



Inland Regional Energy Network I-REN Executive Committee

AGENDA

**Tuesday, April 16, 2024
2:00 PM**

**WRCOG
3390 University Avenue, Suite 200
Riverside, CA 92501**

Remote Meeting Locations

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

**Town of Apple Valley
14955 Dale Evans Parkway
Apple Valley, CA 92307**

**Sheraton Business Center
1230 J Street, Sacramento CA, 95814**

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: 835 4047 4339
Passcode: 428570
Dial in: 669 444 9171 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 agenda 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. 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. Action Minutes from the January 16, 2024, I-REN Executive Committee Meeting

Requested Action(s):

1. Approve the Action Minutes from the January 16, 2024, I-REN Executive Committee meeting.

B. I-REN Regulatory and Reporting Activities Update

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

6. REPORTS / DISCUSSION

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

A. Workforce, Education & Training Sector Activities Update

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

B. I-REN 2023 Annual Report

Requested Action(s): 1. Receive and file.

C. Approval of Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Agency Budget

Requested Action(s): 1. Approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Agency budget.

D. Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing Program

Requested Action(s): 1. Receive and file.

7. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

Crystal Ruiz, WRCOG

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Members are invited to suggest additional items to be brought forward for discussion at future Committee meetings.

9. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

10. NEXT MEETING

The next I-REN Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 16, 2024, at 2:00 p.m., location to be determined.

11. ADJOURNMENT

12. 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 gases
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

I-REN Executive Committee

Action Minutes

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 January 16, 2024, 2023, at the WRCOG office, 3390 University Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Committee member Jackie 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 Jurupa Valley - Chris Barajas
- City of San Jacinto - Crystal Ruiz (Chair)

Absent:

- City of Rialto

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

RESULT:	APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
MOVER:	Hagman
SECONDER:	Barajas
AYES:	Ortiz, Hagman, Bishop, Casillas, Barajas, Ruiz

A. Action Minutes from the November 21, 2023, Special I-REN Executive Committee Meeting

Action:

1. Approved the Action Minutes from the November 21, 2023, Special I-REN Executive Committee meeting.

B. I-REN Regulatory and Reporting Activities Update

Action:

1. Received and filed.

6. REPORTS / DISCUSSION

A. Public Sector Technical Assistance Resource Allocation Policy

RESULT:	APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
MOVER:	Hagman
SECONDER:	Barajas
AYES:	Ortiz, Hagman, Bishop, Casillas, Barajas, Ruiz

Action:

1. Approved an I-REN policy for the Public Sector Technical Assistance Program by allowing a maximum of two energy efficiency projects per agency at a time and reserve funding for all eligible agencies, with a maximum of four projects at a time for both counties.

B. Workforce Education & Training Update - Professional Services Agreements for On-Call Workforce Service

RESULT:	APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
MOVER:	Hagman
SECONDER:	Casillas
AYES:	Ortiz, Hagman, Bishop, Casillas, Barajas, Ruiz

Actions:

1. Recommended that the WRCOG Executive Committee authorize the WRCOG Executive Director to execute a new On-Call Professional Services Agreement between WRCOG and The Energy Coalition for support to I-REN with workforce assessment and working group implementation and facilitation services in an amount not-to-exceed \$175,000, for a term through June 30, 2026, with options for one-year extensions through 2027.
2. Recommended that the WRCOG Executive Committee authorize the WRCOG Executive Director to execute a new On-Call Professional Services Agreement between WRCOG and Riverside Community College District for support to I-REN with workforce assessment, working group implementation and facilitation services, and other support services in an amount not-to-exceed \$195,000, for a term through June 30, 2026, with options for one-year extensions through 2027.
3. Recommended that the WRCOG Executive Committee authorize the WRCOG Executive Director to execute a new On-Call Professional Services Agreement between WRCOG and Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce for support to I-REN with workforce assessment, working group implementation and facilitation services, and other support services in an amount not-to-exceed \$195,000, for a term through June 30, 2026, with options for one-year extensions through 2027.

C. I-REN Strategic Planning Activities Update

RESULT:	APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
MOVER:	Hagman
SECONDER:	Ruiz
AYES:	Ortiz, Hagman, Bishop, Casillas, Barajas, Ruiz

Action:

1. Approved the 2023-2027 I-REN Strategic Plan.

7. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

Chair Ruiz had nothing to report.

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Committee member Art Bishop asked staff to track proposed legislative issues affecting energy within the state of California.

Committee member Curt Hagman asked for updates on emerging technology, such as hydrogen and microgrids.

9. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Casey Dailey, WRCOG Director of Energy and Environment, reported that I-REN is hosting the first Energy & Workforce Sector Showcase on March 20, 2024, alongside the Inland Empire Desert Regional Consortium at the Riverside Marriott. It will bring together community college faculty and decision-makers with municipal leaders and city staff to discuss energy and workforce issues and barriers, policy trends, employer demands, and state energy goals. CPUC Commissioner Sharoma will give the key-note speech.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next I-REN Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 16, 2024, at 2:00 p.m., in WRCOG's office located at 3390 University Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:46 p.m.



Inland Regional Energy Network

I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: I-REN Regulatory and Reporting Activities Update

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

Date: April 16, 2024

Recommended Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

Summary:

The purpose of this item is to provide an update on I-REN's regulatory and reporting activities. I-REN is a party on various California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) proceedings, including Energy Efficiency, REN Business Plan Applications, CalChoice Petition for Modification, Integrated Distributed Energy Resources, and Clean Energy Financing Options. I-REN is also monitoring other proceedings including CPUC Building Decarbonization, CPUC Self-Generation Incentive Program (SGIP), California Energy Commission (CEC) 2025 Energy Code Rulemaking, and CEC Equitable Building Decarbonization (EBD) Program. By participating in and monitoring CPUC and CEC proceedings, I-REN is able to stay up to date on relevant regulatory events impacting I-REN. I-REN has also outlined a schedule for 2024 to comply with CPUC reporting requirements including, annual, monthly and quarterly reports, and other required advice letters. Finally, this item also includes a state Legislature update.

Discussion:

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 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. The table in Attachment 2 to this Staff Report illustrates the various reports that I-REN must file with the CPUC throughout the year.

State Legislature Update for March / April 2024

Following the February 16, 2024 bill introduction deadline, the California Legislature's count for new bills this year is 2,124, including 1,505 in the Assembly and 619 in the Senate. One energy-related bill to watch is Assembly Bill (AB) [1999](#), which would restore a \$10 cap on monthly residential electric utility fees. AB 205 in 2022 had allowed the CPUC to authorize income-graduated fixed charges. Also of interest currently is the state budget process for 2024-25. When the governor's budget was proposed in January 2024, the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) [estimated](#) the deficit to be \$58B, largely resulting from severe declines in revenue. LAO updated that estimate as of February 2024 to be \$73B. Generally, proposed [solutions](#) sustain the vast majority of planned multi-year funding, focus reductions on recent one-time augmentations, and do not reduce funding committed to specific projects/grantees. Between now and mid-May, budget committees and subcommittees will hold hearing to review the Governor's proposals and make preliminary decisions. The Governor will release the May Revision by May 14th for the legislature to finalize and then pass the budget bill by June 15th.

Prior Action(s):

January 16, 2024: The Executive Committee received and filed.

August 15, 2023: The Executive Committee received and filed.

May 16, 2023: The 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.

Financial Summary:

All costs associated with regulatory monitoring and reporting are included in WRCOG's adopted Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Agency Budget under I-REN Program (Fund 180) in the Energy & Environmental Department.

Attachment(s):

[Attachment 1 - I-REN Regulatory Proceedings Overview](#)

[Attachment 2 - I-REN Required CPUC Reporting](#)

Attachment

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 EE 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 (EE) 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 EE in the region, and the important role of local government program administrators (PAs).
- 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 EE 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 EE policy and programs.
- [D.23-02-002](#) (February 2, 2023) – Addresses several topics important to the ongoing success of the CPUC's EE 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 EE programs.
- [D.23-04-009](#) (April 6, 2023) – Grants the motion of Southern California Regional Energy Network, on behalf of the California EE Coordinating Committee (CAEECC), requesting authorization for the EE PAs to use unspent and uncommitted EE 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 EE 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 EE policy and programs, including CAEECC compensation issues and natural gas incentive issues.
- [Decision 23-08-005](#) (August 10, 2023) – Adopts total system benefit and energy savings goals for ratepayer-funded EE portfolios for 2024 – 2035 based on 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 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.
- [Administrative Law Judge's Ruling](#) (November 17, 2023) – Provides notice and opportunity to comment on draft revisions to the rulebook for normalized metered energy consumption (NMEC Rulebook). Parties are invited to provide comments on the draft revised Rulebook and to address the questions set out in the Ruling, no later than no later than February 29, 2024. Reply comments are due no later than March 15, 2024. WRCOG on behalf of I-REN expects to file comments.

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 Pacific Gas & Electric (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.

- February 1, 2024 – WRCOG on behalf of I-REN, Southern California Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN), Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) and Tri-County Regional Energy Network (3C-REN) filed response comments in support of the motion of San Diego Community Power on behalf of San Diego Regional Energy Network for approval of its EE portfolio application.
- February 29, 2024 – WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed response comments on the draft revised NMEC Rulebook. I-REN address the questions set out in the Ruling and supported revisions to the NMEC Rulebook that do not further complicate or create additional barriers to equity target communities accessing EE.
- March 15, 2024 – Reply comments on the draft revised NMEC Rulebook were due. WRCOG on behalf of I-REN did not file.
- March 18, 2024 – CPUC Public Advocates Office (Cal Advocates) petitions the CPUC to commence a rulemaking proceeding to align demand side program designs and budgets with current electrification, decarbonization, equity, and reliability goals. The petition proposes heightened scrutiny on RENs, equity programs and performance metrics.
- April 5, 2024 – WRCOG on behalf of I-REN, BayREN and 3C-REN file a joint response to the petition, citing the prior litigation of REN budgets and the CPUC's clear disagreement with Cal Advocates' insistence on REN budget proportionality.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- 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 EE 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 EE (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 BayREN as the first non-utility administrator of a statewide program; (3) approves a new REN called Rural REN, to deliver EE 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 (IDSM) opportunities beyond EE into the portfolios.

4. Status Update

- March 14, 2024 – WRCOG filed I-REN’s IDSM Advice Letter with the CPUC, requesting that it be effective April 13, 2024.
- Various parties have filed Petitions for Modification of D.23-06-055 related to the proposed Rural REN. 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

D.23-06-055 directs the development of a non-energy benefits (NEBs) study, to be led by one of the IOUs and involving all PAs and overseen by CPUC Energy Division staff, to identify or develop quantification/estimation methods for NEBs for equity segment customers. The output(s) of this study should be used to update and improve quantification of NEBs as an indicator for equity segment program performance, as well as for consideration by PAs, stakeholders, and Energy Division staff in the equity goals development process. The Decision sets a due date of October 1, 2026, for the NEBs study to be completed. Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) is the lead IOU, and Frontier Energy (Frontier) is participating in the NEBs working group on behalf of I-REN.

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 EE 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 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 EE 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 EE projects across the state.

3. Key Decisions

[Proposed Decision Granting California Choice Energy Authority's Petition for Modification of D.14-01-033](#) (February 29, 2024) – This Proposed Decision grants CalChoice's petition for modification (PFM) of D.14-01-033, which established the regulatory approach to allowing CCAs to elect to administer EE funds for their retail customers. The maximum funding is set at 4 percent of the total electricity EE nonbypassable charge collections from the CCA's customers. CCAs that wish to elect to administer EE funds shall include in their advice letters a clear proposed start and end date for funding, for a maximum of a three-year period. CCAs may also include in their advice letters a request for an exemption from the requirements for filing annual Joint Cooperation Memoranda (JCM) with other EE portfolio administrators if the requirements are either administratively burdensome or unnecessary. The CPUC will consider requests for exemption from JCM requirements on a case-by-case basis.

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 (then Assigned Commissioner on the CPUC EE proceedings) to discuss the PFM of D.14-01-033 filed by CalChoice in this proceeding.
- March 19, 2024 – WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed response comments in support of the Proposed Decision.
- March 25, 2024 – Reply comments on the Proposed Decision were due. WRCOG on behalf of I-REN did not file.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

April 18, 2024 – Proposed Decision scheduled to be heard and approved at CPUC Voting Meeting.

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 (DWG) 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 DWG, and formation of the DWG (e.g., membership).
- [Assigned Commissioner's Ruling](#) (December 1, 2023) – Sets forth (1) the Scope of Work for the Consultant, (2) Scope of Work for the DWG, and (3) guidance for the formation of the DWG. The CPUC will hire a consultant to facilitate, coordinate and manage the work of the DWG, who will report to Energy Division staff and work under their direction and guidance. The work of the DWG should include providing actionable recommendations or solutions on the topics set out in the Ruling.

4. Status Update

- January 9, 2023 – Comments on the Order were filed by the parties, including BayREN, 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 EE. 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, including SoCalREN, BayREN and 3C-REN. SoCalREN noted that the RENs should be explicitly included among the list of the stakeholders participating in the Data Working Group. BayREN and 3C-REN in their joint comments noted that they will collaborate with other RENs to ensure REN representation in DWG cohort.
- February 21, 2024 – Opening briefs were filed by various parties to the proceeding.
- March 13, 2024 – Reply briefs were filed by various parties to the proceeding.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- Phase One Track One:
 - TBD – Proposed Decision for the SCT, or Air Quality Research Result
 - June 2024 – Proposed Decision
- Phase One Track Two:
 - TBD – Workshops for the DWGs
 - The IOUs are directed to serve a summary of the DWG progress on the service list of the proceeding every three months from the date of the first DWG working group meeting.
 - Approximately 12 months after the first workshop is held – Recommendations from DWGs are served
 - Within two weeks after Recommendations from the DWGs are served – Ruling requesting Party Comments on the Recommendations from the DWGs
 - TBD – Workshops, if necessary, to discuss Recommendations from the DWGs
 - Three weeks after the conclusion of workshops – Party Comments on the Recommendations from the DWG, filed (Track Two submitted)
 - No later than 90 days after Party Comments on DWG Recommendations are filed – Proposed Decision(s) addressing Recommendations from the DWGs

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.
- [Decision 23-08-026](#) (August 10, 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 EE Financing programs. The Decision 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.
- March 13, 2024 – The TOB Working Group held a public workshop that discussed and provided forum for comment on TOB / Inclusive Utility Investment (IUI) Joint Proposal. The TOB/IUI Proposal is a joint IOU and Silicon Valley Clean Energy Authority proposal that would establish TOB customer programs across the State and provide access to residential clean energy upgrades for utility customers.
- April 3, 2024 – TOB Working Group workshop #2.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

May 14, 2024 – TOB Working Group will submit its proposal to the CPUC.

