Ortiz
- SBCOG:
  - County of San Bernardino - Curt Hagman
  - Town of Apple Valley - Art Bishop
- WRCOG:
  - City of Corona - Jacque Casillas
  - City of San Jacinto - Crystal Ruiz

<u>Members absent</u>:

- City of Rialto
- City of Jurupa Valley

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR (Corona / Apple Valley) 5 ayes; 0 nays; 0 abstentions

A. Summary Minutes from the April 18, 2023, Executive Committee Meeting

<u>Action</u>:

1. Approved the Summary Minutes from the April 18, 2023, Executive Committee meeting.

B. I-REN Regulatory and Reporting Update

Action:

1. Received and filed.

6. REPORTS / DISCUSSION

A. I-REN Strategic Planning Update

Mindy Craig from BluePoint Planning reported that BluePoint conducted surveys and spoke to member agencies with regard to the vision and goals for I-REN and has been working with I-REN staff to refine that vision and develop strategies to achieve those goals.

One of those visions is to strive for social and racial equity, which for I-REN means enabling under-resourced communities that have not been supported by the State's shift towards energy efficiency. These equity principles include procedural equity which will prioritize low-income communities and those who have traditionally lacked access due to demographic barrier, distributional equity to make sure programs and services are equally available throughout the I-REN service territory, and structural equity to address and mitigate structural inequities that limit access and engagement of Inland Empire cities and agencies.

Committee members asked whether there will be more clarification on the equity and distribution of resources.

Ms. Craig replied that this will be a discussion about governance, budgeting, and allocations to ensure the Committee is comfortable with how the dollars are spent.

Casey Dailey, WRCOG Director of Energy & Environmental Programs, added that there are goals in place that ensures resources will be equitably distributed.

The four pillars of the organizational goals are:

1. A cohesive region: distributing benefits equally throughout the region
2. First 2 years: delivering a positive impact through a successful launch and roll-out in the first two years of the Strategic Plan
3. Awareness and relationships: be actively involved with all member agencies, tribes, special districts, and partners to engage them as active participants
4. Internal organization strategies: characterized by agility, responsiveness, and accountability

Committee member Curt Hagman asked how the grading and point system will work when demographics are involved versus the need of the equipment and needs of the city.

Mr. Dailey stated that the services are not geographically-based, such as virtual trainings and webinars, and will be available to all. For Public Sector programs, such as NMEC, the Committee will need to be determine if it will be done on a first-come, first-served basis, or if all cities must have one project completed before a city can apply for a second project.

Committee member Hagman asked if having a broad definition of equity will complicate the allocation of resources, and would cities with multiple needs will be given more support?

Committee member Art Bishop stated that City Managers are different and engage differently. What may be good for one city may not be the best for another.

Committee member Jacque Casillas does not see a conflict with including the definitions of equity, but she would like to see examples of what that resource allocation will look like.

Mr. Dailey stated that the equity aspect and how the rebate programs will work are still in active development. Orientation meetings are starting in the hardest to reach areas, which is what RENs are supposed to do to help fill the gaps.

Committee member Oscar Ortiz stated that the having a simple basic framework could be used at the beginning to get the funds out to disadvantaged communities, then that framework can be adjusted later.

Chair Ruiz asked Committee member Hagman where he sees a potential conflict.

Committee member Hagman stated that having too many filters on infrastructure make it difficult to judge. How is an application scored based on socioeconomic demographics versus the project itself? There are better ways to weigh a project rather than with the socioeconomic factors.

Committee member Bishop asked if there is a way to compromise by keeping what is applicable and usable, and removing what is deemed to be a potential hindrance.

Committee member Hagman stated that some cities like Ontario may not have a need for I-REN programs and services, even though they meet certain criteria such as having a 50% minority population.

Committee member Ortiz pointed out that the guidelines do not exclude communities that are not disadvantaged. Services are available equally and do not exclude anyone.

Mr. Dailey stated that the goals may be modified by the Committee if the terminology is presenting more roadblocks than benefits.

Ms. Craig suggested considering having the basic equity definition and removing the definitions of procedural, distributional, and structural equity.

Action:

1. Received and filed.

B. Codes & Standards Program Update

Nancy Barba from Frontier reported that the Codes and Standards framework addresses the barriers when it comes to numerous authorities having jurisdiction. I-REN would compile best practices into locally focused trainings, forums, education, and other tools to aid in understanding, enforcing, and implementing energy building codes throughout the region.

The training and education will focus on outreach and engagement, and building professionals. Market assessment surveys will be sent out to identify the challenges of each agency. After this engagement and successful implementation, I-REN will showcase success stories to further promote its programs and tools.

Committee member Hagman expressed concern about how the equity will be gauged for cities with limited resources versus larger entities.

Ms. Barba stated that training would be provided to current city staff and also to those interested in the field, and depending on the results of the assessment, staff may be provided to fill the gaps for cities where there is insufficient staff. Most training will be available online and tailored to the needs of each jurisdiction.

Technical support will also be provided to cities in the form of model codes and ordinances, periodic surveying, and permitting guides.

Action:
1. Received and filed.

7. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

Chair Ruiz reported that I-REN meetings for June and July will be cancelled. The Committee will reconvene in August 2023.

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Committee member Ortiz wants to bring back the points on equity.

9. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Karina Camacho, WRCOG Analyst III, gave an overview of the I-REN orientation meetings that have been scheduled. Staff is still confirming dates for the remaining cities.

Casey Dailey, WRCOG Director of Energy & Environmental Programs, added that lunch will be provided at the meetings, and there will be small giveaways for participants. This will engage with and identify the champions in each jurisdiction to start building relationships. Planning Directors, Facility Managers, Sustainability Managers, and City Managers are all welcome to attend.

Cheryl Chestnut from SBCOG welcomed new management analyst, Stacy Morales.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next I-REN Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for August 15, 2023, at WRCOG's office located at 3390 University Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside, CA.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m. in honor of the Sheriff Deputy Brett Harris.

Item 6.B

Inland Regional Energy Network
I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: **I-REN Regulatory and Reporting Update**

Contact: **David Freedman, CVAG Energy & Sustainability Program Manager, dfreedman@cvag.org, (760) 346-1127**

Date: **August 15, 2023**

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to provide an update on I-REN's regulatory and reporting activities.

Background:

Initiated in 2019, the Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) is a consortium of the Western Riverside Council of Governments, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, and the San Bernardino Council of Governments (I-REN COG partners) that serve the Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino in the implementation of energy efficiency programs and services to support member agencies and the public. These partners joined together and submitted a Business Plan to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in order to establish locally administered, designed, and delivered energy efficiency programs. On November 18, 2021, the CPUC formally approved the I-REN Business Plan through program year 2027. As presented to the Executive Committee at its March 21, 2023, meeting, WRCOG, on behalf of I-REN, is party to several relevant California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) proceedings, as required by the CPUC when it approved I-REN's Business Plan in November 2021. In these proceedings, I-REN provides feedback to the CPUC on the matters under consideration in the proceeding and serves as a voice for the member agencies and stakeholders in I-REN's region. In addition, I-REN staff monitors CPUC and California Energy Commission proceedings that I-REN is not a party to but that could affect I-REN. Finally, I-REN is required to provide periodic reporting to the CPUC.

Attachment 1 to this Staff Report provides an overview of I-REN's regulatory proceedings, summarizing the proceedings to which WRCOG, on behalf of I-REN, is a party, as well as the proceedings that I-REN Is monitoring. Two of those proceedings, the CEC Equitable Building Decarbonization Program and the CPUC REN Business Plan Applications, are further discussed in Agenda items 7E and 7C, respectively. The table in Attachment 2 to this Staff Report illustrates the various reports that I-REN must file with the CPUC throughout the year.

Prior Action(s):

May 16, 2023: The I-REN Executive Committee received and filed.

March 21, 2023: The Executive Committee authorized WRCOG, on behalf of I-REN, to provide comments on CPUC proceedings that I-REN is a party to, when the required deadline to provide comments does not allow sufficient time for presentation to the IREN Executive Committee and report the comments at the next meeting of the I-REN Executive Committee.

Fiscal Impact:
All costs associated with regulatory monitoring and reporting are included in WRCOG's adopted Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Agency Budget under the Energy & Environmental Department.

Attachment(s):
Attachment 1 - I-REN Regulatory Proceedings Overview
Attachment 2 - I-REN Required CPUC Reporting

Attachment 1

I-REN Regulatory Proceedings Overview

I-REN Regulatory Proceedings Overview

I. Proceedings to Which WRCOG on Behalf of I-REN Is a Party

A. CPUC Energy Efficiency Proceeding (R.13-11-005)

1. Proceeding Overview

This proceeding provides a venue for policy changes and regulatory oversight by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) associated with the energy efficiency programs of the large investor-owned electric and natural gas utilities (IOUs), community choice aggregators (CCAs), and regional energy networks (RENs). This includes how Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) and other RENs are funded and evaluated.

2. Key I-REN Issues

- I-REN has championed the concept of an Inland REN made up of local governments to help expand equity and energy efficiency in the region, and the important role of local government program administrators.
- The Inland Empire region faces significant challenges, with vast territory and demographics that I-REN's geography represents, and large tracts of disadvantaged communities and income levels that are significantly below the statewide average.
- I-REN shares the CPUC's urgency regarding the need to focus on disadvantaged and underserved populations.
- Access to customer data is a crucial component of successful program implementation, and therefore I-REN supports data sharing between IOUs and RENs and their agents.

3. Key Decisions

- D.21-11-013 (November 18, 2021) – Approves I-REN's energy efficiency business plan, beginning in 2022 and continuing through 2027, with a total budget of approximately $65 million over this period.
- Assigned Commissioner and Administrative Law Judges' Amended Scoping Ruling (December 23, 2021) – Sets forth an amended scope and schedule for this proceeding to address new and outstanding issues concerning the CPUC's energy efficiency policy and programs.
- D.23-02-002 (February 2, 2023) – Addresses several topics important to the ongoing success of the CPUC's energy efficiency portfolio, including improvements to the third-party solicitation process, allowing the use of strategic energy management approaches beyond the industrial sector, and adopting data sharing requirements for CPUC-authorized energy efficiency programs.
- D.23-04-009 (April 6, 2023) – Grants the motion of Southern California Regional Energy Network, on behalf of the California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee (CAEECC), requesting authorization for the energy efficiency program administrators to use unspent and uncommitted energy efficiency funds up to $185,000 to fund a

compensation pilot recommended in the Final Report of the CAEECC Compensation Task Force.