F. **CPUC Transportation Electrification Policy and Infrastructure Proceeding** ([R. 23-12-008](#))

1. Proceeding Overview

This rulemaking continues the CPUC's oversight of the development of infrastructure to support the acceleration of transportation electrification. This rulemaking also establishes a venue for considering future

transportation electrification policy matters. This proceeding may consider the development of rates if a substantial need arises. This proceeding is the successor to Rulemaking 18-12-006.

2. Key I-REN Issues

- Issues related to transportation electrification are critically important to the I-REN partner agencies and their communities and intersect with I-REN's work in EE and IDSM as well as its commitments as a REN to equity and market support.
- The I-REN service territory covers over 27,000 square miles – an area nearly the size of South Carolina. The region has some of the worst smog in California, contributing to health impacts and poor air quality due to geography, the long distances that must be traveled by road, the high concentration of warehouses, and other factors. I-REN, as a local government coalition, has a mission to equitably serve its outlying communities, and this was a major impetus for the submittal of I-REN's EE Business Plan.
- WRCOG, as lead administrator for I-REN, has a particular interest in issues related to vehicle-grid integration policy, planning, technology enablement, and vehicle support of grid needs; and deployment of behind-the-meter charging infrastructure to support statewide charging infrastructure goals. This correlates directly to I-REN's proposed IDSM services in support of distributed energy resources (such as vehicle-to-grid) that enable load shifting in combination with EE.

3. Key Decisions

[Order Instituting Rulemaking](#) (December 20, 2023) – The Order includes a preliminary scoping memo as set forth below, and preliminarily determines the category of this proceeding and the need for hearings. The preliminary scope of issues for this proceeding include:

- Timely Energization of Electric Vehicle Charging
- Transportation Electrification Grid Planning to Support Charging Infrastructure Deployment
- Deployment of Behind-the-Meter Charging Infrastructure to Support State Goals
- Vehicle-Grid Integration
- Ongoing Transportation Electrification Policy Development and Collaboration

4. Status Update

- February 5, 2024 – Comments on Order filed
- Reply comments on Order filed
- February 29, 2024 – WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed a Motion for Party Status, which was granted at the Pre-Hearing Conference held the same day.

- February 29, 2024 – Pre-Hearing Conference. Frontier attended on behalf of I-REN. BayREN and 3C-REN filed Pre-Hearing Conference statements on the proposed scope of the proceeding.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

April 29, 2024 – Assigned Commissioner's Scoping Memo and Ruling.

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, 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.
- [D.23-12-037](#) (December 14, 2023) – Eliminates electric line extension subsidies for all mixed-fuel new construction (building projects that use gas and/or propane in addition to electricity) effective July 1, 2024. Additionally, the new rules adopted therein require all mixed-fuel new construction projects to use actual cost billing of an electric line extension rather than estimated cost billing effective January 1, 2025. To track the progress of the rule changes and to monitor savings from the elimination of electric line extension subsidies for all mixed-fuel new construction, the Decision establishes an annual reporting requirement for California’s three largest electric IOUs beginning May 1, 2024.

4. Status Update

[D.23-12-037](#) (December 14, 2023) – Extends the statutory deadline in this proceeding until December 31, 2025.

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.
- [D.23-12-004](#) (December 14, 2023) – Modifies the existing HPWH program in D.22-04-036 to expand program eligibility. The Decision also revises the current definition of a qualifying demand response program and revises the eligible software that can be used to model central HPWHs. SGIP PAs may use any software approved by the CEC for modeling central heat pump water heaters for compliance with the California Energy Code.
- [D.23-03-071](#) (March 21, 2024) – This decision allocates \$280 million from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund to the SGIP Residential Solar and Storage Equity budget and makes programmatic changes to improve SGIP and provide the framework for the new budget category, eligibility requirements, and administration. For Fiscal Year 2023-24, SCE is allocated \$97 million and SoCalGas is allocated \$15 million. Publicly owned electric utilities in I-REN's territory are assigned to SoCalGas as SGIP PA.

4. Status Update

SGIP PAs have submitted Advice Letter 2-E on May 16, 2023, and a supplemental Advice Letter 2-EA on September 12, 2023, to be reviewed by Energy Division staff. The SGIP HPWH program handbook will become effective on September 14, 2023, and should be used by PAs to comply with SGIP HPWH program rules. Going forward, PAs must refer to the most recent SGIP Handbook approved by the CPUC's advice letter process.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

None pending.

C. CPUC Microgrids Proceeding [\(R.19-09-009\)](#)

1. Proceeding Overview

On September 19, 2019, the CPUC initiated an Order Instituting Rulemaking to begin crafting a policy framework surrounding the commercialization of microgrids. This rulemaking focuses on implementation of Senate Bill (SB) 1339. SB 1339 requires the CPUC, in consultation with the CEC and the California Independent System Operator (CAISO), to take specific actions to facilitate the commercialization of microgrids for distribution customers of the IOUs. Components of microgrid commercialization are set by SB 1339, and must include: (1) rates, tariffs, and rules, as necessary; that (2) remove barriers for deploying microgrids across the large IOU service territories; (3) without shifting costs onto non-benefiting customers; and (4) prioritizing and ensuring worker, public, and the electric system's safety and reliability.

2. Key I-REN Issues

- In its Business Plan, I-REN envisioned providing technical assistance support to local jurisdictions in its region through climate resiliency projects such as battery storage systems and microgrids. While not applicable to I-REN's current plans for IDSM integration in its portfolio, I-REN is well-positioned to coordinate as needed across other DER proceedings if and when applicable to its portfolio; I-REN is party to and/or monitors numerous CPUC proceedings relevant to IDSM, including but not limited to the microgrids proceeding.
- WRCOG is launching the Energy Resilience Plan (ERP) 2.0 to explore the feasibility of microgrids at key facilities and community resilience centers. The plan, which begins by identifying potential sites for microgrids and resilience centers, seeks to enhance infrastructure and community resilience while aligning member agencies with California's climate goals through strategic project development. WRCOG has received a grant of \$421,000 under the Governor's Office of Planning & Research Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program's Adaptation Planning Grant Program to further develop the ERP 2.0.

3. Key Decisions

- [D.21-01-018](#) (January 14, 2021) – Adopts microgrid rates, tariffs, and rules for the IOUs. They are each required to form a new microgrid tariff for their respective service territories and to jointly develop a Microgrid Incentive Program. This decision also creates a Resiliency and Microgrids Working Group. Through the Resiliency and Microgrids Working Group, this decision directs the CPUC's Energy Division to identify microgrid-specific policy issues, if any, that are not adequately addressed by existing venues at the CPUC, CEC, California Air Resources Board, and CAISO and create a workplan for considering these issues.

- [D.23-04-034](#) (April 6, 2023) – This decision adopts implementation rules for the previously authorized Microgrid Incentive Program for the IOUs. The Microgrid Incentive Program is a program that targets placement of community microgrids in disadvantaged vulnerable communities (DVCs) to support populations impacted by grid outages. The Microgrid Incentive Program seeks to advance microgrid resiliency technology, advance system benefits of microgrids equitably across DVCs, and inform future regulatory resiliency action to the benefit of all ratepayer customers.
- [Assigned Commissioner's Scoping Memo and Ruling](#) (July 18, 2023) – Sets forth the issues to be addressed, the need for hearing, the schedule, and the category for Track 5 of this proceeding and directs the IOUs to submit a draft pro-forma standard microgrid multi-property tariff into the record of this proceeding for public comment and debate. The Ruling directs the CPUC's Energy Division to issue a Staff Proposal on a draft microgrid multi-property tariff and also directs the Energy Division to host a public workshop on the tariff proposals so that stakeholders could participate in the development of a statewide, microgrid multi-property tariff.
- [Administrative Law Judge's Ruling](#) (August 8, 2023) – Orders the IOUs to develop and submit a draft Pro-Forma Standard Microgrid Multi-Property Tariff, and any necessary utility-specific deviations, based on PG&E's Community Microgrid Enablement Tariff.
- [Administrative Law Judge's Ruling](#) (March 27, 2024) – Directs the parties to file comments discussing if and/or how their multi-property microgrid tariff proposal aligns with the nine goals in the CPUC's Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) Action Plan. ESJ communities as defined in the plan include disadvantaged communities, all Tribal lands, and low-income households and census tracts having 80% or less of the area or state median income.

4. Status Update

- October 9, 2023 – The IOUs submit the Pro-Forma Standard Microgrid Multi-Property Tariff, and any necessary utility-specific deviations, into the record.
- October 27, 2023 – Opening comments on the IOUs' Pro-Forma Standard Microgrid Multi-Property Tariff.
- November 10, 2023 – Opening comments on the IOUs' Pro-Forma Standard Microgrid Multi-Property Tariff.
- December 15, 2023 – Stakeholder Pro-Forma Standard Microgrid Multi-Property Tariff submitted into the record.
- January 12, 2023 – Opening comments on the Stakeholder Pro-Forma Standard Microgrid Multi-Property Tariff.
- January 26, 2023 – Reply comments on the Stakeholder Pro-Forma Standard Microgrid Multi-Property Tariff.
- March 26, 2024 – Energy Division Public Workshop on IOU and Stakeholder Proposals for Microgrid Multi-Property Tariffs.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- April 19, 2024 – Deadline for IOUs and other parties who submitted proposals for a multi-property microgrid tariff to file comments discussing if and/or how their proposal aligns with the nine goals in the ESJ Action Plan.
- May 3, 2024 – Deadline for parties who wish to provide formal comments to the April 19, 2024, response.
- May 17, 2024 – Deadline for parties to file reply comments.
- The Proposed Decision will be issued within 90 days from submission of the Track 5 record.

D. 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. The CEC opened a separate formal rulemaking docket to support the development of the 2025 California Energy Code (see below).

4. Status Update

- 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.
- August 2023 – Final CASE Reports submitted to CEC.
- July - September 2023 – CEC pre-rulemaking workshops.
- November 3, 2023 – CEC published 2025 Energy Code Draft Updates (Draft Express Terms).

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

January 2023 - June 2024 – CEC Rulemaking for 2025 Energy Code.

E. CEC 2025 Energy Code Rulemaking ([24-BSTD-01](#))

1. Proceeding Overview

This specific docket is intended to record public engagement in rulemaking activities for the 2025 revisions to Parts 1 and 6 of the California Energy Code.

2. Key I-REN Issues

See above re 2025 Energy Code Pre-Rulemaking.

3. Key Decisions

On January 8, 2028, the CEC opened a new docket to facilitate updates to the California Energy Code.

4. Status Update

March 28, 2024 – CEC published 2025 Energy Code 45-day language and Initial Study and Proposed Negative Declaration for the 2025 Energy Code

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- April 16 - 18, 2024 – Lead Commissioner Hearings on 2025 Energy Code.
- April 29, 2024 – Comments due on Initial Study and Proposed Negative Declaration for the 2025 Energy Code.
- May 13, 2024 – Comments due on 2025 Energy Code 45-day language.
- August 14, 2024 – 2025 Energy Code CEC Business Meeting adoption.
- December 17 - 19, 2024 – Building Standards Commission approval of 2025 Energy Code.
- January 1, 2026 – 2025 Energy Code effective date.

F. 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, EE 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 PAs who will partner with community-based organizations for

culturally appropriate outreach, education, and support for participating households and communities. The state intends to allocate approximately \$690 million for the EBD Program. The CEC initially 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.
- [EBD 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 EBD 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.
- [Equitable Building Decarbonization Direct Install Program Guidelines \(Adopted\)](#) (October 18, 2023) – The guidelines for the EBD Direct Install Program outline the initial rules and requirements for the program, including funding allocations, household and property eligibility requirements, and eligible measures.

4. Status Update

- May 17, 2023 – Staff Workshop on Draft EBD Direct Install Program Guidelines.
- June 6 - 21, 2023 – Staff Regional Workshops on EBD 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.

- March 11, 2024 – Draft EBD Direct Install Solicitation Manual, Scope of Work and Federal Terms and Conditions issued. The draft solicitation states CEC’s intent to integrate a portion of the \$292 million in funding from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Home Efficiency Rebate (HOMES) Program into the EBD Direct Install Program, pending U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) approval, to realize implementation efficiencies and allow more funding to go directly to decarbonization activities that benefit Californians. While funding is formula-driven (non-competitive), states must submit applications to DOE that include detailed plans covering program design criteria in accordance with the HOMES Program Requirements.
- March 14, 2024 – Pre-Solicitation Workshop on EBD Direct Install Program. Staff provided an overview of the Program’s draft solicitation for three regional administrators. Topics included applicant eligibility requirements, budget, scope of work, timeline, scoring criteria, integration of IRA HOMES Program funding and requirements, and opportunities for prospective administrators to find partners using the Empower Innovation website. There were opportunities for the public to ask questions and provide comments during the workshop.
- March 29, 2024 – Deadline for submitting written comments on the workshop.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- April 30, 2024 – EBD Direct Install Program solicitation released.
- May 9, 2024 – Pre-Bid Conference.
- June 30, 2024 – Deadline to Submit Proposals.
- August 1, 2024 – Notice of Proposed Award Posting Date.
- November 13, 2024 – CEC Business Meeting approving awards.
- 2025 – PA ramp-up and direct install program roll-out in initial communities.

G. CEC IRA Residential Energy Rebate Programs [\(23-DECARB-01\)](#)

1. Proceeding Overview

The IRA provides \$391 billion nationwide to support clean energy and address climate change, including \$4.3 billion designated for the HOMES Program. California will be allocated \$292 million in HOMES funding to support whole home energy retrofits. The CEC is planning on incorporating or “braiding” HOMES funding with the EBD Program discussed above to realize administrative efficiencies, thus allowing more funding to go towards decarbonization activities that benefit Californians. If braiding the programs is not feasible, and the CEC needs to develop a separate whole house decarbonization program to meet federal rules, the CEC would like input as to program design.

2. Key I-REN Issues

See above re EBD Program.

3. Key Decisions

[Request for Information \(RFI\)](#) (December 21, 2023) – Invites the public to provide comments on the CEC's approach to program design for the HOMES Program and its application to U.S. Department of Energy for \$292 million in funds.

4. Status Update

- January 26, 2024 – Deadline for submitting written comments on staff questions in the RFI as well as program-related topics. BayREN and 3C-REN were among the stakeholders submitting comments.
- March 21, 2024 – Workshop on HOMES Program. The workshop explored California's implementation of the federal IRA-funded HOMES Rebate Program design and implementation. The workshop explored a Pay-for-Performance approach to whole home EE aligned with the state's decarbonization goals, the enabling federal IRA legislation, and the DOE guidelines for the HOMES rebates. Staff provided an overview of the IRA legislation and HOMES Program requirements and a survey of existing Pay-for-Performance programs in the state.
- April 5, 2024 – Deadline for submitting written comments on the workshop.

5. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

None pending.

Attachment

I-REN Required CPUC Reporting

I-REN Required CPUC Reporting for February 2024 – February 2025

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.	In progress.
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.	Dependent on finalization of invoicing.
Integrated Demand Side Management (IDSM) Advice Letter (Tier 3)	3/15/2024	NEW for 2024. D.23-06-055 COL 41 allows PAs to set aside up to \$4M or 2.5% of budget for ongoing load shifting that reduces peak consumption and is not event-based. IDSM programs to be launched during 2024-2027 are to be submitted in an advice letter.	Filed.
2023 Annual Report	4/15/2024	Narrative and spreadsheet format report on overall Portfolio performance and Program level accomplishments.	In progress.
2023 Annual Claims True up	4/15/2024	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.	In progress.
2023 Annual Monthly Report	4/18/2024	"Month 13" report to align savings and expenditures with annual claim true up and annual report.	In progress.
2024-2025 Joint Cooperation Memorandum (JCM)	4/7/2024	Memo describing coordination among overlapping PAs on similar programs. NEW per D.23-06-055 Ordering Paragraph ("OP") 35: JCM now covers two years, is submitted via CEDARS, and deadline is based on TUAL approval date	In progress. Note: on 3/13/24 SoCalREN sought an extension from 4/7/24 to 5/7/24. As of 3/15/24, pending response from CPUC.
Annual Report Overview Presentation to CAEECC	5/14/2024 or 5/15/2024	NEW for 2024. Per D.23-06-055 at 27, PAs are required to provide a high-level overview of Annual Report near the time it is filed.	In progress.

Report Type	Due Date	Content	Status
Joint PAs' Metrics Advice Letter (Tier 2)	5/1/2024	NEW for 2024. Per D.23-06-055 OP 11, Joint PAs are to submit an advice letter clarifying equity and market support indicators adopted in this decision, modifying any common metrics/indicators adopted in Decision 18-05-041, and identifying any baseline info/methodologies for future targets.	In progress.
2024 Q1 Claims	7/1/2024	Program expenditures and committed funds (YTD) PLUS Project level savings, measures, participant costs, incentives, etc., being claimed in Q1.	
Joint PAs' AKAB Surveys Advice Letter (Tier 2)	8/1/2024	NEW for 2024. Per D.23-06-055 OP 25, Joint PAs will select PA to lead awareness, knowledge, attitude, and behavior [AKAB] study/surveys to inform baselines, target setting, and goals for the market support and equity segments. Lead PA shall submit advice letter describing study/survey plans.	
Joint PAs' Similar Programs Advice Letter (Tier 2)	8/30/2024	NEW for 2024. Per D.23-06-055 OP 32, Joint PAs are to submit an advice letter to provide information on substantively similar programs, and steps to mitigate/minimize ratepayer risk of program overlap and duplication.	
2024 Q2 Claims	9/16/2024	Program expenditures and committed funds (YTD) PLUS Project level savings, measures, participant costs, incentives, etc., being claimed in Q2.	
Program Segmentation Justification	9/13/2024	NEW for 2024. Per D.23-06-055 OP 21, PAs are to submit a Program Segmentation Justification spreadsheet (Attachment A to decision) to CEDARS	

Report Type	Due Date	Content	Status
Semi-Annual Progress Update to CAEECC	TBD (aprox. 11/1/2024)	NEW for 2024. Per D.23-06-055 at 27, PAs are required to provide semiannual data-driven updates on EE portfolio progress at the CAEECC, including an update on progress, approximately 6 months after the Annual Report filing.	
2024 Q3 Claims	12/6/2024	Program expenditures and committed funds (YTD) PLUS Project level savings, measures, participant costs, incentives, etc., being claimed in Q3.	
2024 Q4 Claims	3/3/2025	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: Workforce, Education & Training Sector Activities Update

Contact: Cheryl Chesnut, SBCOG Program Manager, cchesnut@gosbcta.com, (909) 884-8276

Date: April 16, 2024

Recommended Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

Summary:

The purpose of this item will be to provide a program update of the I-REN Workforce Education & Training (WE&T) activities and accomplishments from year 2023 to current date. WE&T updates will include information about the Energy Fellows, job fairs, community engagement and partnership updates, and the presentation of the Energy Science Fair award winners.

Discussion:

I-REN is a partnership between the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG), the San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG), and the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG), collectively known as the (I-REN COG partners). Together the I-REN COG partners serve both Riverside and San Bernardino Counties in the implementation of energy efficiency programs and services to support the member agencies and the public. The I-REN COG partners joined together and submitted a business plan to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) 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. Work on I-REN began in earnest in fall 2022. I-REN initiatives are guided by the the Executive Committee, which is comprised of a board of elected officials from both Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

One of the I-REN resources is the WE&T Sector. The WE&T Sector initiatives provide important opportunities to build partnerships within the community to help advance and promote energy efficiency jobs for a trained energy workforce in both Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

I-REN Energy Fellows

The I-REN Energy Fellowship Program partnered with CivicSpark, an AmeriCorps Program, and has a goal to place up to 27 Fellows within public agencies in the Inland Empire. Fellows are college or university students with at least an associate's degree who have submitted an application, are interviewed, and ultimately selected by interested member agencies. Fellows are placed with a member agency for 11 months to provide energy efficiency project support on all things I-REN, at no cost to the

member agency.

The Fellows Program launched in 2023, and there was a total of 11 Fellows deployed throughout all three local I-REN COG partner member agencies. One recent highlight of the Fellows Program included a March 2024 trip to the ESRI Campus in Redlands where the Fellows learned about data visualization and geographic information systems (GIS) as it applies to energy efficiency.

I-REN will be encouraging and sponsoring Fellows to attend the 15th Annual California Climate and Energy Collaborative (CCEC) Forum in June 2024 in Palm Springs, California. The CCEC Forum brings together several hundred local government staff, elected officials, and community organizations, to collaborate and learn from each other as they work to advance fair and equitable climate change and energy practices.

The WE&T team is currently exploring options to expand additional energy-related learning opportunities and resources for Fellows.

Job Fair

WE&T staff attended 25 job fairs from September 2023 through March 2024. The team collected more than 150 job seeker slips and made more than 40 potential interested workforce partner contacts. I-REN will notify candidates who complete the job seeker slip through email updates once the Energy Fellowship application period is open.

Community Engagement and Partnership Updates

Through community engagement and partnership, staff will collaborate with community and training providers to create a robust local network of training programs to increase capacity and knowledge related to the energy efficiency industry. I-REN and these offerings and partnerships raise the value of energy efficiency training and career paths within high schools, community colleges, and universities, encouraging more individuals to enter an energy efficiency job or related industry.

Notable Outreach Events

- September 2023 Foresight Retreat with Youth Action Project: The purpose of this event was to address workforce equity issues in the Inland Empire region. This event played a unique role in I-REN's opportunity to provide outreach and network with the local business and community leaders.
- December 2023 Inland Empire Desert Regional Consortium (IEDRC) presentation: Staff led a breakout session presentation to discuss the WE&T Sector program and the current strategies to connect educational providers and develop a market assessment to determine effective training methodologies for green job pathways. This event played a role in I-REN's opportunities to connect with local educational providers in K-12 and the community college leaders.
- March 20, 2024, Energy & Infrastructure Workforce Showcase: Staff, in partnership with the IEDRC, hosted an event with over 130 attendees that was a one-stop energy workforce system that brought together Inland Empire community colleges, local agency staff, and workforce organizations who focused on the issues, barriers, and resources to help connect, identify, and

have conversations to further develop the local workforce training initiatives.

Partnerships

In 2023, the I-REN team entered into partnerships with the following organizations:

- Science and Technology Education Partnership Conference (STEP Con): STEP Con was established to bridge the skills gap between local K-12 students and high technology industry needs. On March 7, 2024, I-REN received the exemplary step sponsorship award from the STEP organization.
- Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition (LGSEC): LGSEC is a statewide membership network representing local government interests related to EE, clean energy, and climate resilience to state regulatory agencies.
- Inland Empire Desert Regional Consortium (IEDRC): The IEDRC is a collective of workforce education and training providers led by the community colleges in both Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

In 2023, the I-REN team engaged with over 20 local community partners to discuss and collaborate with joint energy efficiency initiatives.

I-REN Energy Science Fair Award Winners

I-REN participated in judging efforts and sponsorship of the I-REN Energy Science Fair awards at the San Bernardino, Inyo, and Mono Counties Science and Engineering Fair (SIMSEF), which is an annual competition of science projects from students who attend the schools in each county. In the elementary division there were four projects in the energy category, in the junior division there were four projects in the energy sustainable materials and design category, and in the senior division there were three projects in the energy sustainable materials and design category.

On March 14, 2024, I-REN staff presented the I-REN Energy Science Fair community award. I-REN received an appreciation award in recognition of the support for the Fair.

The following students received the I-REN Energy Science Fair Award and are scheduled to attend the April I-REN Executive Committee meeting to be acknowledged and presented with their scholarship check award:

- Elementary Division: Layla Alauddin, for her project: Which Energy is Most Efficient for Cars?
- Junior Division: Andre Mejia, for his project: Can Electronics Use Plants as A Conduit?
- Senior Division: Michael Stodelle and Lucas Torres for their project: Sand Battery

The Elementary Division winner won a gold medal in the district award category. The Junior Division winner won a silver medal in the district award category. The Senior Division winners won a gold medal in the district award category and will be advancing to the CSEF at the state level. Moreover, the senior division winners were promoted as finalists to the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) which is a program of Society for Science. ISEF is the world's largest international pre-college competition. Each year, approximately 1,800 high school students from more than 75 countries, regions,

and territories are awarded the opportunity to showcase their independent research.

Prior Action(s):

None.

Financial Summary:

Activities related to the Workforce Education & Training Sector are included under the I-REN Budget in Fund 180, under the Workforce Education & Training subprogram.

Attachment(s):

None.



Inland Regional Energy Network

I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: I-REN 2023 Annual Report
Contact: Benjamin Druyon, WRCOG Program Manager, bdruyon@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6727
Date: April 16, 2024

Recommended Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

Summary:

Each year in the spring, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) requires each energy efficiency (EE) portfolio administrator (PA) to submit an Annual Report describing its achievements in the preceding year and detailing its plans for the year ahead. I-REN submitted its first Annual Report in Spring 2023, recounting its activities in 2022 as a new REN, and laying out goals for the 2023 calendar year. Now I-REN submits its second Annual Report for 2023, affirming how the goals set in its 2022 Annual Report have been achieved and looking ahead to further achievements in 2024.

Discussion:

Background

The CPUC requires all EE PAs, including RENs, to provide an Annual Report each spring. REN Annual Reports are typically due April 15th, and investor-owned utility Annual Reports are due May 1st. The annual report is both retrospective and prospective, describing a PA's achievements in the previous year as well as their plans for the upcoming year.

In the spring of 2022, I-REN was not required to submit an Annual Report for 2021 as it was approved very late in the previous year (November). In April 2023, I-REN submitted its first Annual Report to the CPUC regarding calendar year 2022. The report centered on the new REN's organizational efforts to build a solid foundation for program launch activities that would follow in 2023.

What I-REN promised in the 2022 Annual Report: In the 2022 Annual Report (submitted in April 2023), I-REN discussed its achievements in its first full year of operation, including establishing a strong foundation for its administrative and organizational functions to support sector and program activities for its EE portfolio. I-REN also laid out its plans for further growth in year 2023. Some of the goals the established for 2023 included:

- Build capacity for all I-REN programs
- Continue development of 5-year Organizational Strategic Plan
- Develop the Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) software tool

- Establish a Memorandum of Understanding between COG partners and a governance structure
- Establish a website to validate I-REN's presence and be the central location for all of I-REN's information and offerings
- Coordinate with local building departments, state agencies, and other PAs to develop a calendar of beneficial instructional training workshops
- Hold orientation workshops for member agencies
- Launch I-REN Codes & Standards (C&S) programs, market assessment activities, and training opportunities
- Establish a calendar of C&S training workshops
- Begin designing a Fellowship program for the WE&T sector
- Continue collaboration with workforce organizations and initiatives in the region
- Start collecting data for I-REN's unique value metrics to report to CPUC

As described below, I-REN reached these goals and had many additional achievements in 2023.

Present Situation

April 2024, I-REN submits its 2023 Annual Report: After establishing a solid foundation for portfolio administration and governance in 2022, I-REN moved swiftly in 2023 to approve contracts, onboard consultants, and begin program development and outreach activities in earnest.

Stakeholder engagement, which played a vital role in shaping I-REN's business plan, continued to be a major focus of 2023 activities. I-REN hosted orientations across its expansive territory to introduce the REN and gain insights from local and regional agency staff. Feedback from stakeholders informed I-REN's Organizational Strategic Planning process. Public and private sector building professionals provided survey responses with their needs and priorities for I-REN program designs. I-REN program teams attended and presented at events in partnership with a wide range of organizations to strengthen existing relationships and foster new connections in the region.