- Administrative Law Judge's Ruling (April 17, 2023) – Provides notice of a draft 2023 Potential and Goals Study (P&G Study) that will inform the CPUC's adoption of energy efficiency goals for 2024 and beyond. Parties were invited to file comments on the draft study, and address the questions included in this ruling, no later than May 8, 2023, and reply comments no later than May 18, 2023. WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed reply comments noted below.
- Assigned Commissioner and Administrative Law Judges' Amended Scoping Memo and Ruling (May 11, 2023) – Sets forth an amended scope and schedule to address new and outstanding issues concerning the CPUC's energy efficiency policy and programs, including CAEECC compensation issues and natural gas incentive issues.
- Proposed Decision Adopting Energy Efficiency Goals for 2024-2035 (July 5, 2023) – Adopts total system benefit and energy savings goals for ratepayer-funded energy efficiency portfolios for 2024 – 2035 pursuant to the 2023 P&G Study. The P&G Study historically (and continuing with the 2023 P&G Study) has provided data and analysis at the IOU Program Administrator (PA) level and is used to set savings goals for the IOU PAs. The Potential and Goals Study does not set goals for RENs and CCA PAs. There is a separate goal-setting process for non-IOU PAs as outlined in D.21-09-037. However, there are useful insights that can be gained from reviewing the P&G Study, e.g., trends in technologies and policy implications, which could inform I-REN program offerings. WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed comments on the Proposed Decision noted below.

4. Status Update

- May 18, 2023 – WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed reply comments on the ALJ's Ruling of April 17, 2023, recommending that public sector-specific results be included in P&G Studies in future years, as suggested by Southern California Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN).
- July 31, 2023 – WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed a reply on the P&G Study and provided the following comments:
    - Reporting of Inflation Reduction Act funding should not be mandatory; the emphasis should remain on PAs documenting implementers' outreach activities, rather than tracking and reporting on actual tax credits or direct payments to the customer.
    - I-REN supports comments by PG&E requesting changes to the P&G Study update process to (1) allow for early stakeholder feedback via an accessible existing tool such as the Public Document Area, and (2) grant additional time for PAs and their implementers to adjust True-Up Advice Letter and Mid-Cycle Advice Letter filings based on the final P&G decision.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- August 10, 2023 – Earliest possible date for the CPUC to adopt the Proposed Decision on the P&G Study.
- 3rd and 4th Quarters 2023 – Workshops on CAEECC compensation and natural gas incentive issues.
- 1st Quarter 2024 and ongoing – 2024-2027 Portfolio Oversight

B. CPUC REN Business Plan Applications (A.22-02-005 et al.)

1. Proceeding Overview

The scope of this proceeding is to evaluate the reasonableness of the 2024-2027 portfolio proposals and the 2024-2031 business plan proposals by PAs, including IOUs, two CCAs and RENs. This includes analyzing the reasonableness of the programmatic aspects of the proposals, as well as the budgets, savings estimates, and cost-effectiveness and total system benefit calculations.

2. Key I-REN Issues

- I-REN's business plan was approved in D.21-11-013, so it is not required to submit a business plan in this proceeding.
- The REN evaluation framework established in this proceeding may have implications for I-REN's current portfolio and will determine how I-REN will be evaluated when it applies for CPUC approval of its next business plan for the period beginning 2028.

3. Key Decisions

- Assigned Commissioner's Scoping Memo and Ruling (June 24, 2022) – Sets forth the issues, need for hearing, schedule, category, and other matters necessary to scope this proceeding.
- Administrative Law Judge's Ruling (August 2, 2022) – Invites comments on two topics pertaining to the 2024-2031 business plan and 2024-2027 portfolios under consideration in this proceeding: (1) staff proposal to phase out gas energy efficiency incentives, and (2) codes and standards sub-programs and budgets.
- Administrative Law Judges' Ruling (August 26, 2022) – Provides specific questions for which the CPUC seeks responses in intervenors' prepared testimony. The questions are on: (1) advancement of the Environmental and Social Justice Action Plan; (2) opportunity for energy efficiency (EE) innovation; (3) alignment with external EE funding; and (4) EE integration with integrated demand-side management.
- D.23-04-035 (April 6, 2023) – Addresses a CPUC staff proposal for reducing ratepayer-funded incentives for natural gas EE measures. This Decision also: (1) establishes a framework that defines and allows continued funding of "exempt measures" — measures that result in gas savings but do not burn gas; (2) establishes a means to determine

whether a given measure is (or is not) cost-effective; and (3) provides for working groups to examine and recommend technical guidance for identifying a viable electric alternative (for a given gas measure) and further criteria for custom projects. It has near-term implications for I-REN regarding required participation in a stakeholder process to develop a technical guidance document, plus required additions to 2028 portfolio filings to be submitted in 2026, and potentially other reporting implications.

- D.23-06-055 (June 29, 2023) – Addresses the applications for EE portfolios during the period 2024-2027 and the business plans for 2024-2031 from nine PAs. The Decision also (1) makes adjustments to the allocation of costs for statewide programs and some changes to the statewide portfolio to eliminate some obsolete programs and introduce new ones; (2) approves the Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) as the first non-utility administrator of a statewide program; (3) approves a new REN called Rural REN, to deliver energy efficiency benefits to underserved customers and communities in the rural areas all over California in four different regions; (4) includes a number of elements addressed to the equity and market support segments of the EE portfolios, including better defining underserved and hard-to-reach customers and communities, as well as adopting success indicators and a process for identifying metrics and goals associated with the indicators to be measured; (5) includes several measures to improve portfolio oversight, including guidance for continued coordination among PAs; and (6) includes guidance for continued emphasis on the market access approach, the use of normalized metered energy consumption methods for estimating energy savings, and the integration of demand-side management opportunities beyond EE into the portfolios.

4. Status Update

D.26-06-055 closed the proceeding. Any additional or ongoing EE policy issues related to the delivery of the portfolios approved in the Decision will be addressed in the EE proceeding noted above, R.13-11-005.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

None pending.

C. CPUC CalChoice Petition for Modification (R.09-11-04)

1. Proceeding Overview

On May 15, 2023, California Choice Energy Authority (CalChoice) filed a petition requesting the CPUC to modify Decision (D.)14-01-033. This Decision implemented Senate Bill 790, which authorized CCAs to invoke an “elect to administer” (ETA) option for administering certain energy efficiency programs funded by CCA customers. CalChoice believes modification of D.14-01-033 is necessary to ensure that funding for ETA programs is consistent with the Legislature’s intent that CCAs have meaningful opportunities to administer ETA programs. CalChoice proposes that D.14-01-033 be modified to set a minimum 4 percent funding threshold for ETA programs.

2. Key I-REN Issues

- Three of the CalChoice CCAs are located in I-REN territory: Apple Valley Choice Energy, Rancho Mirage Energy Authority and San Jacinto Power. I-REN territory also includes Desert Community Energy, a CCA whose members are the Cities of Palm Desert and Palm Springs with shared staff at CVAG.
- For the I-REN region, meaningful opportunities for CCAs to offer ETA energy efficiency programs represent a reinvestment in communities that historically have suffered from disinvestment—a return of benefits to communities of ratepayers who have faithfully paid the public good charges intended to fund energy efficiency projects across the state.

3. Key Decisions

None.

4. Status Update

- June 14, 2023 – WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed a Motion for Party Status, which was granted by email ruling the same day.
- August 3, 2023 – CalChoice met with Cheryl Wynn, Chief of Staff for Commissioner Genevieve Shiroma (Assigned Commissioner on the CPUC energy efficiency proceedings) to discuss the petition for modification of D.14-01-033 filed by CalChoice in this proceeding.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

None pending.

D. **CPUC Integrated Distributed Energy Resources Proceeding (R.22-11-013)**

1. Proceeding Overview

The CPUC opened this rulemaking to achieve consistency of cost effectiveness assessments, improve data collection and use, and consider equipment performance standards for Distributed Energy Resource (DER) customer programs. This rulemaking serves as a procedural framework for advancing the vision articulated in the customer programs track of the DER Action Plan recently adopted by the CPUC.

2. Key I-REN Issues

- Whether to adopt the Societal Cost Test (SCT) and submitting input on the questions outlined in the Administrative Law Judge ruling issued on February 13, 2023, referred to below.
- Continuing to improve the DER cost-effectiveness process.
- Taking part in the Data Working Group activities as described in Track Two of this proceeding, including recommending goals and objectives for expanded use of available data; developing recommendations regarding data sharing, access, and use; developing recommendations regarding data collection and reporting tools; and developing recommendations for data collection in support of equity programs.

3. Key Decisions

- Order Instituting Rulemaking (November 23, 2022) – Sets forth the issues, need for hearing, schedule, category, and other matters necessary to scope this proceeding.
- Administrative Law Judge's Ruling (February 13, 2023) – Seeks comments from parties on whether the CPUC should use an SCT or apply recent air quality research results when evaluating the cost effectiveness of DER.
- Assigned Commissioner's Scoping Memo and Ruling (May 31, 2023) – Sets forth the issues, need for hearing, schedule, category, and other matters necessary to scope this proceeding. This proceeding has two phases. Phase One focuses on issues related to cost-effectiveness of customer DER programs, and policies on improving data usage and access to help customers make informed decisions about adoption, evaluation, and utilization of DERs. There are two tracks in Phase One. Track One examines how to make cost-effectiveness assessments more accurate and consistent across DER programs. Track Two examines the rules and requirements to improve data access to facilitate adoption, evaluation, and utilization of DERs by customers and other entities and to improve DER integration with the grid. Phase Two focuses on developing equipment performance standards.
- Administrative Law Judge's Ruling (July 17, 2023) – Requests party comments on the draft scope of work for the consultant the CPUC intends to hire to facilitate, coordinate and manage the work of the Data Working Group, the scope of work for the Data Working Group, and formation of the Data Working Group (e.g., membership).