Alongside stakeholder outreach efforts, crucial elements of I-REN's program portfolio were activated to provide quick benefits to the region. I-REN's Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) was launched, and the public sector program team onboarded 28 agencies to begin receiving services. I-REN hosted its first C&S training in June 2023 and successfully delivered 12 trainings by the end of 2023. Under the WE&T Sector, 11 I-REN jurisdictions received I-REN Energy Fellows at their agencies to support capacity for EE and resiliency projects.

With the launch of program activities in 2023, I-REN also heightened its focus on data collection and program performance tracking. Findings from past evaluations and REN best practices figured prominently in this process. In early 2023, I-REN undertook a process to define its unique value metrics (UVMs) in alignment with its strategic framework. Program teams selected key performance indicators and developed methodologies for tracking program data. I-REN participated in an Evaluability Assessment as part of the CPUC's evaluation of RENs, receiving high marks from evaluators for its UVMs and preparedness to successfully track program data. In late 2023, I-REN joined the other PAs and stakeholders in beginning to examine and clarify segment indicators and common metrics.

Looking ahead to 2024, I-REN will continue to build on these early achievements and refine program offerings based on stakeholder engagement, to ensure that equity and market support remain at the heart of I-REN operations as its reach and impact expands.

Key Achievements in 2023 and Plans for 2024

I-REN Organizational Strategic Plan: In 2023, I-REN developed a five-year Organizational Strategic Plan to ensure effective use of CPUC funding, identify clear priorities, and align activities across member agencies. The I-REN Strategic Plan will be used by I-REN's staff and Executive Committee and will serve as a public-facing document to share the direction and focus of I-REN with cities, tribes, and other partners in the region.

The I-REN Organizational Strategic Plan was approved by the I-REN Executive Committee in January 2024.

Orientations, Website, and Branding: I-REN staff completed orientations throughout Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. More than 133 public agency staff members participated from 41 jurisdictions. In addition, there has been participation from 16 other agencies including the CPUC, chambers of commerce, community college districts, K-12 unified school districts, and water districts.

In 2023, I-REN marketing efforts were dedicated to building a solid foundation. I-REN's marketing team successfully crafted an I-REN brand direction and identity, including key assets that are specifically designed to enhance I-REN's visibility.

I-REN marketing assets represent the essence of the I-REN brand and ensure consistency and professionalism in all communications.

Public Sector: As I-REN ramped up in 2023, Public Sector programs focused on introducing member agencies to their services. I-REN conducted orientations throughout the region and individual onboarding meetings with public agencies. I-REN began strategic energy planning efforts, conducted facility audits, and helped to identify new energy projects and benchmark energy performance at public sector facilities.

The programs also focused on creating tools, templates, and other program elements, including designing an incentive structure based on member agency feedback and developing an Energy Resilience Roadmap to help agencies plan for their energy future. In 2024, the programs will expand their reach by onboarding new member agencies and expanding on energy planning and project development efforts that started in 2023. The Public Sector team also plans to begin providing distributed energy resource (DER) audits to identify resilience opportunities in 2024.

Table 1: Public Sector 2023 Achievements and 2024 Plans

Program	2023 Achievements	2024 Plans
Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning Program	- 28 onboarding meetings with public agencies - 25 facilities benchmarked - 2 site visits performed - 2 audits in progress - 37 utility data requests initiated - 4 BUC portfolios created	- Engage all member agencies in the region - Deliver first Initial Measure List with EE opportunities - 11 agencies to receive Energy Resilience Roadmap reports - Begin DER audits

Public Buildings Normalized Metered Energy Consumption (NMEC) Program – Cash for Kilowatts	- Gathered member agency feedback - Integrated feedback in program design - Developed tiered incentive structure to encourage projects at critical emergency operation and cooling centers	- Project development and incentives - Build robust project pipeline - Obtain utility data and track with BUC tool - Use BUC tool to provide reports and supporting data for evaluation
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Codes & Standards: In 2023, efforts focused on familiarizing the I-REN brand, fostering relationships, garnering interest in developed offerings, and developing a base audience to continue reengaging as C&S activities grow. Broadly, strategies included leveraging I-REN's connections with public and private stakeholders, distributing materials and messaging to partner entities and permit counters, and developing a website landing page as a one-stop shop for C&S resources.

I-REN C&S programs delivered trainings, awarded continuing education unit certificates, performed outreach to agencies and building professionals, and conducted a market assessment study. With initial data collected through 2023 activities, I-REN can better pinpoint prospects for involvement within census tracts characterized by elevated levels of low-income households, limited educational achievements, and significant unemployment rates. In the region, more than 140 census tracts offer potential for community engagement, and more than 400 contacts are strategically positioned to support I-REN outreach efforts to disadvantaged and hard-to-reach (HTR) areas.

Table 2: Codes & Standards Sector 2023 Achievements & 2024 Plans

Program	2023 Achievements	2024 Plans
C&S Training and Education Program	77 public and private sector building professionals surveyed 13 trainings held 64 net individual attendees 37 jurisdictions and 9 private sector building entities attended trainings 99% satisfaction rating from participants	12 trainings 2 C&S Forums Increase number of participants, jurisdictions and private entities served through trainings Offer a new training in Spanish
C&S Technical Support Program	Identified key areas for greater support needed by jurisdictions Supported Reach Code activities in Palm Springs Launch of “Ask an Energy Code Question” on I-REN website	Continue outreach to promote support services Follow up with survey respondents to provide targeted support Offer additional training around Senate Bill 379 compliance

Workforce Education & Training: In 2023, I-REN launched the I-REN Energy Fellowship in partnership with CivicWell's CivicSpark Program and placed 11 college graduates and job seekers at I-REN member agencies to support implementation of energy initiatives. Through this Program, the 11-month Energy Fellows will help implement EE and climate action plan activities within local jurisdictions. In many cases, the Energy Fellows are either supporting HTR or disadvantaged communities within the I-REN service territory and come from or reside in those communities themselves.

In 2023, I-REN explored bringing on a subject matter expert to conduct an energy-focused workforce assessment within the I-REN territory. This workforce assessment, to be completed in 2024, will identify energy workforce resources and their jurisdictional scopes that currently exist within Riverside and San Bernardino Counties as well as a gap analysis of the resources and provide recommendations on the design, development, and deployment of future I-REN WE&T programs.

Table 3: Workforce Education & Training Sector 2023 Achievements & 2024 Plans

Program	2023 Achievements	2024 Plans
WE&T Training & Education Program	Established partnerships with regional organizations: Science and Technology Education Partnership Conference Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium (IEDRC) Participated in regional workforce events Solicited proposals for workforce assessment provider	Conduct workforce assessment to guide I-REN staff on recommendations for future training programs related to energy job pathways
WE&T Workforce Development Program	11 I-REN Energy Fellows placed at member agencies 17 job fairs attended 200+ job seeker leads collected 50 potential partners identified 20 community partner meetings	Energy Fellow activities: planned networking events and learning resource opportunities March 2024 Energy & Infrastructure Showcase in partnership with IEDRC California Climate and Energy Collaborative Forum

There will be a presentation on the I-REN 2023 Annual Report.

Prior Action(s):

None.

Financial Summary:

All costs associated with regulatory monitoring and reporting are included in WRCOG's adopted Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Agency Budget under I-REN Program (Fund 180) in the Energy & Environmental Department.

Attachment(s):

[Attachment 1 - Draft I-REN 2023 Annual Report](#)



DRAFT

2023 | Annual Report



Your Local Champion for Equitable Access to Energy Resources

Our mission is to build a stronger clean energy economy and community throughout California's Inland Empire by connecting residents, businesses, and local governments to a wide range of energy efficiency resources. Together, we will empower local governments to practice energy efficiency; support workforce education and training in our region; and enable code compliance in the building industry.



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01.

Executive Summary

I-REN Overview

The Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) is a consortium of the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG), San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG) and Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) that serve the counties of Riverside and San Bernardino. These partners initially began collaborating in 2019 with a shared vision to establish locally administered, designed, and delivered energy efficiency (EE) programs.

Historically, the Inland Empire has faced challenges in receiving equitable opportunities to participate in EE and advanced energy. As dedicated representatives of local government, the I-REN consortium members bring established connections from their work serving this region to support filling gaps in existing EE services. The establishment of a Regional Energy Network (REN) in the Inland Empire region offers equitable opportunities for ratepayers in these communities to be engaged and active participants in meeting California's EE goals.

In February 2021, I-REN applied for REN portfolio administrator (PA) status to offer a portfolio of programs serving the Public Sector, Codes & Standards (C&S), and Workforce Education & Training (WE&T), with governance from WRCOG as the administrative lead agency as well as SBCOG and CVAG. I-REN was authorized by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC or Commission) in Decision (D.) 21-11-013 Approval of Inland Regional Energy Network Energy Efficiency Business Plan, which funded I-REN to offer EE services through program year 2027.



2023: Expanding I-REN's Reach and Impact

After establishing a solid foundation for portfolio administration and governance in 2022, I-REN moved swiftly in 2023 to approve contracts, onboard consultants, and begin program development and outreach activities in earnest.

Stakeholder engagement, which played a vital role in shaping I-REN's business plan, continued to be a major focus of 2023 activities. I-REN hosted orientations across its expansive territory to introduce the REN and gain insights from local and regional agency staff. Feedback from stakeholders informed I-REN's Organizational Strategic Planning process. Public and private sector building professionals provided survey responses with their needs and priorities for I-REN program designs. I-REN program teams attended and presented at events in partnership with a wide range of organizations, to strengthen existing relationships and foster new connections in the region.

Alongside stakeholder outreach efforts, crucial elements of I-REN's program portfolio were activated to provide quick benefits to the region. I-REN's Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) was launched, and the public sector program team onboarded 28 agencies to begin receiving services. I-REN hosted its first C&S training in June 2023 and successfully delivered 12 trainings by the end of 2023. Under the WE&T Sector, 11 I-REN jurisdictions received I-REN Energy Fellows at their agencies to support capacity for EE and resiliency projects.

With the launch of program activities in 2023, I-REN also heightened its focus on data collection and program performance tracking. Findings from past evaluations and REN best practices figured prominently in this process. In early 2023 I-REN undertook a process to define its unique value metrics (UVMs) in alignment with its strategic framework. Program teams selected key performance indicators and developed methodologies for tracking program data. Beginning in August 2023 I-REN participated in an Evaluability Assessment as part of the CPUC's evaluation of RENs, receiving high marks from evaluators for its UVMs and preparedness to successfully track program data. In late 2023 I-REN joined the other PAs and stakeholders in beginning to examine and clarify segment indicators and common metrics.

Looking ahead to 2024, I-REN will continue to build on these early achievements and refine program offerings based on stakeholder engagement, to ensure that equity and market support remain at the heart of I-REN operations as its reach and impact expands.