4. Status Update

- January 9, 2023 – Comments on the Order were filed by the parties, including BayREN, Tri-County Regional Energy Network (3C-REN) and various CCAs.
- February 16, 2023 – WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed a Motion for Party Status.
- March 14, 2023 – WRCOG Motion for Party Status is granted.

- March 29, 2023 – Pre-hearing Conference. WRCOG on behalf of I-REN participated and gave the following testimony:
    - I-REN agrees that equity should be scoped broadly and considered across all phases and tracks.
    - I-REN is generally supportive of exploring the SCT at least on an informational basis as a possible way to better quantify and implement non-energy benefits.
    - Of particular importance to I-REN are non-energy benefits such as family health and safety and comfort given the disproportionate impacts of climate change on I-REN territory.
    - I-REN is reviewing the staff report and preparing to respond to the ALJ Ruling with additional thoughts and comments on this topic.
- April 27, 2023 – WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed a response to the ALJ Ruling of February 13, 2023, and provided the following comments:
    - I-REN supports the adoption of an SCT for informational purposes. Having the SCT as an additional reference point will provide a more comprehensive view of the benefits and costs of DERs such as energy efficiency. The adopted SCT could be used for informational purposes across all DER proceedings and should retain flexibility to continue being iterated as new methodologies and new data sets become available.
    - I-REN believes that the methodology used in the Quantifying the Air Quality Impacts of Decarbonization and Distributed Energy Programs in California study is reasonable and accurate. The results of this study could provide valuable inputs to an SCT, particularly given its granular approach to modeling air quality impacts compared to the Air Quality Adder described in the SCT impact evaluation and should be considered when evaluating the cost-effectiveness of DER programs, particularly in the context of societal benefits that are not captured by current cost-effectiveness testing.
    - August 11, 2023 – Comments on the ALJ Ruling of July 17, 2023, were filed by parties. I-REN will review the filed comments and determine if a reply is warranted.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- Phase One Track One:
    - TBD – Proposed Decision for the SCT, or Air Quality Research Result
    - January 23-25, 2024 – Evidentiary hearing
    - February 21, 2024 – Opening briefs
    - March 13, 2024 – Reply briefs (Track One submitted)
    - June 2024 – Proposed Decision
- Phase One Track Two:
    - TBD – Workshops for the Data Working Groups
    - Approximately 12 months after the first workshop is held – Recommendations from Data Working Groups are served

- Within two weeks after Recommendations from the Data Working Groups are served – Ruling requesting Party Comments on the Recommendations from the Data Working Groups
- TBD – Workshops, if necessary, to discuss Recommendations from the Data Working Groups
- Three weeks after the conclusion of workshops – Party Comments on the Recommendations from the Data Working Group, filed (Track Two submitted)
- No later than 90 days after Party Comments on Data Working Group Recommendations are filed – Proposed Decision(s) addressing Recommendations from the Data Working Groups

E. CPUC Clean Energy Financing Options Proceeding (R. 20-08-022)

1. Proceeding Overview

Provides a venue for investigating and designing mechanisms that can help customers finance all the energy investments (EE/DER/demand response) they might wish to make on their properties without artificial barriers, such as those caused by regulatory rules related to funding source. The CPUC proposes to build a cohesive and comprehensive strategy for helping customers finance energy improvements to their homes and buildings across various DERs.

2. Key I-REN Issues

- This proceeding is an opportunity for I-REN to continue to stay involved with the financing options that are being discussed and align its programming with those options.
- I-REN's portfolio includes commercial and financing programs. The issues in this proceeding touch on I-REN's role as a PA with a robust EE portfolio as well as a collaboration of local governments responsible for helping to meet state and local goals. The availability of financing options plays a critical role in the success of meeting these goals.

3. Key Decisions

- Order Instituting Rulemaking (August 27, 2020) – Institutes this rulemaking to examine options to assist electricity and natural gas customers with investments in residential and commercial buildings and at industrial and agricultural sites designed to decrease energy use, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and/or produce clean energy to support customers' on-site needs.
- Administrative Law Judges' Ruling (March 22, 2023) – Seeks additional comment regarding proposals from the IOUs to expand their non-residential on-bill financing (OBF) programs, to better assess the IOUs' proposals regarding the OBF programs.

- Proposed Decision on Clean Energy Financing Proposals (June 9, 2023) – Authorizes the expansion of the OBF programs administered by the IOUs for non-residential customers to support clean energy technologies beyond EE and approves the proposal of the California Alternative Energy and Advanced Transportation Financing Authority to expand the clean energy technologies eligible under the California Hub for Energy Efficiency Financing programs. The Proposed Decision also directs the IOUs to establish a Tariff On-Bill (TOB) Working Group within 45 days of the issuance of the decision to further develop a record and consider proposals, which would enable residential customers to finance EE or other clean energy technologies through a utility tariff.

4. Status Update

- March 11, 2021 – WRCOG filed a Motion for Party Status.
- March 12, 2021 – WRCOG Motion for Party Status is granted.
- D.23-03-011 (March 16, 2023) – Extends the statutory deadline in this proceeding until June 30, 2024.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

August 10, 2023 – Earliest possible date for the CPUC to adopt the Proposed Decision.

II. Proceedings That I-REN Is Monitoring

A. CPUC Building Decarbonization Proceeding (R.19-01-011)

1. Proceeding Overview

On January 31, 2019, pursuant to SB 1477, the CPUC initiated this rulemaking to support the decarbonization of buildings in California. The proceeding is designed to be inclusive of any alternatives that could lead to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy use in buildings [related]… to the State's goals of reducing economy-wide GHG emissions 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 or sooner.

2. Key I-REN Issues

- Ensure coordination of I-REN programs with state building decarbonization policies.
- Southern California Edison (SCE) is the contracting agent for the Technology and Equipment for Clean Heating (TECH) Initiative, and Frontier Energy, I-REN's Codes & Standards program implementer, is part of the TECH Initiative implementation team.

3. Key Decisions

- D.20-03-027 (March 26, 2020) – Established the TECH Initiative administered by the CPUC addressing space/water heating technologies and the Building Initiative for Low-Emissions Development (BUILD) Program administered by the California Energy Commission (CEC) addressing residential new construction electrification, with total budgets of $120 million and $80 million, respectively.
- D.21-11-002 (November 4, 2021) – This decision: (1) adopted certain principles for the application of incentives; (2) established a new Wildfire and Natural Disaster Resiliency Rebuild program; (3) provided guidance on data sharing; (4) directed the study of bill impacts and required utilities to propose rate adjustments in some cases; and (5) directed utilities to collect data on fuels used to power various appliances, including propane.
- D.22-09-026 (September 15, 2022) – Eliminated gas line extension allowances, refunds, and discounts regarding all new applications for gas line extensions submitted on or after July 1, 2023, for all customers in all customer classes.
- D.23-02-005 (February 2, 2023) – Authorizes the transfer of $50 million appropriated by AB 179 to fund the continued implementation of the TECH Initiative. The new funding became available in mid-April 2023.
- Assigned Commissioner's Amended Scoping Memo and Ruling (July 26, 2023) – Opens and sets forth the scope and schedule for Phase 3B of this proceeding to further fulfill the goals set out in R.19-01-011. In particular, Phase 3B will consider building decarbonization efforts regarding the reasonableness of modifying or ending electric line extension allowances, refunds, and discounts for "mixed-fuel" new construction (i.e., building projects that use gas and/or propane in addition to electricity). The ruling attaches a staff proposal regarding subsidies for electric line extensions in mixed-fuel new construction. Parties were invited to file comments on the staff proposal and address the questions included in the ruling no later than August 15, 2023, and reply comments no later than August 25, 2023.

4. Status Update

D.23-02-030 (February 23, 2023) – Extends the statutory deadline in this proceeding until January 31, 2024.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

Beginning with the second quarterly report in 2023, SCE as the TECH Initiative implementer shall include within its quarterly public reporting strategies and funding for workforce training targeted towards serving equity customers, among other information.

B. CPUC Self-Generation Incentive Program (SGIP) Proceeding (R. 20-05-012)

1. Proceeding Overview

The SGIP was established in 2001 and provides financial incentives for the installation of eligible behind-the-meter distributed generation and energy storage technologies that meet all or a portion of a customer's electricity needs, including heat pump water heaters (HPWH). The proceeding helps define those technologies, incentives, and rules.

2. Key I-REN Issues

Ensure coordination of I-REN programs with SGIP and improving participation of tribal customers in SGIP.

3. Key Decisions

- D. 22-04-036 (April 7, 2022) – Adopts final budgets, incentive levels and other program requirements for the SGIP HPWH program, including training, inspection, and workforce development requirements.
- Assigned Commissioner's Ruling (October 26, 2022) – Seeks comments from parties on issues related to improving outcomes for low-income customers under the SGIP and a variety of implementation issues related to the funding authorized by Assembly Bill (AB) 209.
- Assigned Commissioner's Ruling (July 12, 2023) – Seeks comments from parties to supplement the proceeding record regarding: (1) improving outcomes for low-income customers under the SGIP; and (2) expanding the SGIP HPWH Program to make a larger number of customers eligible.
- Administrative Law Judge's Ruling (July 12, 2023) – Seeks comments from parties to supplement the proceeding record regarding the funding authorized by AB 209 and improving outcomes for low-income customers under the SGIP.

4. Status Update

Parties were directed to file opening comments on the questions contained in the Assigned Commissioner's and Administrative Law Judge's Rulings of July 12, 2023, no later than August 1, 2023, and reply comments no later than August 11, 2023.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

None pending.

C. CEC 2025 Energy Code Pre-Rulemaking [(22-BSTD-01)]

1. Proceeding Overview

   This docket is used to document public interaction regarding preliminary rulemaking activities for the 2025 California Energy Code. This includes the research and gathering of information necessary to develop the documents required to conduct a formal rulemaking proceeding.

2. Key I-REN Issues

   - Energy Code enforcement has historically been difficult for local jurisdictions, particularly smaller communities with fewer resources.
   - Track and provide information on California Energy Code.
   - Perform updates to training curriculums to reflect adopted changes to California Energy Code.