I-REN Accomplishments

From Business Plan Approval to Present

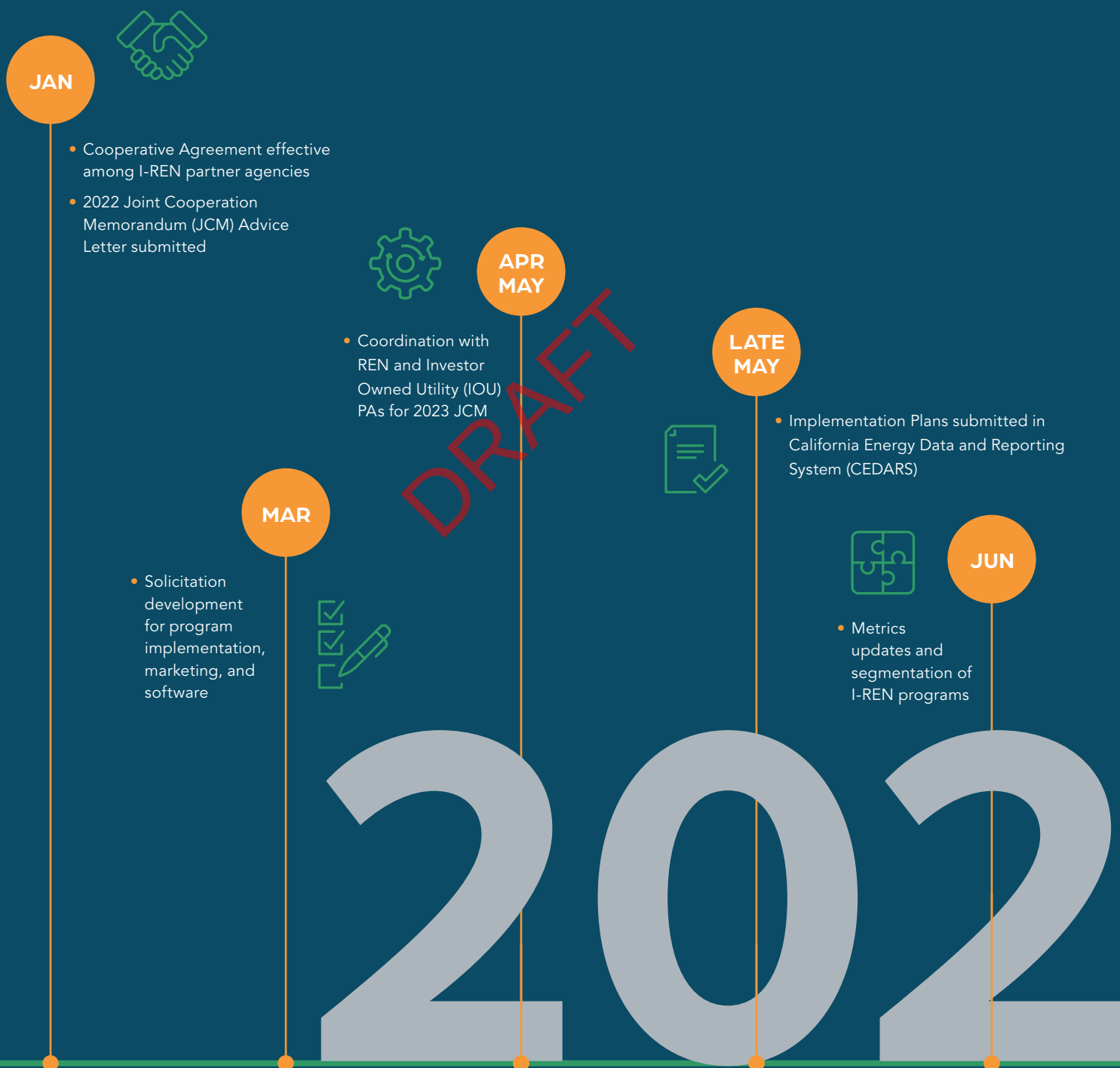


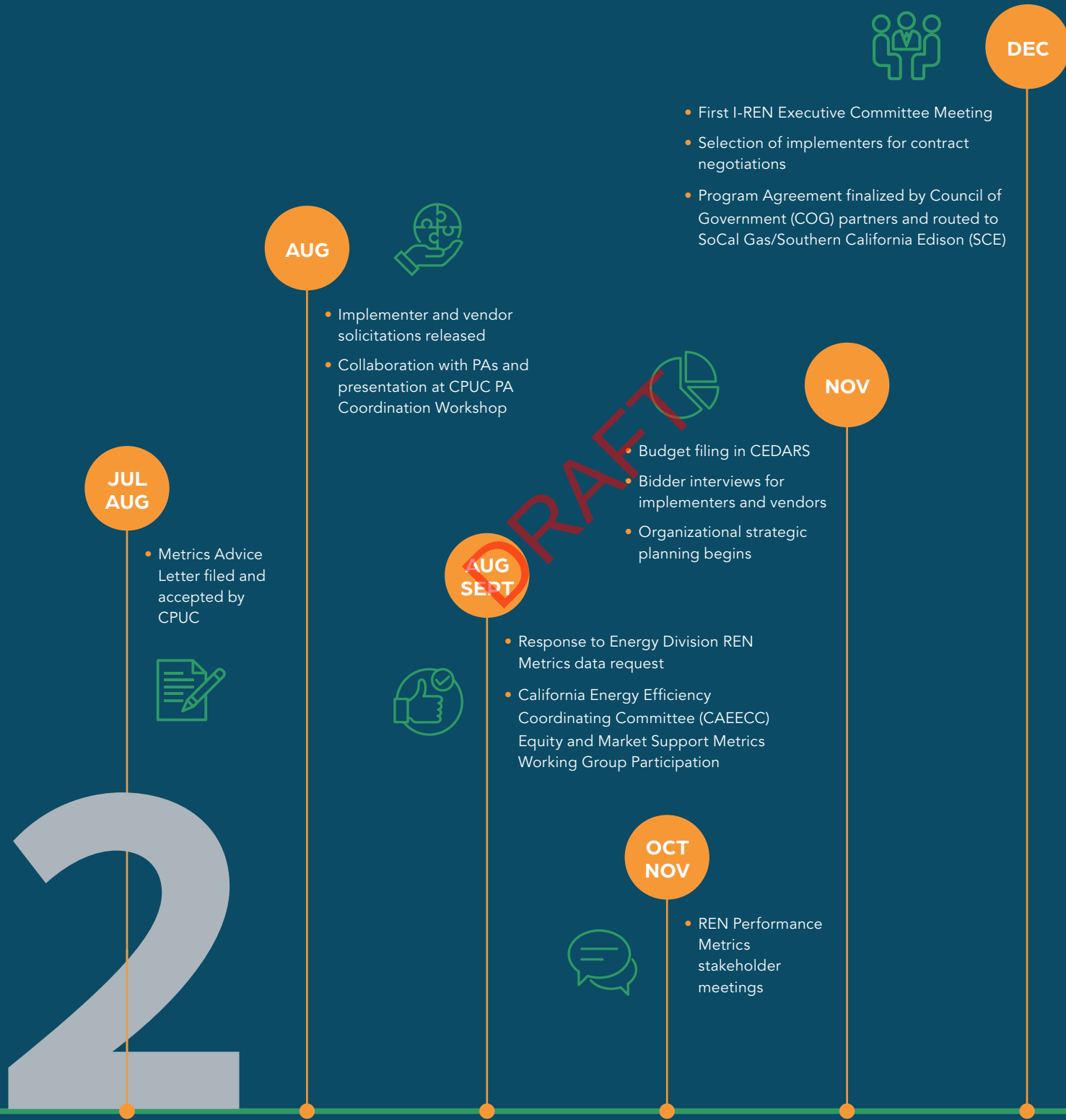
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- Business Plan approved in D.21-11-013
- Building I-REN contacts list for local governments, tribes, and other stakeholders
- Began working with SoCalGas on Program Agreement
- Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and I-REN Governance and Operations Rules in development between I-REN partner agencies

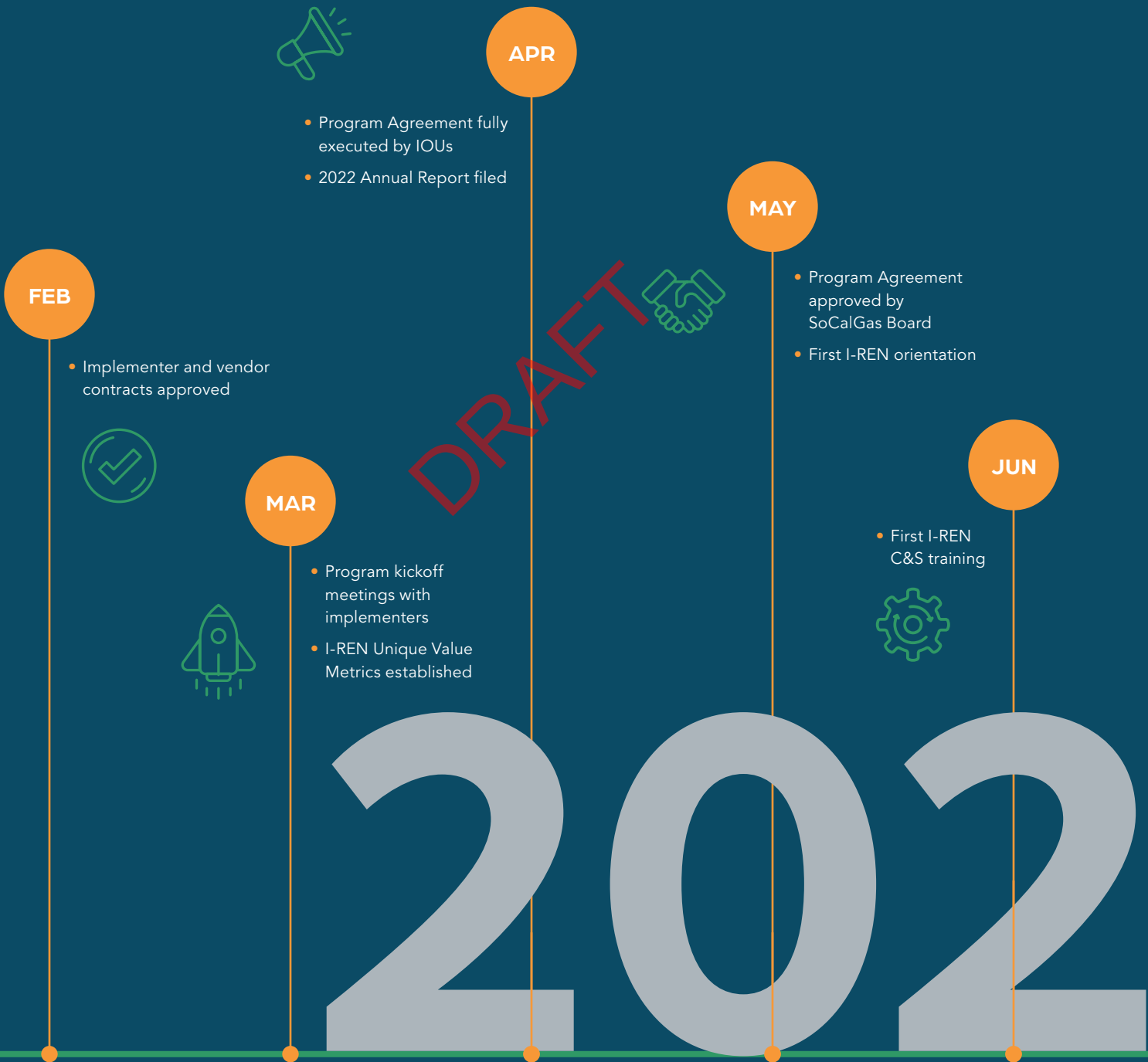
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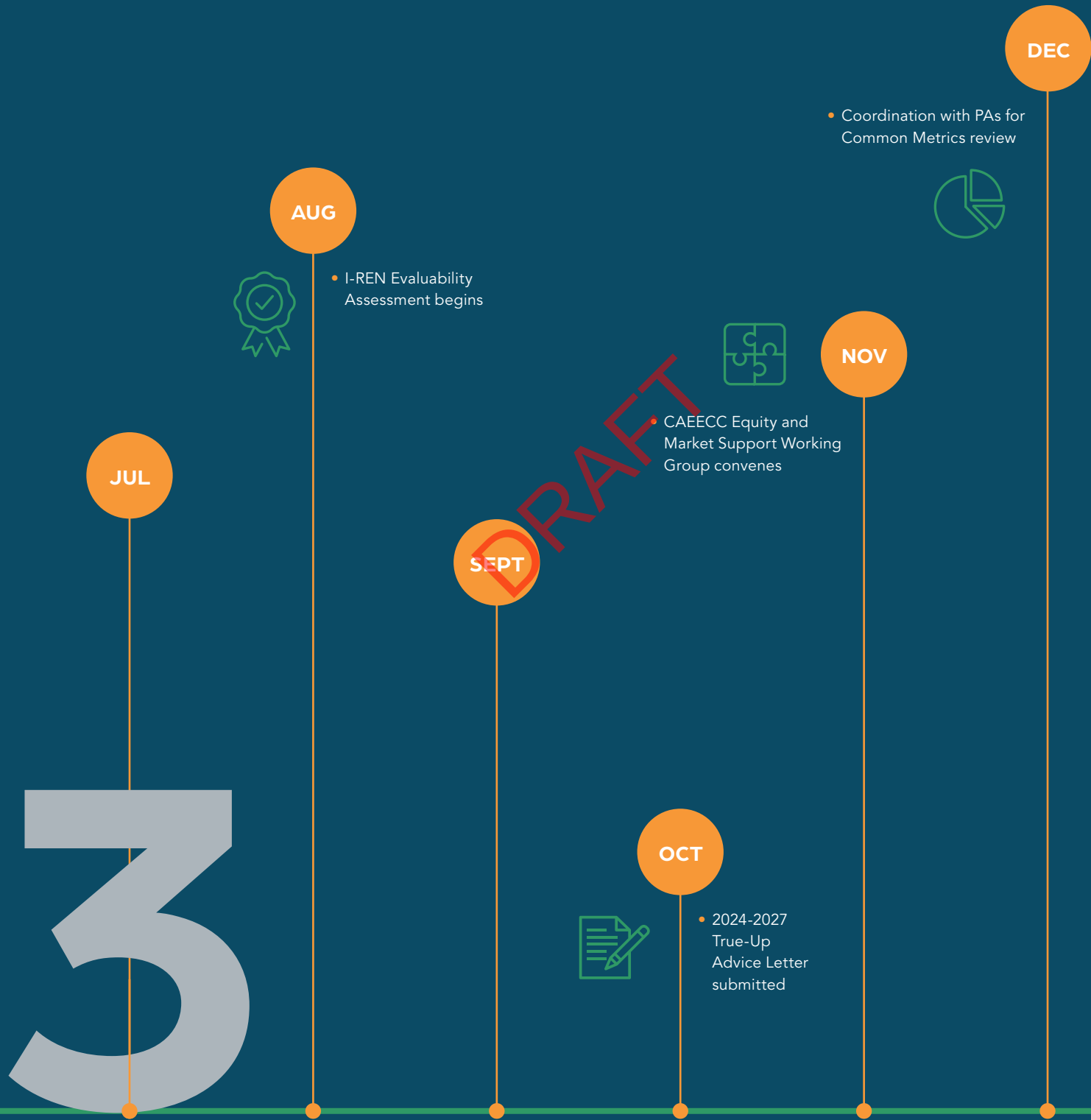
I-REN Accomplishments





I-REN Accomplishments





Organizational Strategic Planning

In 2023, I-REN developed a five-year Organizational Strategic Plan to proceed with the launch and roll-out of its programs, to ensure effective and efficient use of CPUC funding, identify clear priorities and actions, and align activities and engagement across REN member agencies. The I-REN Strategic Plan will be used by the internal I-REN team and I-REN Executive Committee and will also serve as a public-facing document to share the direction and focus of I-REN with cities, tribes, and other government partners in the local region.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

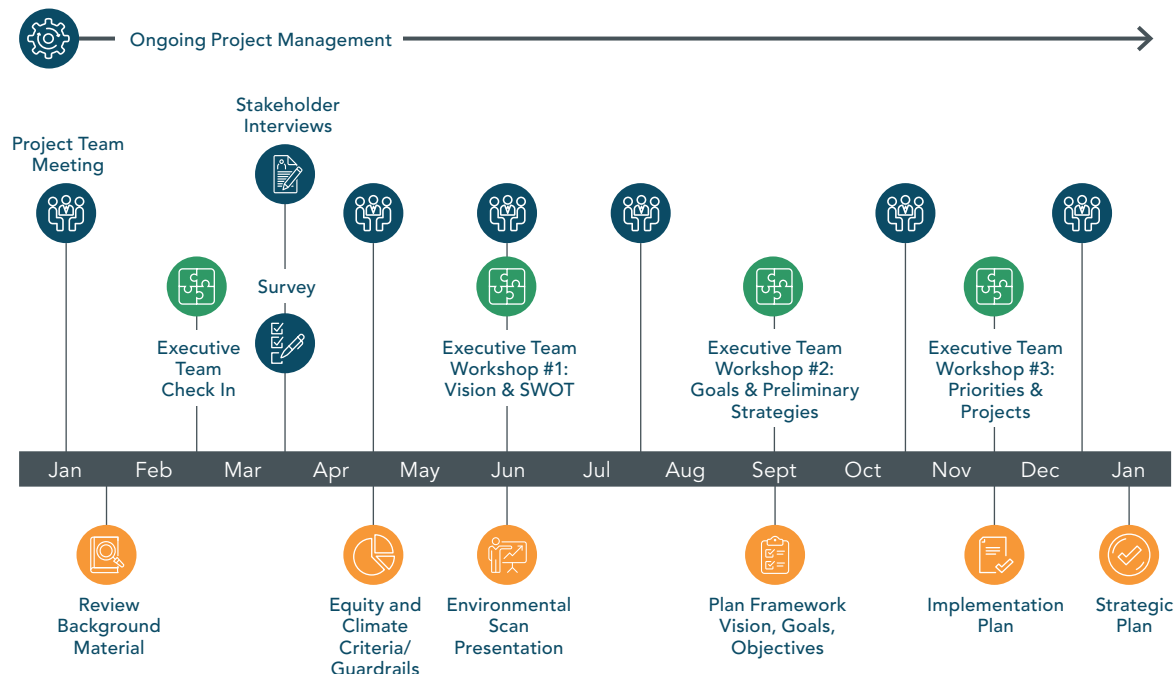
- **1** **COHESIVE REGION**
I-REN operates as a cohesive regional program and will make available and distribute benefits equally throughout the region with a fair allocation of resources and services to the COGs and member agencies.
- **2** **FIRST TWO YEARS**
I-REN will focus on the delivery of positive tangible impacts to the region through a successful roll-out and launch of programs.
- **3** **AWARENESS AND RELATIONSHIPS**
I-REN will actively engage with all member agencies, special districts, and partners and strive to establish them as active participants.
- **4** **INTERNAL ORGANIZATION**
I-REN I-REN will be an effective and efficient organization, characterized by agility, responsiveness, and accountability.