3. Key Decisions

   This is not a formal rulemaking docket. A separate formal rulemaking docket will be established to support the development of the 2025 Energy Code.

4. Status Update

   C. January – March 2023 – Utility-sponsored stakeholder meetings
   - May 3, 2023 – The first five draft Codes and Standards Enhancement (CASE) Reports have been published and are ready for stakeholder comments by May 30.
   - May 26, 2023 – Six additional CASE reports were published.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

   - July - August 2023 – CASE Reports to CEC
   - July - August 2023 – CEC pre-rulemaking workshops
   - October 2023 - January 2024 – File and open rulemaking
   - January - June 2024 – CEC rulemaking
   - June 2024 – 2025 Energy Code adopted.
   - January 1, 2026 – 2025 Energy Code goes into effect.

D. CEC Equitable Building Decarbonization (EBD) Program [(22-DECARB-03)]

1. Proceeding Overview

   AB 209 directed the CEC to develop the EBD Program. The EBD Program will include a direct install program for low- and moderate-income households, which is a type of program that provides and installs energy efficient electric appliances, energy efficiency measures, and related upgrades directly to consumers at minimal or no cost. The EBD Program will also include a statewide incentive program to accelerate deployment of low-carbon building technologies. The primary goals of the program are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and advance energy equity. The direct install program will include a statewide direct install program and a tribal direct install program. The statewide direct install program will be administered separately in Northern, Central, and Southern California by competitively selected program administrators who will partner with community-based organizations for culturally appropriate outreach, education, and support for participating households and communities. The state intends to allocate $783 million for the EBD Program. The Legislature has thus far approved a combined $494 million for FY 2022-23 and FY 2023-24. The CEC has proposed that 58% of budgeted amounts go to Southern California, based on its population of under resourced communities at 13.6 million people.

2. Key I-REN Issues

- SoCal REN is interested in applying to be the PA for the entire Southern California area, which includes I-REN's region. I-REN and SoCal REN staff have begun preliminary discussions about I-REN's participation in SoCal REN's application.
- I-REN's Business Plan does not include a residential sector. However, I-REN's member agencies have asked for programs to serve their residents. The EBD Program is statewide, so it will be available in the Inland Empire.
- Through its Workforce Education & Training sector, I-REN will be working closely with contractors who provide decarbonization services within the residential sector in the Inland Empire. WE&T resources will be provided to develop local skilled workers

3. Key Decisions

- Request for Information (December 9, 2022) – Seeks input and comment to inform the development of the EBD Program. To facilitate recommendations, CEC staff developed a list of questions. Individuals were invited to provide input on staff's questions and program-related topics not posed. Comments were due by January 20, 2023.
- Equitable Building Decarbonization Direct Install Program Draft Guidelines (May 4, 2023) – Proposes the initial rules and requirements for the program, including funding allocations, household and property eligibility requirements, and eligible measures.
- Questions on Draft Guidelines (May 4, 2023) – Seeks input and comments on the Draft Equitable Building Decarbonization Direct Install Program Guidelines. To facilitate input, CEC staff developed a list of questions. Comments were welcome in response to these questions and on any other topic related to the EBD Program. Comments were due by June 30, 2023. BayREN and 3C-REN were among the groups submitting comments.

4. Status Update

- May 17, 2023 – Staff Workshop on Draft Equitable Building Decarbonization Direct Install Program Guidelines
- June 6 - 21, 2023 – Staff Regional Workshops on Equitable Building Decarbonization Direct Install Program and Coordination with Other Building Decarbonization Programs. I-REN staff attended the Santa Rosa workshop on June 12, 2023, and made a presentation on I-REN at the Indio workshop on June 15, 2023.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- Summer 2023 – Review comments and finalize guidelines.
- Summer/Fall 2023 – CEC adoption hearing on guidelines.
- Fall/Winter 2023 – Direct install program administrators selected through competitive solicitation.
- 2024-2025 – Administrator ramp-up and direct install program roll-out in initial communities.

Attachment 2

I-REN Required CPUC Reporting

I-REN Required CPUC Reporting for March 2023 – March 2024

Report Type	Due Date	Content	Status
Monthly Report	Due 30 days after last day of month	Current month's expenditures, plus YTD Expenditures, Committed Funds, Gross and Net Savings for all Programs in the Portfolio.	To begin after SoCalGas invoicing.
2022 Q4 Claims	3/1/2023	Program expenditures and committed funds (YTD) PLUS Project level savings, measures, participant costs, incentives, etc., being claimed in Q4.	Not required, as I-REN invoice to SoCalGas is forthcoming as of due date.
2022 Annual Monthly Report	5/14/2023	"Month 13" report to align savings and expenditures with annual claim true up and annual report.	Completed and submitted. Deadline extended for all PAs in ALJ Email Ruling 3/28/23.
2022 Annual Report	5/14/2023	Narrative and spreadsheet format report on overall Portfolio performance and Program level accomplishments.	Completed and submitted. Deadline extended for all PAs in ALJ Email Ruling 3/28/23.
2022 Annual Claims True up	4/14/2023	Yearly report which sums up all Quarterly reports; opportunity for PAs to true up/reconcile any errors in reporting from previous quarters and/or monthly reports.	Completed and submitted.
2023 Q1 Claims	9/15/2023	Program expenditures and committed funds (YTD) PLUS Project level savings, measures, participant costs, incentives, etc., being claimed in Q1.	Deadline extended by ALJ for all PAs
2023 Q2 Claims	9/15/2023	Program expenditures and committed funds (YTD) PLUS Project level savings, measures, participant costs, incentives, etc., being claimed in Q2.	Deadline extended by ALJ for all PAs
2024-2027 Portfolio True-Up Advice Letter	TBD; no earlier than 10/9/2023	True up of 2024-2031 Business Plan forecasting (savings, budget) and metrics; updated Implementation Plans also due in CEDARS.	Per D.23-06-055, due 60 days after the approval of the Potential & Goals (P&G) decision.

Report Type	Due Date	Content	Status
2023 Q3 Claims	12/1/2023	Program expenditures and committed funds (YTD) PLUS Project level savings, measures, participant costs, incentives, etc., being claimed in Q3.	
2023 JCM	TBD; no earlier than 12/8/2023	Narrative describing coordination with other PAs in I-REN territory.	Initial coordination meetings held. Per D.23-06-055, JCM is due 60 days after the 2024-2027 BP TUAL is approved.
2023 Q4 Claims	3/1/2024	Program expenditures and committed funds (YTD) PLUS Project level savings, measures, participant costs, incentives, etc., being claimed in Q4.	
Abbreviations: ALJ = Administrative Law Judge; D = Decision; CEDARS = California Energy Data and Reporting System; CPUC = California Public Utilities Commission; FE: Frontier Energy; JCM = Joint Cooperation Memorandum; PII = personally identifiable information; PL = program lead; PA = program administrator; Q = quarter of the year; SFTP = Secure File Transfer Protocol; YTD = year to date			

Inland Regional Energy Network
I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: **Discussion of I-REN Executive Committee Meeting Schedule for Fiscal Year 2023/2024**

Contact: **Casey Dailey, WRCOG Director of Energy & Environmental Programs, cdailey@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6720**

Date: **August 15, 2023**

Requested Action(s):

1. Determine and approve a Fiscal Year 2023/2024 I-REN Executive Committee meeting schedule.

Purpose:
The purpose of this item is to discuss and obtain approval of a meeting schedule for Fiscal Year 2023/2024.

Background:
In December 2022, the I-REN Executive Committee approved one meeting for January 17, 2023, and discussed the need to have additional meetings throughout 2023 in order to receive additional comprehensive presentation(s) related, but not limited to, I-REN Business Plan development and CPUC approval, and Strategic Plan and contracting activities. The Executive Committee retains discretion to meet at any time or frequency the members deem appropriate.

On January 17, 2023, the Executive Committee reviewed two schedule options and approved monthly meetings on every 3rd Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. through the end of 2023. In the event a meeting is not needed, the Executive Committee has the right to cancel a meeting on an as-needed basis.

At the March 21, 2023, meeting, the Executive Committee approved to go dark for the summer in lieu of I-REN orientations and cancel the June and July meetings. It was suggested to add an agenda item to the August 15, 2023, meeting to discuss a potential quarterly meeting cadence.

Option 1: Quarterly meetings, dark for the holidays:

Day and Time	AUG 2023	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
3rd Tues @ 2:00pm	15	DARK	17	DARK	DARK

Day and Time	JAN 2024	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
3rd Tues @ 2:00pm	16	DARK	DARK	16	DARK	DARK	16	DARK	DARK	15	DARK	DARK

Option 2: Quarterly meetings, dark for the summer:

Day and Time	AUG 2023	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
3rd Tues @ 2:00pm	15	DARK	DARK	21	DARK

Day and Time	JAN 2024	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
3rd Tues @ 2:00pm	DARK	20	DARK	DARK	21	DARK	DARK	20	DARK	DARK	19	DARK

Option 3: Monthly meetings

Day and Time	AUG 2023	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
3rd Tues @ 2:00pm	15	19	17	21	19

Day and Time	JAN 2024	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
3rd Tues @ 2:00pm	16	20	19	16	21	18	16	20	17	15	19	17

Staff seeks input from Committee members to establish a future meeting schedule for 2024.

Prior Action(s):

January 17, 2023: The I-REN Executive Committee approved monthly meetings on every 3rd Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. through the end of 2023.

March 21, 2023: The I-REN Executive Committee approved cancelling the June 20, 2023, and July 18, 2023, meetings in lieu of I-REN orientations this summer.

Fiscal Impact:

This item is for informational purposes only, therefore, there is no fiscal impact.

Attachment(s):
None.

Inland Regional Energy Network
I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: **I-REN Branding and Marketing Update**

Contact: **Tyler Masters, Program Manager, tmasters@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6732**

Date: **August 15, 2023**

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

Purpose:
The purpose of this item is to provide an update on the development and implementation of I-REN Branding and Marketing initiatives.

Background:
This item is reserved for a presentation from consultant ICF on the development and implementation of I-REN Brand and Marketing strategies.