BASED ON THESE GOALS I-REN HAS IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIES AND KEY ACTIVITIES.

- **EQUAL BENEFITS REGION-WIDE**
Establish tools and approaches to offer equal benefits for COGs and member agencies.
- **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND LAUNCH**
Ensure successful launch of programs in the first two years to help build I-REN's momentum.
- **REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT**
Ensure that the diverse voices of the region are engaged and part of the development of the programs.
- **STRONG AND SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATION**
Create the foundation for an effective and responsive organization.

Below is the process that was used in the development of the I-REN Strategic Plan which included analysis of I-REN best practices and engagement with all the agencies, staff, and I-REN Executive Committee members.

I-REN Three to Five Year Organizational Strategic Plan Process



I-REN is unique in its deep relationship with its member agencies in the region.

These relationships are central to the process and the organization's path to success. To that end, the Strategic Planning effort has reached out to every member agency, as well as other partners, to share information and gather input. Through this outreach, I-REN has identified a clear mission guiding principles, and central goals to inform the development and operation of I-REN, priorities and key activities, targets and metrics for gauging and managing success, and has increased awareness for I-REN and its role in the region.

In conjunction with the Strategic Plan, I-REN's internal team worked with the consultant team to create an actionable Implementation Plan that identifies timelines for each action and details the roles and responsibilities of staff members in completing these actions. The Implementation Plan will stand as an internal guide for the coming years to keep I-REN on track and complete the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan. I-REN staff and the I-REN Executive Committee are dedicated to implementing this plan over the coming years and tapping the innovation and dynamic character of the region to become a well-established, effective, and impactful organization.

The Strategic Plan was officially approved by the I-REN Executive Committee in January of 2024.

Orientations

I-REN orientations served as comprehensive, introductory meetings on the programs and services available for the three (3) I-REN sectors: Public Sector, WE&T, C&S. The I-REN orientation meetings included presentations about the service offerings as well as a demonstration of the Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) platform. The orientations also served as interactive meetings to start discussions and develop an understanding for each I-REN member agency's needs.

I-REN Staff have hosted 16 orientations throughout Riverside and San Bernardino counties. More than 133 public agency staff members have participated from 41 jurisdictions. In addition, there has been participation from 16 other agencies including the CPUC, chamber of commerce, community college districts, K-12 unified school districts, and water districts.

I-REN Branding and Website

In 2023, I-REN marketing efforts were dedicated to building a solid foundation. I-REN's marketing team successfully crafted an I-REN brand direction and identity, including a messaging framework, foundational templates, a website, and social media structure. These assets were specifically designed to enhance I-REN's visibility through their website, meetings, outreach, and events, and are intended for collaborative use by stakeholders. The establishment of the I-REN brand involved creating PowerPoint template decks, E-mail signatures and invitations, Word documents, overview flyers, QR code driven staff identification, web copy, and high-quality visuals. In addition, the I-REN marketing team implemented a reporting and approval process to ensure the continued strength and coherence of the I-REN brand. These components not only represent the essence of the I-REN brand but also ensure consistency and professionalism in all communications.

Having successfully laid a robust foundation for the I-REN brand, the I-REN marketing team implemented the following comprehensive tactics and initiatives to elevate I-REN marketing efforts.



Your Local Champion for Equitable Access to Energy Resources

Our mission is to build a stronger clean energy economy and community throughout California's Inland Empire by connecting residents, businesses, and local governments to a wide range of energy efficiency resources. Together, we will empower local governments to practice energy efficiency; support workforce education and training in our region; and enable code compliance in the building industry.

Who We Are

We are a network of partners including the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, San Bernardino Council of Governments, and Western Riverside Council of Governments formed to serve the cities and communities of our region.

Our Programs

- Public Sector Program**
We build capacity and knowledge to enable local governments to effectively leverage energy efficiency services and to demonstrate best practices. We take a comprehensive approach in helping local and State agencies undertake energy efficiency projects—from designing performance specifications to project completion—at no additional cost.
- Workforce Education & Training Program**
We support various workforce and education programs to encourage and realize energy efficiency goals across sectors. We provide training, tools, and opportunities for diverse participants in Disadvantaged Communities to pursue careers and contract opportunities in energy efficiency. This includes deploying up to 27 fellows every year to support public sector agencies with their energy efficiency initiatives within municipal operations and through outreach and engagement within the communities.
- Codes & Standards Program**
We work closely with local building departments and the building industry to provide training and support to enable long-term streamlining of energy code compliance. We also assist local government agencies in better understanding and enforcing building codes.

Learn more at iren.gov.




We support local career opportunities in the clean energy economy.

Our mission is to build a stronger, more energy-efficient economy and community throughout California's Inland Empire by connecting residents, businesses, and local governments to a wide range of energy efficiency resources. A big part of that is bringing comprehensive, equitable, and targeted career training to people from all communities so they can pursue opportunities in energy efficiency.

Who We Are

We are a network of partners including the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, San Bernardino Council of Governments, and Western Riverside Council of Governments formed to serve the cities and communities within Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

Workforce Education & Training Program

Building a brighter energy future requires a highly motivated and skilled workforce throughout the communities we serve. That's why we support various workforce and education programs to realize energy efficiency goals across sectors.

Our comprehensive approach starts with outreach and engagement within our communities to provide no-cost training opportunities for careers in energy efficiency. We also support training providers with the latest information on energy efficiency trends and establish local partnerships, so job seekers have easy access to training tools and resources.

Finally, we foster connections between local companies and workforce development organizations to establish and maintain job pathways. This includes helping job seekers find employment and collaborating with employers to provide continuing education and promote employee retention.

In other words, we're helping people build better futures, for themselves, their communities, and the planet.

Learn more at iren.gov.



MESSAGING FRAMEWORK

The team crafted a pivotal messaging framework, recognizing its crucial role as a structured tool for key messages. This strategic approach ensured unified communication, reinforced I-REN brand identity, shaped foundational elements for essential marketing, and played a vital role in precisely defining distinct target markets.

Primary Narrative	Your Local Champion for Equitable Access to Energy Resources We prioritize bringing energy efficiency resources to the Inland Empire Region. I-REN increases local control and access to the savings and other benefits of energy efficiency in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. We champion communities to participate in the state's clean energy initiatives by empowering local governments to practice energy efficiency, enabling code compliance in the building industry, and supporting workforce education and training.		
Primary Message Components	PEOPLE-FOCUSED	FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE	ACTION-ORIENTED
	Community Empowerment Our programs uplift communities by providing opportunities to shape their energy future.	Energy Efficiency We deliver both energy efficiency and financial savings, while supporting the local economy.	Trusted Facilitator We provide expert resources to enable equitable access to energy solutions.
Support Points	- Deliver equitable access to workforce and job training resources in energy efficiency across a variety of sectors throughout Riverside and San Bernardino counties. - Empower communities through expertise and readily available resources, so they can make informed energy efficiency decisions for themselves. - Partner with 54 local governments, creating energy efficiency internships and charting a pathway to future employment.	- Provide nearly \$10M per year in energy efficiency programs. - Generate additional value by releasing trapped budget line items. - Work with local governments to leverage financial mechanisms to deliver energy efficiency projects in public buildings. - Provide project management resources for local government energy efficiency projects. - Train today's workforce and student candidates while building the local workforce for the new energy efficiency sector and a pathway to better salaried careers.	- Work with local building departments and industry stakeholders to enable long-term development of energy code compliance. - Provide subject matter experts who can advise on a variety of energy and resource issues. - Network local governments with their key contacts, employee candidates, and policy advisers. - Provide expert advice on preparing for future state mandates and understanding code requirements.

BRAND GUIDELINES

Developing brand guidelines was crucial as it established a comprehensive framework, providing clear and consistent guidelines for visual and messaging elements. This ensured brand cohesion, recognition, and a unified brand experience across diverse channels.



Primary Colors

01 Verde

02 Poppy

Secondary Colors

03 Navy blue

04 Deep gray

05 White

WEBSITE LAYOUT AND CONTENT

The I-REN website (iren.gov) was crafted in collaboration with CivicPlus, incorporating essential elements like written content, icons, color schemes, and photographic direction. This approach ensured that the I-REN online presence stayed current, visually appealing, and consistent, highlighting the significance of a well-maintained website in reinforcing the I-REN brand identity and engaging the audience effectively.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Throughout 2023, the marketing team established the foundation for I-REN's presence on social media by creating the brand's official social media profiles with new accounts and social media handles. Additionally, the marketing team crafted comprehensive social media guidelines that will serve as the blueprint for all future I-REN Wide and implementor posts.

Looking ahead, the I-REN marketing team's commitment is to fortify and expand upon this solid foundation and build the profile and engagement of the I-REN brand and presence.





Public Sector Summary

I-REN's public sector programs are here to help public agencies complete EE projects.

From project identification to completion, I-REN offers a comprehensive suite of no-cost services. I-REN helps identify energy-saving measures and then works alongside agency staff to fund and install them.

As I-REN ramped up in 2023, the public sector programs focused on introducing member public agencies to their services. I-REN conducted orientations throughout the region and 28 individual onboarding meetings with public agencies. I-REN began strategic energy planning efforts and helped to identify new energy projects. They also helped member agencies to benchmark energy performance for 25 facilities and conducted two facility energy audits.

The programs also focused on creating tools, templates, and other program elements, including designing an incentive structure based on member agency feedback and developing an Energy Resilience Roadmap to help agencies plan for their near, mid, and long-term energy future. In 2024, the programs will focus on expanding their reach by onboarding new member agencies and expanding on agencies' energy planning and project development efforts that were started in 2023.



Codes & Standards Summary

C&S offerings consist of non-resource programs to establish and implement training and education for Building Department staff and the building industry within the I-REN territory to support, understand, and effectively implement EE codes and standards.

The target audience includes:

- **PUBLIC SECTOR:** building inspectors, chief building officials, permit technicians, plans examiners, planners, and sustainability directors or managers
- **PRIVATE SECTOR:** architects, contractors, designers, developers, energy consultants, or other non-jurisdictional building professionals

I-REN's locally focused interventions equip Building Department staff to identify potential issues, provide guidance to permit applicants, and streamline the permitting process. With increased knowledge and capacity, local Building Department staff will have the tools and additional resources to support their energy code enforcement and compliance, as well as cultivate the associated energy savings from efficient building practices. The C&S offerings include two core programs: the **Training & Education Program** which provides training, and the **Technical Support Program** which provides technical assistance tools and resources.

In 2023, efforts focused on familiarizing the I-REN brand, fostering relationships, garnering interest in developed offerings, and developing a base audience to continue reengaging as C&S activities grow. Broadly, strategies included:

- **LEVERAGING** I-REN's extensive network of connections with public and private stakeholders
- **DISTRIBUTING** materials and messaging to partner entities and permit counters
- **DEVELOPING** a website landing page as a one-stop shop for C&S resources

Specific achievements, outcomes, and opportunities are detailed under "2023 Achievements and 2024 Plans."

Enforcing energy codes has traditionally posed challenges for local jurisdictions, especially smaller communities lacking sufficient resources. Within I-REN's service territory, numerous Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs) encounter significant hurdles in upholding energy codes and standards due to limited resources and capacity.

With initial data collected through 2023 activities, I-REN can better pinpoint prospects for involvement within census tracts characterized by elevated levels of low-income households, limited educational achievements, and significant unemployment rates.

In Riverside and San Bernardino counties, there are a combined count of more than 140 census tracts offering potential for community engagement, along with more than 400 contacts strategically positioned to support I-REN's outreach efforts aimed at reaching building industry professionals within disadvantaged and hard-to-reach areas (HTR).

140+

Census tracts offering potential for
community engagement

400+

Contracts strategically positioned to
support I-REN's outreach efforts



Workforce Education & Training Summary

I-REN's WE&T sector offerings consist of non-resource programs with the goal to ensure there is a trained workforce to support and realize EE savings goals across sectors.

The WE&T sector is split into two core services: **Training & Education Program** that will assess the marketplace and enhance and deploy training content tailored to the unique I-REN territory. Then there is the **Workforce Development Program** that will highlight EE, green jobs, and bridge the gap connecting job seekers with employers.

In 2023, I-REN launched the I-REN Energy Fellowship.

Placing 11 college graduates and job seekers, with a minimum of an associate degree, at I-REN member agencies to support implementation of important energy initiatives. I-REN is partnering with CivicWell's CivicSpark program to deliver the I-REN Energy Fellowship. Through this program, the 11-month Energy Fellows will support in filling gaps and providing much needed capacity to implement EE and climate action plan activities within their member agency's jurisdiction and the I-REN territory. I-REN remains committed to identifying the most effective and accessible ways to increase the number of skilled EE workers; especially those within underserved, HTR, tribal, and disadvantaged communities (DACs). In many cases, the I-REN Energy Fellows are either supporting the HTR or DAC communities within I-REN service territory or come from and/or reside in those communities.