Prior Action(s):
None.

Fiscal Impact:
All costs associated with the development and implementation of marketing and communication activities are included in WRCOG's adopted Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Agency Budget under the Energy & Environmental Department. In February 2023, the WRCOG Executive Committee approved a Professional Services Agreement with ICF Resources, LLC, to develop and implement marketing and communications plans, strategies, and activities to support I-REN's energy efficiency program portfolio. ICF Resources was selected after public solicitation of an RFP and evaluation by all partner COGs. The total contract amount is not-to-exceed $750,000 through the end of calendar year 2025.

Attachment(s):
None.

Item 7.C

Inland Regional Energy Network
I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: **Update on California Public Utilities Commission Final Decision (D.23-060-055) and True-up Advice Letter**

Contact: **Benjamin Druyon, WRCOG Program Manager, bdruyon@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6727**

Date: **August 15, 2023**

Requested Action(s):

1. Authorize the submittal of the True-Up Advice Letter to the California Public Utilities Commission.

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to provide an update on the California Public Utilities Commission Final Decision 23-06-055 and the True-up Advice Letter process.

Background:

Initiated in 2019, the Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) is a consortium of the Western Riverside Council of Governments, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, and the San Bernardino Council of Governments (I-REN COG partners) that serve the Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino in the implementation of energy efficiency programs and services to support member agencies and the public. These partners joined together and submitted a Business Plan to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in order to establish locally administered, designed, and delivered energy efficiency programs. On November 18, 2021, the CPUC formally approved the I-REN Business Plan through program year 2027.

As presented to the Executive Committee at its March 21, 2023, meeting, WRCOG, on behalf of I-REN, is party to several relevant CPUC proceedings, as required by the CPUC when it approved I-REN's Business Plan in November 2021. In these proceedings, I-REN provides feedback to the CPUC on the matters under consideration in the proceeding and serves as a voice for the member agencies and stakeholders in I-REN's region. In addition, I-REN staff monitors CPUC and California Energy Commission proceedings that I-REN is not a party to but could affect I-REN. Finally, I-REN is required to provide periodic reporting to the CPUC.

On June 29, 2023, the CPUC adopted **Decision (D.) 23-06-055**, a significant regulatory development that authorizes energy efficiency portfolios for 2024-2027 and business plans for 2024-2031 for the four Investor-Owned Utilities, the four other Regional Energy Networks (including Rural REN) and two Community Choice Aggregators. The CPUC approved I-REN's Business Plan in November 2021, so it was not required for I-REN to submit a business plan in this proceeding. While the decision approves the Business Plans of other Program Administrators (PAs), it also contains guidance and directives that are crucial for I-REN's energy efficiency initiatives. Notable adjustments to prior directives relate to topics such as the treatment of unspent funds and integrated demand side management (IDSM - designing and delivering programs that influence the electricity usage patterns of customers); the fiscal impact of this decision as they pertain to these topics will be outlined in the subsequent "Fiscal Impact" section.

Additional guidance and directives relate to the differences between other REN programs, Joint Cooperation Memorandums (JCMs), assessing program value by using various tracking methods (metrics), and hard-to-reach (HTR) definition criteria. Relevant to I-REN, HTR definitions were updated to include tribes and public sector customers who meet geographic criteria, and wording was changed from "homes and businesses" to "customers or customer premises" in order to accommodate non-home and non-business participation by the public sector. The decision establishes that the JCM, a narrative describing coordination among PAs with overlapping territory, must be filed by PAs 60 days from the last PA's True-up approval. The decision establishes that PAs must file joint Advice Letters regarding programs that are the same within overlapping territory, which will require I-REN to focus on creating different programs from other PA programs.

The decision reiterates that the purpose of equity segment programs (programs that ensure access to resources and opportunities are provided for all to succeed and grow) is to provide energy efficiency to hard-to-reach or underserved customers and disadvantaged communities in advancement of the CPUC's Environmental and Social Justice Action Plan. Therefore, PAs must design their equity segment programs to reach, serve and ultimately benefit HTR and/or underserved customers and/or disadvantaged communities. The decision also adopts a structure for reporting quarterly and annually on equity and market support segment program performance. I-REN supports two Public Sector Programs that fall within the equity segment and are subject to these criteria.

PA support for IDSM is another development outlined in the decision. The IDSM approach encompasses a comprehensive set of strategies that promote energy conservation, demand response, and the integration of distributed energy resources such as solar, wind, electric vehicles, and battery storage. Measures and technologies supported by IDSM include EE equipment upgrades, better equipment, electric vehicle integration, and load shifting (shifting electricity use from high use times of the day to low use times of the day).

The Portfolio True-up Advice Letter (TUAL) is a key regulatory filing in fall 2023. D.23-06-055 establishes the timeline for TUAL submittal. The TUAL process will require I-REN to show its prior years' program expenses, any energy savings earned through its programs, and current budget of each program. I-REN will be required to provide a narrative for each of its programs to show what is working well, and what might need some adjustments, and the steps to take to improve results. This process will show the CPUC that I-REN is being cost-effective with the ratepayer funds it has been granted. Frontier Energy will coordinate among parties, review cost-effectiveness files, and summarize results for program leads. Program leads will establish budgets, review narrative and summary results, and ensure forecasts are realistic and achievable. The TUAL process will also identify and/or update metrics for each program.

In preparation for the fall 2023 Portfolio TUAL submittal to the CPUC, I-REN has estimated its adjusted budget for 2022 through 2027. Table 1 below shows I-REN's portfolio budget by sector as approved in CPUC Decision 21-11-013, Approval of Inland Regional Energy Network Energy Efficiency Business Plan, with adjustments to reflect actual expenditures in the 2022 calendar year, 2023 calendar year-to-date (YTD) actual expenditures, and projected expenditures through December 2023.

Based on actual and projected expenditures for 2022 and 2023, unspent budget is estimated and applied to years 2024-2027 (as shown in Table 2 below) as an addition to the original CPUC approved budget from D.21-11-013, in accordance with CPUC guidance on unspent funds per D.23-06-055, Decision Authorizing Energy Efficiency Portfolios For 2024-2027 And Business Plans For 2024-2031. Staff is seeking authorization to submit the TUAL with the proposed revised budget shown below for 2022-2027.

Table 1 (CPUC Approved Budget for 2022-2027)

Portfolio Sector	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Public Sector	6,288,194	6,191,722	6,629,390	7,074,566	7,074,566	7,074,566	40,333,004
Workforce Education & Training	2,253,295	2,393,426	2,437,164	2,674,650	2,674,650	2,674,650	15,107,835
Codes & Standards	1,446,107	1,503,952	1,564,110	1,626,674	1,626,674	1,626,674	9,394,191
Evaluation Measurement & Verification (EM&V)	114,441	115,604	121,810	130,349	130,349	130,349	742,902
Total	10,102,037	10,204,704	10,752,474	11,506,239	11,506,239	11,506,239	65,577,932

Table 2 (I-REN 2022-2027 Estimated Adjusted Budget Including Unspent Dollars)

Portfolio Sector	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Public Sector	331,955	4,707,687	8,117,439	8,860,224	9,083,432	9,232,237	40,333,004
Workforce Education & Training	338,837	1,334,614	3,031,818	3,338,235	3,477,433	3,536,898	15,107,835
Codes & Standards	443,153	1,470,339	1,771,423	1,875,450	1,906,547	1,927,278	9,394,191
Evaluation Measurement & Verification (EM&V)	-	-	167,819	185,560	192,461	197,062	742,902
Total	1,113,975	7,512,641	13,088,498	14,309,468	14,659,872	14,893,475	65,577,932
Unspent Ramp Up by Year	-	-	20%	24%	27%	29%	100%

Links to CPUC documents on this item:

CPUC Final Decision D.23-06-055
CPUC Environmental and Social Justice Action Plan

This item will have a presentation from Frontier Energy.

Prior Action(s):
None.

Fiscal Impact:
All costs associated with this item are included in WRCOG's adopted Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Agency Budget under the Energy & Environmental Department.

D.23-06-055 establishes that unspent funds may be rolled over from year to year within a PA’s portfolio period and clarifies that I-REN’s portfolio period is 2022-2027. I-REN’s unspent funds from 2022 and 2023 may be rolled over into 2024, enhancing the available funding for energy efficiency initiatives. The Fall 2023 TUAL will address the reconciliation of this fiscal impact through updates to program budgets for 2024-2027 to include unspent funds.

D.23-06-055 also establishes that PAs may expend a portion of their energy efficiency budget on a pilot basis for ongoing load shifting that reduces peak energy consumption. The funds may not be used for rebating capital costs of non-energy efficiency equipment but rather as an operational complement to potential capital funding from other sources. The IDSM budget carve-out of 2.5% or $4 million (whichever is greater) with a maximum of $15 million over the portfolio period for each PA ensures a minimum allocation for IDSM programs. I-REN's IDSM budget will be up to $4 million, within the existing total Public Sector budget of approximately $40.3 million.

Attachment(s):
Attachment 1 - I-REN True-up Advice Letter Estimated Budget Adjustment

I-REN Estimated Budget Adjustments for Fall 2023 Portfolio True-Up Advice Letter to CPUC

In preparation for the Fall 2023 Portfolio True-Up Advice Letter (TUAL) submittal to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), I-REN has estimated its adjusted budget for 2022 through 2027. The following tables show I-REN's portfolio budget by sector as approved in CPUC Decision (D.) 21-11-013 Approval of Inland Regional Energy Network Energy Efficiency Business Plan, with adjustments to reflect actual expenditures in the 2022 calendar year, 2023 calendar year-to-date (YTD) actual expenditures, and projected expenditures through December 2023.

Based on actual and projected expenditures for 2022 and 2023, unspent budget is estimated and applied to years 2024-2027 as an addition to the original CPUC approved budget from D.21-11-013, in accordance with CPUC guidance on unspent funds per D.23-06-055 Decision Authorizing Energy Efficiency Portfolios For 2024-2027 And Business Plans For 2024-2031.[1]

Note: Table columns may not sum due to rounding. Budget projections are estimates only and will continue to be refined in advance of I-REN's TUAL filing.