In 2023, I-REN explored bringing on a subject matter expert to conduct an energy-focused workforce assessment within the I-REN territory. This workforce assessment will identify the energy workforce resources and their jurisdictional scopes that currently exist within Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Given the large geographic area of the area, this assessment will also include a gap analysis of the resources and provide recommendations on the design, development, and deployment of future I-REN WE&T programs. This assessment will be completed in 2024.





Social Media Post



2023 Fellows



02.

2023 Achievements & 2024 Plans

Introduction

2023 saw the launch of key I-REN program elements to begin delivering value to Inland Empire communities, building on the foundation established in 2022.

I-REN's EE program portfolio consists of six programs in three sectors: public sector, C&S, and WE&T. The primary purpose of I-REN's public sector programs is equity—to improve access to EE for HTR, underserved, and DACs in advancement of the Commission's Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) Action Plan¹ and to provide corollary benefits such as increased comfort and safety, improved indoor air quality, and more affordable utility bills, consistent with Goals 1, 2, and 5 in the ESJ Action Plan. One of I-REN's equity segment programs is a resource program that will deliver savings via projects in public sector facilities.

The primary purpose of I-REN's WE&T is to provide market support to supporting the long-term success of the EE market by educating customers, training contractors, and building partnerships. C&S programs are considered separately from other segments, as directed in D.21-05-031.² I-REN's C&S programs are focused around training, outreach, and technical assistance to support private and public sector building professionals in understanding and complying with building energy codes.

I-REN's programs and 2023 activities are detailed in the pages that follow, along with a look ahead to I-REN opportunities in 2024 and beyond.

¹ <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/esjactionplan/>

² D.21-05-031 at 16.

I-REN Programs



Public Sector

Technical Assistance
and Strategic Energy
Planning Program

Normalized Metered
Energy Consumption
Program

Codes & Standards

Training and
Education Program

Technical
Support



Workforce Education & Training

Training and
Education Program

Workforce
Development



Public Sector

I-REN's public sector programs deliver customized technical assistance and provide monetary incentives for energy projects at publicly-owned facilities in the I-REN service territory.

Through these programs, I-REN aims to increase EE and resiliency within the region. Public sector services include energy use evaluation, facility benchmarking, and targeted project development in line with regional climate and/or energy action plans. Eligible public agencies include:

- Cities and Townships
- Counties
- Tribes
- K-12 school districts
- Special districts
- Water and wastewater agencies/districts
- Higher education institutions
- Other public agencies

In 2023, I-REN launched two public sector programs: the **Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning Program (TA Program)** and the **Public Buildings Normalized Metered Energy Consumption Program (NMEC Program)**. I-REN agencies can access offerings from both programs simultaneously to maximize energy and resilience outcomes while minimizing their out-of-pocket project costs.

I-REN is focused on increased performance within existing buildings. The Inland Empire is one of the hottest regions within California and a significant portion of the population is considered underserved per the CPUC.³ Existing public spaces, such as community centers and libraries,

27,263

Square miles

11%

of California's
population

3

COGs

2

Counties

52

Cities

13

Tribal nations

215

Special districts

³ Pub. Util. Code Section 1601(e)

commonly provide refuge for vulnerable community members facing hardship due to extreme climate or economic impacts. By supporting resilience and clean energy, I-REN agencies can: (1) ensure traditionally underserved residents have safe and comfortable spaces, (2) use their experiences with I-REN to empower other local jurisdictions to take action and positively influence current and future programs, and (3) emerge as EE leaders regionally and at the state level.

I-REN-PUBL-001: Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

I-REN's TA Program offers energy planning and project development support throughout the lifecycle of EE projects. The program reduces the confusion and administrative burden of public sector EE projects, such as funding/financing and reporting requirements, by delivering no-cost services tailored to each agency's unique goals and needs.

This program offers several energy data collection and analysis services to equip agencies to make informed decisions about their energy future. For example, it offers facility benchmarking in I-REN's Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) software and strategic energy and resilience planning through customized Energy Resilience Roadmaps.

Participating agencies receive a high level of technical and financial assistance to complete EE projects. After determining an agency's energy and resilience goals, I-REN helps agencies identify EE projects and secure funding and financing to implement them. The program then guides agencies through applicable energy programs (including I-REN offerings and those of other PAs), helping build capacity and easing the administrative burden of participating in energy programs. I-REN helps agencies to use whatever financing mechanisms are available to them for their energy upgrade projects, including through other PAs and non-ratepayer funded offerings (e.g., IOU financing, third-party program incentives, grants).

The TA Program has the following objectives:

- **PROVIDE** local governments with support and resources to develop and implement their strategic energy plans and EE projects.
- **HELP** local governments to afford and finance a range of EE upgrades.
- **ESTABLISH** one-on-one support for local governments' EE projects.

- **DEVELOP** or enhance strategic energy plans to connect local government goals related to climate, resilience, and economic development to EE programs and adoption.
- **CREATE** resources for the public sector to tap into EE and distributed energy resources programs offered by other providers, including IOUs.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2023

In 2023, the public sector programs focused on creating tools and templates for effective service delivery, integrating member agency feedback collected through the I-REN orientation meetings, and onboarding agencies looking for immediate support. I-REN incorporated agency feedback into all program policies and other elements of their program designs to ensure they serve I-REN member agencies' needs equitably. I-REN also began coordinating with other PAs to ensure effective coordination of program services and to maximize support for member agencies. Collecting stakeholder feedback and ramping up the program required significant effort, but it laid the groundwork for full program services in 2024.

The I-REN team created numerous outreach and engagement resources to clearly articulate I-REN program services to public agencies. For example, the high-level overview of public sector programs and services breaks down the project lifecycle into easy-to-digest phases.

External-Facing Slide Providing an Overview of Public Sector EE Support Services

INLAND REGIONAL ENERGY NETWORK



Energy Efficiency Project Support for Public Agencies

The Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) is committed to helping public agencies identify and complete energy efficiency upgrades. We'll support you through each phase of your project.

1. Project Identification Your I-REN team will: • Collect data from utilities, facilities or equipment • Develop portfolio-level deliverables to help you prioritize potential projects that meet your goals, such as energy savings or community resilience	2. Energy Audit and Funding/ Financing Application Your I-REN team will: • Visit your project site to identify opportunities for energy efficiency • Select viable energy efficiency measures and eligible funding and financing strategies • Help complete funding and financing applications	3. Project Approval and Procurement Your I-REN team will: • Help identify and align procurement methods and timelines with applicable program requirements • Provide technical specifications for procurement needs • Help develop materials for council agenda package (and attend council meetings as needed)	4. Construction Your I-REN team will: • Review construction schedule, pre-construction submittals, and scope changes to ensure continued incentive/financing eligibility • Participate in construction kick-off or recurring meetings (as needed)	5. Project Closeout Your I-REN team will: • Help collect project closeout records • Prepare and submit final paperwork for funding and financing application(s) • Confirm you receive your funding or financing distribution • Broadcast your success to the community (case study, check presentation, video, social media, etc.)
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The Coachella Valley Association of Governments and San Bernardino Council of Governments have partnered with the Western Riverside Council of Governments to develop I-REN to serve the cities and communities of our region.






ONBOARDING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

I-REN’s onboarding experts led coordination efforts with COG leadership, representing the I-REN Project Team together. Twenty-eight agencies completed onboarding in 2023 and numerous are now developing projects. I-REN’s onboarding team expertly explain program benefits, build relationships, and identify agencies’ program service needs.

Public Sector Program Services Ramp Up



I-REN completed its first two site visits in October of 2023 for the City of Redlands and San Bernardino County Transit Authority/SBCOG. Each agency will receive high-level overviews of identified measures in early 2024 and will subsequently complete energy projects for their selected EE measures.

City of Redlands Joslyn Senior Center Audit

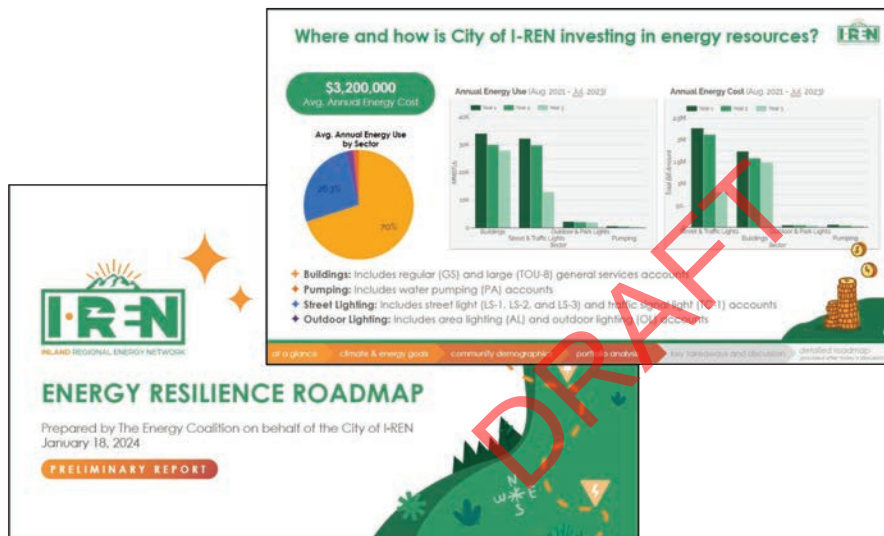


STRATEGIC ENERGY PLANNING

Energy Resilience Roadmap

I-REN has developed an innovative report, the Energy Resilience Roadmap, to help agencies improve their EE and climate resilience.

Sample Energy Resilience Roadmap Highlight



2023 Energy Resilience Roadmap Development

11

Roadmaps in Queue

2

Roadmaps Drafted

The preliminary report examines an agency's climate plans, energy goals, community vulnerabilities, and energy performance across its portfolio. It identifies energy-intensive buildings and pumping sites for potential resilience upgrades. I-REN collaborates with the agency to understand priorities and critical facility needs. Then, a full roadmap offers tailored recommendations for facilities, suggesting EE improvements and technologies like solar, battery storage, and electric vehicle infrastructure. This two-phased approach allows I-REN to fully customize each agency's report to their unique energy consumption patterns and community needs.

The Energy Resilience Roadmap concludes with practical next steps to seamlessly incorporate recommendations into current and future energy plans, ensuring agencies are well-prepared to enhance overall energy resilience. The Energy Resilience Roadmap deliverable template was approved in late 2023. Eleven agencies are queued up to receive a roadmap in 2024, with two drafts already completed and under review.

Energy Benchmarking

I-REN helps agencies to add their building portfolio to ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager® (ESPM), an online management tool created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that allows building owners and facility managers to track and assess energy use. I-REN ESPM benchmarking services include creating new portfolios or updating existing portfolios with facility characteristics like square footage and year built, as well as automating the upload of monthly energy consumption from on-site utility meters. I-REN helps agencies determine if their facilities require California Assembly Bill (AB) 802 compliance, and guides agencies that meet the requirements through the submittal process.

2023 Energy Benchmarking Facility Support

New ESPM Portfolio Development	9	Facilities in progress	
Existing ESPM Portfolio Refresh	4	Facilities in progress	25 Facilities completed
AB 802 Compliance Support			25 Facilities completed

Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) Software

Development of the BUC web-based tool officially kicked off in March 2023. The tool offers analytics, modeling, and measurement and verification performance features for public agency benchmarking and project development. Prior to developing this software solution, I-REN conducted a discovery process over several meetings to fully review their EE portfolio, in particular the Public Sector programs and activities, and current information technology assets for EE program delivery (e.g., the website, reporting templates). After reviewing business requirements for the proposed solution, I-REN created functional specifications. The BUC beta version was available for I-REN member testing in April 2023, and functional specifications were approved in May 2023, when the BUC live production site was released. The I-REN team developed a user guide for BUC’s analytics modules to make the tool easier to use.

I-REN began introducing the BUC tool to local governments, special districts, and tribal communities during orientation meetings, which began in May 2023. Orientation attendees received a high-level overview of BUC’s features, including portfolio management configuration

and dashboard, billing history upload, benchmarking, utility bill analysis charts, and measure savings. I-REN worked with individual local governments to obtain building utility data, which was uploaded into the BUC platform within the agency's respective building portfolio.

2023 BUC Portfolio Development



OPPORTUNITIES IN 2024 AND BEYOND

In 2024, I-REN aims to engage all member agencies in the region and will continue orientation delivery and onboarding activities. I-REN also plans to expand benchmarking deliverables in 2024 by delivering Energy Resilience Roadmaps, benchmarking support through ESPM and BUC, and a video training series on ESPM benchmarking. As more agencies join I-REN and obtain their utility data, I-REN can identify opportunities and support full energy project delivery in 2024.

I-REN will help agencies secure external funding and financing, such as Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grants (EECBG) and deliver site visits and associated project development services. In 2024, the public sector aims to deliver its first Initial Measures Lists (IML), which outlines high-level EE measure opportunities at targeted facilities and guide agencies through the steps to ensure successful project implementation.

After the completion of all I-REN orientations, I-REN will collate feedback for potential updates to the BUC tool. To assist local governments with the adoption of the BUC tool, I-REN will create training videos for the tool's key features: BUC Dashboard, Analytics Charts, Analytics Report, and Opportunity Register. As more users interact and engage with the BUC tool, I-REN will continually evaluate how BUC should evolve to maximize its benefits to the local governments, special districts, and tribal communities it serves. For example, utilizing building analytics and measure opportunities presented in a report template can help agencies make informed decisions on EE project implementation.

I-REN will also continue to engage with other PAs and third-party programs to ensure effective coordination of program services and to maximize support for its member agencies. The TA program will focus on developing a communications strategy and social media plan for the remaining program years.

INTEGRATED DEMAND SIDE MANAGEMENT

D.23-06-055 allows PAs to set aside up to 2.5 percent or \$4 million of their EE budgets to provide an operational complement for integrated demand side management (IDSM) in program years 2024-2027. I-REN will utilize these funds to provide a distributed energy resources (DER) component to audits to identify resilience opportunities, such as renewable energy, battery storage, and microgrids, for agencies. I-REN will carve out resources to conduct 100 DER audits over the next four years, offering agencies technical assistance to further achieve their resilience and climate goals.