[1] D.23-06-055 at 17-18.

Table 1: I-REN Original Approved CPUC Budget from D.21-11-013 ($)

Portfolio Sector	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Public Sector	6,288,194	6,191,722	6,629,390	7,074,566	7,074,566	7,074,566	40,333,004
Workforce Education & Training	2,253,295	2,393,426	2,437,164	2,674,650	2,674,650	2,674,650	15,107,835
Codes & Standards	1,446,107	1,503,952	1,564,110	1,626,674	1,626,674	1,626,674	9,394,191
Evaluation Measurement & Verification (EM&V)	114,441	115,604	121,810	130,349	130,349	130,349	742,902
Total	**10,102,037**	**10,204,704**	**10,752,474**	**11,506,239**	**11,506,239**	**11,506,239**	**65,577,932**

Table 2: I-REN 2022 Approved Budget, Expenditures, and Unspent ($)

Portfolio Sector	2022 Approved Budget	2022 Expenses (Actual)	2022 Unspent (Actual)
Public Sector	6,288,194	331,984	5,956,209
Codes & Standards	1,446,107	443,153	1,002,953
Workforce Education & Training	2,253,295	338,836	1,914,458
Evaluation, Measurement & Verification (EM&V)	114,441	-	114,441
Total	**10,102,037**	**1,113,975**	**8,988,061**

Table 3: I-REN 2023 Approved Budget, Expenditures (Actual YTD + Forecast), and Projected Unspent ($)

Portfolio Sector	2023 Approved Budget	2023 Expenses (Actual YTD + Forecast)	2023 Estimated Unspent
Public Sector	6,191,722	4,707,687	1,484,034
Codes & Standards	1,503,952	1,470,339	33,612
Workforce Education & Training	2,393,426	1,334,614	1,058,811
EM&V	115,604	-	115,604
Total	**10,204,704**	**7,512,641**	**2,692,062**

Table 4: I-REN 2022 Actual Unspent + 2023 Projected Unspent ($)

Portfolio Sector	2022 Unspent (Actual)	2023 Unspent (Projected)	Total Unspent (2022+2023)
Public Sector	5,956,209	1,484,034	7,440,243
Codes & Standards	1,002,954	33,612	1,036,566
Workforce Education & Training	1,914,458	1,058,811	2,973,269
EM&V	114,441	115,604	230,045
Total	**8,988,062**	**2,692,062**	**11,680,124**

Table 5: I-REN 2022-2027 Estimated Adjusted Budget Including Unspent ($)

Portfolio Sector	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Public Sector	331,985	4,707,687	8,117,439	8,860,224	9,083,432	9,232,237	40,333,004
Codes & Standards	443,153	1,470,339	1,771,423	1,875,450	1,906,547	1,927,278	9,394,191
Workforce Education & Training	338,837	1,334,614	3,031,818	3,388,235	3,477,433	3,536,898	15,107,835
EM&V	-	-	167,819	185,560	192,461	197,062	742,902
Total	**1,113,975**	**7,512,641**	**13,088,498**	**14,309,468**	**14,659,872**	**14,893,475**	**65,577,932**
Unspent Ramp by Year			20%	24%	27%	29%	100%

Table Notes:
2022: Actual expenditures
2023: Year-to-date + projected expenditures through December
2024 through 2027: CPUC approved budget + 2022 actual unspent + 2023 projected unspent
Unspent budget is applied to years 2024-2027 according to the percentages shown in the table

Item 7.D

Inland Regional Energy Network
I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: **I-REN Strategic Planning Update**

Contact: **Benjamin Druyon, WRCOG Program Manager, bdruyon@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6727**

Date: **August 15, 2023**

Requested Action(s):

1. Option 1 - Approve the draft Strategic Plan and direct the Executive Director to provide a final version for approval at the next meeting.
2. Option 2 - Direct the Executive Director to revise the draft Strategic Plan and return at a later date for consideration.

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to provide an update on the development of the I-REN Strategic Plan.

Background:

Initiated in 2019, the Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) is a consortium of the Western Riverside Council of Governments, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, and the San Bernardino Council of Governments (I-REN COG partners) that serve the Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino in the implementation of energy efficiency programs and services to support member agencies and the public. These partners joined together and submitted a Business Plan to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in order to establish locally administered, designed, and delivered energy efficiency programs. On November 18, 2021, the CPUC formally approved the I-REN Business Plan through program year 2027. At the March 21, 2023 meeting, this Committee received an update on the development of the I-REN Strategic Plan and some preliminary survey results. At the May 16, 2023 meeting, this Committee received and update on the development of the I-REN Strategic Plan.

I-REN is developing a 5-year organizational Strategic Plan to ensure effective and efficient use of CPUC funding, to identify clear priorities and actions, and to ensure that activities and engagement are aligned across all members of I-REN. This process will include several avenues for stakeholder feedback, including a survey, small group conversations, and in-person and virtual community workshops.

The Strategic Plan process presents a key opportunity for the Executive Committee to shape the direction, focus, and priorities of I-REN. The Business Plan serves as "what" I-REN intends to accomplish and the Strategic Plan represents "how" I-REN will accomplish those goals. The development of a Strategic Plan will include input and insight from Executive Committee members and the communities that I-REN serves and is critical to ensure the effective use of ratepayer dollars in achieving I-REN goals.

At the March 21, 2023, Executive Committee meeting, BluePoint shared a presentation about the Strategic Plan and provided a timeline for the process of creating and implementing the Plan, which was expected to be completed by July 2023. The presentation explained how other RENs operated their programs and how most of their funding was used for technical support, workforce and education, and marketing and outreach, which are equally available and spread throughout the region.

At the May 16, 2023, Executive Committee meeting, BluePoint shared a presentation on the further development of the Strategic Plan, defining what Social and Racial Equity means for I-REN and establishing three equity principles: Procedural Equity, Distributional Equity, and Structural Equity. The presentation went on to list the top five guiding principles for I-REN's organizational strategic framework that were identified through surveys and interviews, which are to be equitable, inclusive, resilient, accessible, and responsive. The presentation wrapped up with a list of four goals and their strategies.

- Goal 1 - Cohesive Region Strategies
    - Effective Governance, Data Sharing and Monitoring, Program Design & Delivery.
- Goal 2 - First 2 Years Strategies
    - Program Priorities, Roll-Out Strategy, Reporting and Performance.
- Goal 3 - Awareness & Relationships Strategies
    - Regional Outreach, Education, and Engagement, Community Roundtables, Dedicated Partnerships, and State Actors.
- Goal 4 - Internal Organization Strategies
    - Strong Organization, Regulatory Capacity, and Performance Management.

Since May, BluePoint has continued to work on the draft Strategic Plan, using the comments and feedback from the Committee to complete the following:

1. Finalize the Strategic Plan Goals and equity definition;
2. Draft and refine the strategies, objectives, and desired outcomes of the plan;
3. Draft tactics that BluePoint has presented to I-REN staff; and
4. BluePoint and I-REN staff met to finalize tactics, identify priorities, identify roles and responsibilities, and set a timeline for activities.

BluePoint will be looking for discussion and confirmation on the direction of the Strategic Plan from the Executive Committee at its meeting on August 15, 2023.

Staff is requesting the Executive Committee select Option 1 or Option 2.

Option 1 - Approve draft Strategic Plan and direct staff to return with final version at the next meeting.

Option 2 - Direct staff to work with consultant to revise draft Strategic Plan and return at a later date for consideration.

BluePoint Planning will provide a presentation on the continuing development of the Strategic Plan.

Prior Action(s):
May 16, 2023: The Executive Committee received and filed.

March 21, 2023: The Executive Committee received and filed.

Fiscal Impact:
All costs associated with the development of an I-REN Strategic Plan are included in WRCOG's adopted Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Agency Budget under the Energy & Environmental Department.

In March 2022, the WRCOG Executive Committee approved a Professional Services Agreement with Frontier Energy and its subconsultant (BluePoint Planning) to support implementation activities of I-REN, one of which is to facilitate the development of a Strategic Plan. Frontier energy was selected after public solicitation of an RFP and evaluation by all partner COGs. The total contract amount is not-to-exceed $793,701 through the end of calendar year 2025.

Attachment(s):
Attachment 1 - I-REN draft Strategic Plan

Goal 1: Cohesive Region

I-REN operates as a cohesive regional program and will make available and distribute benefits equally through the region with the fair allocation of resources and services to the COGs and member agencies.

Objective

Ensure that the COGs and member agencies recognize the strength of the regional program and benefit from REN programs and funds as equally as possible and in line with CPUC guidance.

Desired Outcomes

- The COGs and members begin to identify as a region rather than individual jurisdictions.
- Staff resources are allocated fairly and available to all equally.
- Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) platform is deployed and available for all member agencies.
- Uptake of programs and services is monitored and shared with transparent reporting to the Executive Committee.
- Community voices are representative of the region and inform the program design.

Goal 1 Strategies

1.1 **Effective Governance** – Work collaboratively and proactively with the I-REN Executive Committee to inform budget-making, resource allocation, and program development, ensuring responsiveness and agile decision-making.

1.1.1 Conduct an annual strategic planning session with the Executive Committee to identify progress, opportunities, and any strategic elements for the EC to address.

1.1.2 Establish clear budgeting processes to enable effective engagement by Executive Committee and enable appropriate authority for staff implementation.

1.1.3 Define protocols and processes to streamline critical approvals and activities that cannot wait for quarterly meetings.

1.1.4 Develop onboarding education process and materials for orienting new Executive Committee members.

1.2 **Data Sharing and Monitoring** - Utilize the BUC platform to provide an online dashboard and information-sharing portal that allows I-REN members to learn about and track opportunities, monitor program uptake, and find events and new activities.

1.2.1 Establish clear protocols and processes for maintaining and updating shared database and communicating changes.

1.2.2 Provide regular communications to members to encourage them to use the BUC platform and to participate and learn about opportunities for their communities.

1.2.3 Ensure there are trained and dedicated staff to manage and support the BUC platform at the regional level and agency level.

1.3 **Program Design & Delivery** - Ensure that program design and delivery consider the needs of the entire region, providing focused support for areas with the greatest need and tracking progress towards goals and is in line with the CPUC.

1.3.1 Gather information, data, and details related to relevant policies and procedures, and engage with member agencies to identify needs and interests to support equal access to program benefits.

1.3.2 Identify high-need member agencies and communities that should receive additional support to ensure access to services in alignment with CPUC equity metrics.

1.3.3 In concert with the Community Roundtable (Connect to S3.4), develop and design programs that are easy to access, limit administrative burden, and are flexible enough to adapt to various needs of land users.

1.3.4 Work with implementers to establish contract performance metrics aligned to overall CPUC and program metrics, with a focus on fair distribution of benefits. (Connect to S2.3)

1.3.5 Form guiding principles for management among COGs around contract compliance, metrics, marketing & branding, benchmark parameters, and contract review.

1.3.6 Ensure all parties support and provide accurate reporting, and analyze trends to improve KPIs, and identify other contributing variables to program success.

Goal #2 First 2 years

I-REN will focus on the delivery of positive and tangible impacts for the region through a successful launch and rollout of programs.

Objective

Ensure the effective deployment of programs and services and early wins in the initial phase of 2024-2026.

Desire Outcomes

- Funds expended
- Number of training participants
- Number of fellows placed
- Number of local agencies served
- Number of projects enrolled

Goal 2 Strategies

2.1 **Program Priorities** - By Fall 2023, I-REN staff, in collaboration with the Executive Committee and the implementers, will identify program priorities and essential enabling activities to launch programs.

2.1.1 Identify and prioritize disadvantaged communities and underserved areas that need assistance the most, in line with CPUC guidance. (Connected to T1.3.2)

2.1.2 Identify gaps and needs for data and conduct market research and engagement to make informed decisions about program priorities.

2.1.3 Determine program areas that have potential for greatest impact and ease of implementation to focus on first.

2.1.4 Operationalize performance feedback to institute changes to programs as needed and make possible to address misalignment or inability to meet proposed outcomes.

2.1.5 Proactively follow up with leads from implementers and foster relationships, promoting feedback and flexibility in response.

2.2 **Roll-Out Strategy** - I-REN staff will work with implementers and program teams to establish feasible roll-out schedules and process for each program launch and aggressively work to meet those timelines.

2.2.1 Complete implementer onboarding by end of 2023 and ensure there are clear roles and responsibilities for all involved.

2.2.2 Establish Community Roundtable and engagement process by the end of 2023.

2.2.3 Define and meet milestones, timeframes, and goals of each program action item to ensure early wins.

2.2.4 Establish effective communication channels and protocols with CPUC and other key actors.

2.3 **Reporting and Performance** - Establish transparent reporting and performance metrics to demonstrate success and alignment with the CPUC, member agencies, and Stakeholders. (Connect to T1.3.4)

2.3.1 Determine appropriate metrics to reach outcomes identified in the business plan based on current CPUC regulations.

2.3.2 Develop consistent reports and metrics based on available program data and QA/QC results to ensure accuracy.

2.3.3 Align the expectations and interests of COGs with program implementers work plans.

2.3.4 Maintain consistent communication with consultant team and implementers, including weekly meetings, as needed, to ensure accountability and coordination of scheduling services.

2.3.5 Establish regular check in and progress meetings and conduct routine contract performance review.

Goal #3 Awareness & Relationships

I-REN will actively engage with all member agencies, tribes, special districts, and partners and strive to establish them as active participants.

Objective

Create lasting and valuable relationships with jurisdictions throughout the region to ensure program engagement uptake and participation.

Desired Outcomes

- Engagement and Outreach Plan (EOP) is adopted and utilized routinely
- All I-REN member agencies are aware and understand what I-REN does
- Number of state and other key stakeholders have heard of I-REN
- I-REN is a relevant influencer and known entity at the state level
- Community roundtables are established and operational

Goal 3 Strategies

3.1 **Regional Outreach, Education, and Engagement -** Conduct meaningful outreach and education activities throughout the region, building relationships with each member agency, and making sure that those who are typically underserved can participate and learn about I-REN program opportunities.

3.1.1 Develop an EOP that includes equity considerations with an implementation plan to monitor and measure the effectiveness of the engagement tactics, which identifies key audiences, reach methods, and best approaches for long-term relationship building.

3.1.1.1 Measure the effectiveness of EOP, including digital engagements from social media campaigns.

3.1.1.2 Utilize outreach and social media outlets to help connect and find additional channels for engagement.

3.1.2 Develop and operationalize a branding strategy and marketing plan that includes simple, clear, and tailored messaging and communication materials and identifies the direct benefit of the programs for all audiences. (what they care about, a compelling why).

3.1.3 Become a trusted subject matter expert for all things related to energy efficiency in the region, helping members to tackle pain points and solve problems directly.

3.1.4 Develop and maintain a robust website and engagement platform to deliver ongoing and consistent information and data to the region in conjunction with social media channels.

3.1.5 Ensure accessibility through translating material in multiple languages and providing appropriate accommodations to engage as many people as possible.

3.1.6 Conduct an annual/periodic survey to measure awareness and needs. (Connected to T4.3.4)

3.2 **Community Roundtables** - Identify and collaborate with community champions and thought leaders to be the voice of the program empowering the community through establishing and managing Community Roundtables.

3.2.1 Establish program specific Community Roundtables in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement.

3.2.2 Determine a process for Community Roundtables to inform program design at launch and overtime.

3.2.3 Compensate community champions and outreach partners appropriately for their time.

3.2.4 Update participants, roles, and responsibilities of the Community Roundtables overtime to reflect priorities and needs.

3.3 **Dedicated Partnerships** - Utilize dedicated staff and resources to develop and maintain relationships and partnerships with members, potential partners, and other stakeholders throughout the region.

3.3.1 Establish a Regional Partnership Plan that identifies partner priorities, gaps, and needs in alignment with program priorities, as well as roles and responsibilities for I-REN staff.

3.3.1.1 Identify vital partnerships for each sector, including with community-based organizations, higher education institutions, workforce investment boards, energy employers, industry experts, contractors, architecture and engineering firms, associations, assessors, and unions.

3.3.1.2 Develop relationships with high schools and youth organizations to develop pathways into green jobs and programs.

3.3.1.3 Leverage COG contacts and resources.

3.3.1.4 Continue to work with other agencies and partners to bring non-ratepayer resources and funds to the region and fill gaps.

3.3.2 Develop and maintain contact relationship management (CRM) system to map and identify partners and track by program and region.

3.3.3 Identify staff members to steward partnership development with support from all I-REN staff and the Executive Committee as appropriate.

3.4 **State Actors** - Expand relationship development to state actors at the CPUC, CEC, Legislature, other Program Administrators, and beyond to build the I-REN stature and influence beyond the region, and act as a conduit to share information back to the region.

3.4.1 Identify and train state partnership lead(s) and support staff who are responsible for monitoring various channels for information and connecting the appropriate I-REN staff to engagement opportunities.

3.4.2 Explore opportunities for I-REN staff members to join board or commission meetings, and webinars with state organizations to ensure active participation in decision-making.

3.4.3 Research the landscape to determine the connections and ensure staff training on upcoming legislative matters is up to date.

3.4.4 Utilize Civic Well for regional messaging about state activities to ensure state people are at the table.

3.4.5 Maintain membership and actively participate in CECC, LGSEC, and CAEECC.

3.4.6 Work closely with the other RENs to share best practices, coordinate regulatory responses, and overall increase the impact and influence of the local government program administrators.

Goal #4 Internal Organization

I-REN will be an effective and efficient organization, characterized by agility, responsiveness, and accountability.

Objective

The internal I-REN team has capacity, is prepared, and is able to effectively to manage and drive the launch of the I-REN programs.

Desired Outcomes

- Budget goals are met
- Participation targets are met
- Organizational survey results indicate that I-REN is responsive, relevant and important
- I-REN meets staff and capacity requirements

Goal 4 Strategies

4.1 **Strong Organization** - Foster a strong organization around a clear and central mission, with defined roles and responsibilities for making the I-REN and its programs successful.

4.1.1 Ensure that the administrative process and approval systems are in place to enable agile and streamlined decision-making by the end of 2023 without undue burden.

4.1.2 Provide resources to increase staff knowledge about the program topics and keep up to date through internal training on equity and DEI.

4.1.3 Identify clear roles, and responsibilities while building the team through organizational meetings, effective onboarding, training, hiring and maintaining staff capacity.

4.1.3.1 Provide job description with roles and responsibilities.

4.1.3.2 Develop and maintain organizational chart.

4.1.3.3 Establish file sharing and communication protocols.

4.1.3.4 Create specific and detailed work plans.

4.2 **Regulatory Capacity** - Build capacity and ability to ensure that regulatory requirements are met and become standards of operations.

4.2.1 Train and support staff in learning and building capacity to work with regulators.

4.2.2 Engage with other RENs and CALREN to understand key issues and to build capacity and strength in the RENs position.

4.2.3 Create templates and resources to make responses consistent and simpler.

4.2.4 Routinely subscribe, follow, and read information from CPUC, CEC, and CAAEEC.

4.3 **Performance Management** - Annually review organizational performance and provide a routine means to make changes and updates to systems, processes, and overall operations as needed.

4.3.1 Develop and manage internal organization budget.

4.3.2 Maintain and update the strategic plan annually.

4.3.3 Engage with internal stakeholders to understand areas for improvements and changes.

4.3.4 Conduct an annual member survey to measure effectiveness with member agencies. (Connected 3.1.6)

Inland Regional Energy Network
I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: **California Energy Commission Equitable Building Decarbonization Grant Program**

Contact: **Benjamin Druyon, WRCOG Program Manager, bdruyon@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6727**

Date: **August 15, 2023**

Requested Action(s):

1. Authorize staff to provide a letter of commitment, on behalf of I-REN, to partner with SoCal REN / Los Angeles County in applying for the California Energy Commission Equitable Building Decarbonization Grant Program.

Purpose:
The purpose of this item is to bring additional grant funding opportunities to the I-REN region.

Background:
Initiated in 2019, the Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) is a consortium of the Western Riverside Council of Governments, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, and the San Bernardino Council of Governments (I-REN COG partners) that serve the Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino in the implementation of energy efficiency programs and services to support member agencies and the public. These partners joined together and submitted a Business Plan to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in order to establish locally administered, designed, and delivered energy efficiency programs. On November 18, 2021, the CPUC formally approved the I-REN Business Plan through program year 2027.

Assembly Bill 209 directed the California Energy Commission (CEC) to develop the Equitable Building Decarbonization Program, which will include a direct install program for low- and moderate-income households, which is a type of program that provides and installs energy efficient electric appliances, energy efficiency measures, and related upgrades directly to consumers at minimal or no cost. The Equitable Building Decarbonization Program will also include a statewide incentive program to accelerate deployment of low-carbon building technologies. The primary goals of the program are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and advance energy equity. The direct install program will include a statewide direct install program and tribal direct install program. The statewide direct install program will be administered separately in northern, central, and southern California by competitively selected program administrators who will partner with community-based organizations for culturally appropriate outreach, education, and support for participating households and communities.

The CEC has indicated a budget for this grant at $783M with 58% of that amount going to southern California, based on its population of under resourced communities at 13.6 million people.

SoCal REN, which is run by Los Angeles County, is interested in applying to be the Program Administrator for the entire southern California area, which includes I-REN's region. I-REN and SoCal REN staff have begun preliminary discussions about I-REN's participation in SoCal REN's application, and I-REN staff have attended multiple workshops about the grant program. The Request for Proposals for this grant is expected to open late August or early September of 2023. SoCal REN plans to hire a third party consultant to operate and market the program. As a partner, I-REN would mainly be responsible for outreach to our communities by using existing relationships with our members and community based organizations. Attachment 1 to this Staff Report is information from the most recent planning meetings with SoCal REN / Los Angeles County and the other potential partners for this effort.

Currently, I-REN's Business Plan does not include a residential sector. However, I-REN's member agencies have asked for programs to serve their residents. Pairing nicely with its Workforce Education & Training sector, I-REN will be working closely with contractors who provide decarbonization services within the residential sector in the Inland Empire. Complimenting I-REN further, Workforce Education & Training resources will be provided to develop local skilled workers.

The Equitable Building Decarbonization Program can address current gaps in I-REN's current programs and provides the opportunity for I-REN to "test" its ability to facilitate a residential component and gain experience without risk, should I-REN decide to expand into the residential sector in future Business Plan filings.

If this Committee chooses not to participate and does not partner with SoCal REN, SoCal REN will still submit a proposal and, if it is selected, will still operate the program in the I-REN region. By partnering with SoCal REN, I-REN will have a voice to provide for activities held within its region.

Staff is seeking authorization from the Executive Committee to provide a letter of commitment to partner with SoCal REN / Los Angeles County in the application of this grant.

If authorization is granted, the next steps would be to assist SoCal REN with the proposal. Should the grant be awarded, staff will then prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SoCal REN/Los Angeles County. The MOU would be brought to the I-REN Executive Committee for review and potential approval once the document is finalized. At that time, staff can provide additional information regarding I-REN's roles and responsibilities within the context of the larger regional grant.

Prior Action(s):
None.

Fiscal Impact:
All preliminary costs with the discovery of this grant are included in WRCOG's adopted Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Agency Budget under the Energy & Environmental Department.

If I-REN partners with SoCal REN, and if SoCal REN is selected as the winning bidder for this grant, all costs associated with the work on this grant will be reimbursed by the grant funds.

Attachment(s):
Attachment 1 - CEC Equitable Decarb SoCal REN Program
Attachment 2 - CEC Equitable Decarb SoCal REN Program Partner Commitment Letter

Attachment 1

I-REN CEC Equitable Decarbonization SoCal REN Program

California Energy Commission Equitable Decarbonization Program

Southern California Coalition for the Statewide EBD Program

2023 County of Los Angeles Internal Services Department, Energy and Environmental Service

Agenda

- Background information
- Overview and purpose
- Community-Based Organizations
- Asks, deadlines, and next steps

CEC EBD Program Background Information

The Equitable Building Decarbonization Program (EBD Program) will help eligible residential customers electrify their homes at no cost, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and advancing energy equity.

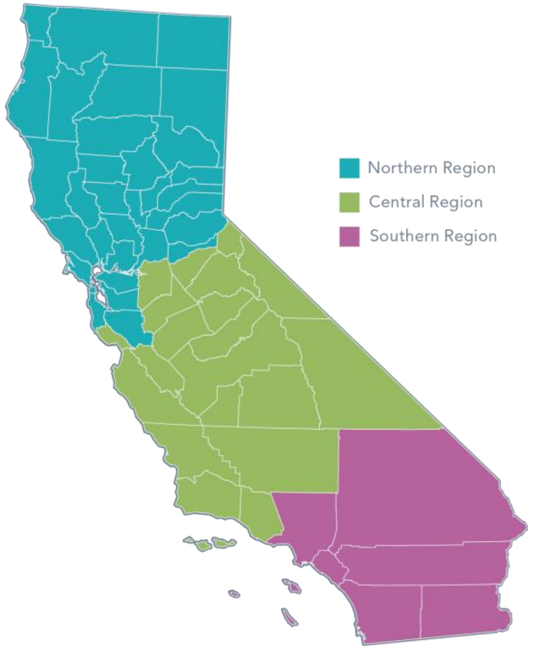
The EBD Program will also encourage resiliency to extreme heat, indoor air-quality improvements, energy affordability, grid reliability, and local workforce opportunities.

EBD Statewide Direct Install Program

- The EBD Statewide Direct Install Program will provide building decarbonization upgrades for low-income and moderate-income households in single-family, multifamily, and manufactured homes in under-resourced communities.
- The program will be administered separately in Northern, Central, and Southern California.

Program Funding

- Funded by the California Energy Commission
- $783M for the Grant Program (58% for Southern California region)
- Projects will be funded at a 100% grant rate; projects that leverage other funds will be more competitive
- Three administrators will be competitively selected (one per region)



Overview and Purpose

The SoCal EBD Program is designed to be a one-stop-shop that provides comprehensive project support services from project inception to completion: gold standard white glove project delivery for home electrification.

In addition, the SoCal EBD Program is designed to build a trade ally network of electrification experts:

- Home Electrification Concierge
- Electrification Construction Managers
- Intake Advisors
- Installation Contractors

Types of No-Cost Upgrades

- **Heating and Cooling**
- **Water Heating**
- **Cooking**
- **Laundry**
- **Lighting**
- **Building Envelope**
- **Electrical**
- **Remediation and Safety**

SoCal Building Decarbonization Coalition

- The County of Los Angeles is leading a coalition of southern California partners that include ***public agencies, JPAs, and CBOs to apply for the CEC EBD Program Southern Region funding.***
- Through this partnership resources would be available to partners that will enable them to offer their residential customers a DI Decarbonization program within their service territory.
- Through this coalition partners will be able to provide local insight in the development of the proposal as well as the implementation post-award.

Partnership Overview

Partner Agencies

- SDCP
- Clean Energy Alliance
- IREN
- SoCalREN
- SBCCOG
- SGVCOG
- WRCOG
- GWCCOG
- OC Power Authority

Roles and Responsibilities	Benefits to Communities

• Provide logo and background information (e.g., organization overview, community information, etc.)
• Sign Partnership Letter
• Virtual Partner Advisory Council meeting (cadence TBD)
• In-person Partner Advisory Council meetings (cadence TBD)
• Recruit local CBOs
• Marketing, education & Outreach
• Pipeline Leads
	• Deliver equitable decarbonization to low- and middle-income (LMI) households
	• Supports renewable energy affordability for LMI customers
	  ◦ Clean Energy Alliance Customer Options
	  ◦ San Diego Clean Power Customer Options
	  ◦ OC Power Authority Customer Options
	• Alignment with local initiatives (e.g., climate mitigation and adaptation, affordable housing, etc.)
	  ◦ Sustainable South Bay
	  ◦ SGVCOG Programs and Projects
	  ◦ WRCOG/IREN Programs (Energy | Environmental)

Asks, Deadlines, and Next Steps

What we need from each Partner

- Commitment Letter
- High-res logo
- Organization overview and background information
- 1-2 successful related community initiatives to highlight
- Any information you wish to share regarding existing targeting studies, complementary program offerings, etc.

Deadlines

- Commitment Letter 8/7
- Partner logo/information 8/14

Next steps

- Partnership Commitment
- LA County will schedule additional meetings with CBOs after the RFP is released (expected late August 2023)

Contacts

County of Los Angeles
Internal Services Department (ISD)
Office of Energy & Environmental Service (EES)

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Attachment 2

CEC Equitable Decarb SoCal REN Program Partner Commitment Letter

California Energy Commission Equitable Building Decarbonization Program

Name
Title
Address
City, State, ZIP Code

Dear California Energy Commission,

On Behalf of the Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) a consortium among Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) and the San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG) and the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG), we commit to working with the County of Los Angeles on the Equitable Building Decarbonization Program (EBD Program). I-REN is a Program Administrator that provides energy efficiency services to increase energy savings and equitable access throughout the San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

If the County of Los Angeles is selected to administer the EBD Statewide Direct Install Program for the Southern Region of California, I-REN commits to being an active program partner in offering a decarbonization program to households in the eligible area. The County of Los Angeles' vision for the EBD Statewide Direct Install Program aligns with I-REN's equity and climate action objectives, including actively participating in California's Clean Energy initiatives, and providing resources to develop a trained workforce to support and realize energy efficiency savings goals in the Inland Empire region.

Like our other coalition partners, I-REN believes that local public agencies are best suited to administer this historic decarbonization effort. We understand our communities, our neighborhoods, and our citizens. The Southern California coalition led by the County of Los Angeles will deliver a united regional program implemented uniquely within each community, based on local needs, goals, and complementary offerings to ensure each household participating in our program is appropriately and equitably served.

We look forward to supporting this effort to drive direct, household-level action in the communities most impacted by climate change, and to setting our communities up for future success by supporting the development of a local skilled electrification workforce.

Sincerely,

Casey Dailey
Director of Energy & Environmental Programs
Western Riverside Council of Governments / Inland Regional Energy Network