I-REN-PUBL-002: Public Buildings Normalized Metered Energy Consumption Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

I-REN's Public Buildings Normalized Metered Energy Consumption (NMEC) Program provides technical support such as eligibility screening and measurement and verification (M&V), and incentives for meter-based energy savings. The Program uses an NMEC approach to measure energy savings at the meter, incentivizing savings that have historically been excluded from EE programs or from technologies that are considered industry standard practice. The program places a special focus on whole building improvements to community-serving buildings by offering enhanced incentives for deep energy savings at critical facilities, cooling centers, and resilience centers.

The NMEC Program has the following objectives:

- **SUPPORT** comprehensive lighting and whole building projects to improve the comfort and safety of vulnerable populations. The program will focus on critical facilities and emergency or cooling centers.
- **DELIVER** deep energy savings to public agencies at high visibility locations, positioning local governments as EE leaders within their communities and helping to meet local and state EE and greenhouse gas reduction goals.
- **PROVIDE** technical expertise and training to facility personnel to maximize the persistence of energy and bill savings. The program will deliver savings reports to public agencies to monitor and communicate post-project energy usage.

Using an NMEC approach to calculate energy savings will protect agencies from a mismatch between forecasted and actual savings. Combined with technical assistance and reinforcement of operations and management best practices, public agencies will experience maximized savings for their communities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2023

In 2023, the NMEC program focused on designing a program reflective of I-REN member agency values. I-REN integrated member agency feedback collected through the orientations throughout the region into the program's incentive structure design. Based on member agency priorities, the NMEC Program will offer enhanced incentives for deep energy savings at critical facilities. The Program will use a tiered incentive structure based on the percentage of a facility's energy use that will be saved through the project—the higher percentage of energy saved, the higher the incentive rate. The Program will offer further incentive “kickers” for projects at critical emergency operation and cooling centers.

The NMEC program also focused on designing and developing tools and templates for effective program delivery.

OPPORTUNITIES IN 2024 AND BEYOND

With a successful design and launch phase in 2023, the NMEC Program will focus on developing projects and offering incentives in 2024. The program will build a robust pipeline of NMEC-eligible projects and approve the first I-REN NMEC project incentive application(s). I-REN will work with local governments to obtain monthly utility data after EE project implementation and will use the BUC tool to track realized energy savings from completed projects. Local governments will be able to view their building portfolio dashboard, identify projects that are not meeting energy savings projections, and adjust any EE upgrades accordingly. The I-REN Public Sector team will use BUC to provide reports and supporting data to the third-party evaluation, measurement, and verification (EM&V) contractor for the NMEC program. BUC will be the main resource for NMEC project and data tracking.

As the program ramps up, I-REN will identify opportunities to streamline and improve their support to I-REN agencies. With I-REN's support, agencies will be able to fund projects that will improve their facilities and increase energy and cost savings.



Codes & Standards

I-REN's service territory includes many AHJs that face significant challenges in enforcing energy codes and standards with their current resources and capacity.

These jurisdictions are small in population size, geographically dispersed, challenged by extreme climate conditions, and disadvantaged by pollution and other factors. I-REN has significant opportunity to support compliance and enforcement, to ensure building department knowledge, awareness, and realization of energy-savings measures.

As an organization led by and dedicated to serving local governments, I-REN provides flexible and adaptable solutions to help bridge the gap and assist local jurisdictions. I-REN's C&S initiatives offer locally focused training, education, and tools to support C&S implementation, gap filling, energy code enforcement, and compliance activities. Training and educational resources are informed by and targeted specifically to address the needs of jurisdictions in the region. To ensure statewide consistency in compliance improvement support I-REN coordinates and collaborates with the statewide C&S team and meets with the California Energy Commission (CEC) on a quarterly basis.

I-REN-CS-001: C&S Training and Education Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

I-REN's C&S Training and Education Program began delivering trainings tailored to the needs of local AHJs and the building industry to support, understand, and effectively implement EE codes and standards. The program includes outreach to engage, educate and involve regional construction firms and building departments, and support compliance and enforcement within regional EE programs and customers. Local in-person training opportunities will be expanded in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. I-REN C&S trainings are differentiated by topic, with trainings tailored to the region's climate zones and the needs of the region's local jurisdictions, building department staff, and building professionals.

I-REN brings existing relationships with training partners in the region, such as colleges, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), trade

organizations, and regional entities. These relationships are important for connecting with HTR, DAC, underserved, tribal, and ESJ communities. Outreach for this program consists of promoting training through I-REN governing agencies' existing communication channels, through local government partnerships, and through building industry communication networks. I-REN is collaborating with local governments to design and deliver effective messaging during code transitions.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2023

The C&S Market Assessment Survey Training and Education Focus

In 2023 the I-REN C&S team conducted a five-month long effort to survey the current state of energy code compliance in the region, gain an understanding of knowledge gaps, and identify stakeholders' preferred delivery options for C&S program offerings. Seventy-seven building professionals in both the public sector (such as AHJ employees) and the private sector (such as contractors) were surveyed. Public versus private sector responses were compared, as well as the difference in responses from Riverside County versus San Bernardino County.

Data captured:

- Job title and location of respondents
- Preferred Energy Code resources
- Most desired training topics and ideal training dates, times, lengths, and settings
- Interest in reach codes by jurisdiction (public sector)
- Barriers to Energy Code compliance
- Most complex components of the Energy Code
- Languages spoken
- Preferred means of accessing Energy Code expertise

77
*building
professionals
in both the
public and
private
sector were
surveyed.*

For trainings, respondents prefer morning (10 a.m.–12 p.m.) and early morning (before 10 am). Public sector preferred Tuesdays and Thursdays with 60- to 90-minute trainings, while private sector preferred Thursdays and Fridays.

Results such as the below informed outreach, training, and engagement activities planned for 2024.

C&S Market Assessment Survey – Training Topic Requests



PUBLIC SECTOR Energy Code Navigation, Compliance Documentation, Lighting Measures, SolarAPP+, Mechanical Measures

PRIVATE SECTOR Energy Code Navigation, Compliance Documentation, Heat Pumps, Plans and Specifications, Quality Insulation Installation

Launched Training Program

I-REN launched energy C&S education trainings in June 2023 and held thirteen unique offerings through the end of the year, leveraging CEC collaborators, statewide contractor-facing EE programs, and codes entities to cross-promote. Training topics ranged from 2022 energy code changes to compliance, load calculation, SolarAPP+, and design topics.

Successes include:

- I-REN held 13 trainings total.
- There were 64 net individual attendees and 27 people attended at least two trainings. Some repeat attendees were present at up to six of the 13 trainings held.
- 12 trainings offered International Code Council (ICC) Continuing Education Credits (CEUs), and a total of 81 CEU certificates were given out (to receive an ICC certificate, a person must attend the training for 60 minutes or longer).
- 75% of attendees who participated in CEU-eligible classes earned a certification.
- 37 jurisdictions and nine private sector building entities were supported through trainings.
- I-REN C&S trainings earned a 99% satisfaction rating from participants. Across all 13 trainings, 54% of participants strongly agreed that the training fulfilled 10 different measured metrics of satisfaction, such as training content being applicable to their jobs, easy to follow and understand, and increasing their energy code knowledge. An additional 45% agreed across all 10 training questions.
- Heat Pump Water Heaters for Building Departments was the highest rated training, with 95% of respondents strongly agreeing that it met all 10 evaluated satisfaction metrics.

13

Trainings

64

Attendees

81

CEU certificates
given out

37

Jurisdictions
supported

9

Private sector building
entities supported

99%

Satisfaction rating

Educational Webinar on SolarAPP+ Permitting Software

In collaboration with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and the City of Menifee as a speaker, I-REN drew its highest training attendance of the year, 26 attendees, in this webinar tailored specifically for Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Menifee is a local example of a jurisdiction that started using SolarAPP+. The training also promoted the CEC's CalAPP grant funding opportunity.

OPPORTUNITIES IN 2024 AND BEYOND

In 2024 the C&S training program plans to present a set of twelve trainings at the pace of one training per month, as well as two forums. The 2023 Market Assessment Survey identified training topics most desired by both public and private sector respondents in the I-REN region, including energy code navigation, compliance documentation, and basic building science. 2024 training topics are designed with this in mind. Three trainings will be repeated from 2023, heat pump water heaters; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) load calculations and duct design; and basics of the Energy Code.

A key goal for the I-REN C&S training program in 2024 is to increase the overall number of participants and number of unique jurisdictions and private entities served through this channel. The Market Assessment Survey highlighted the main ways that building professionals in the region keep up to date on energy code training opportunities. Consequently, I-REN's C&S team plans to offer a new training in Spanish, expand its social media presence, develop relationships with other energy organizations that can feature I-REN training opportunities in their newsletters, work with the local ICC chapter in the I-REN region, and cross-promote with other organizations.

I-REN-CS-002: C&S Technical Support Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

I-REN's C&S Technical Support Program is a non-resource program to develop technical assistance tools and resources to assist building departments and the building industry with understanding, evaluating, and permitting the energy codes to support improved enforcement and compliance. The Technical Support program offers a range of services informed by I-REN-developed survey instruments that gather data on ways that I-REN can assist building departments and industry professionals. Services include:

- **CODES ASSISTANCE**

Provide localized support to building departments in implementing the Energy Code.

- **REACH CODES**

Develop regionally appropriate model ordinances, vet and refine them with participating local governments, provide ongoing technical assistance for implementation, and deliver updates to reflect the triennial code cycle.

- **TRAINING & EDUCATION**

Deliver localized training, in coordination with Training & Education program. Training partners will include colleges, non-profit organizations, community-based organizations, trade organizations, and other regional entities.

- **GRANT SUPPORT**

Monitor and support grant opportunities for building departments.

Although Training & Education was the primary focus for the C&S program in 2023, the Technical Support program completed initial research and outreach efforts to lay the groundwork for a more robust 2024.

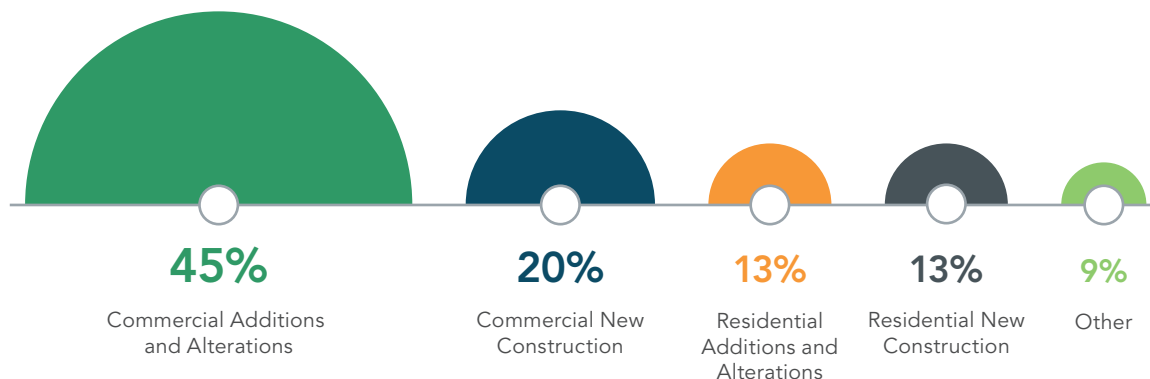
ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2023

The C&S Market Assessment Survey | Technical Assistance Focus

As part of the same Market Assessment Survey mentioned above, technical assistance questions focused on what resources are needed by building professionals outside of trainings.

The Market Assessment survey identified areas for greater support for code compliance. For example, 45% of 50 public sector survey respondents indicated that they could benefit from energy code support on commercial additions and alterations.

C&S Market Assessment Survey – Most Complex Energy Code Aspects



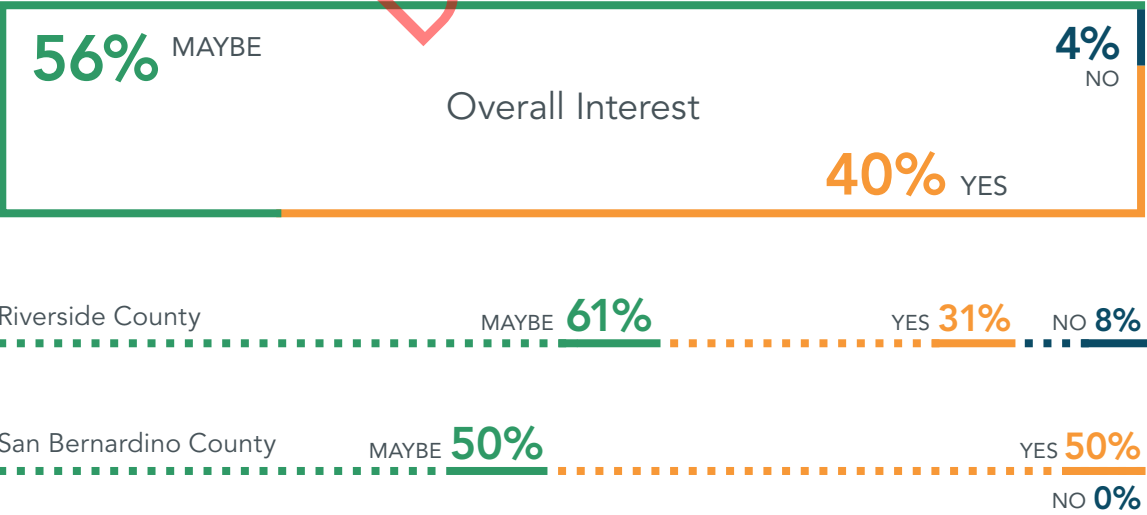
The C&S Technical Support program began its efforts by leveraging the Market Assessment Survey to understand the current challenges and needs facing both the public and private sector in the region.

Key survey findings:

- Both public and private sectors look to the CEC, colleagues, newsletters and trade organizations to learn about the energy code. Public sector prefers ICC chapter resources, while the private sector also cited social media as a means to learn about code.
- The survey requested information on desired training topics. Both private and public sector requested trainings on energy code navigation and compliance documentation. The public sector also expressed interest in lighting measures, SolarAPP+, mechanical measures; the private sector expressed interest in heat pumps, plans and specifications, quality insulation installation.

The below graphic shows Interest in reach code or ordinance development by respondents in each county.

C&S Market Assessment Survey – Reach Codes Interest

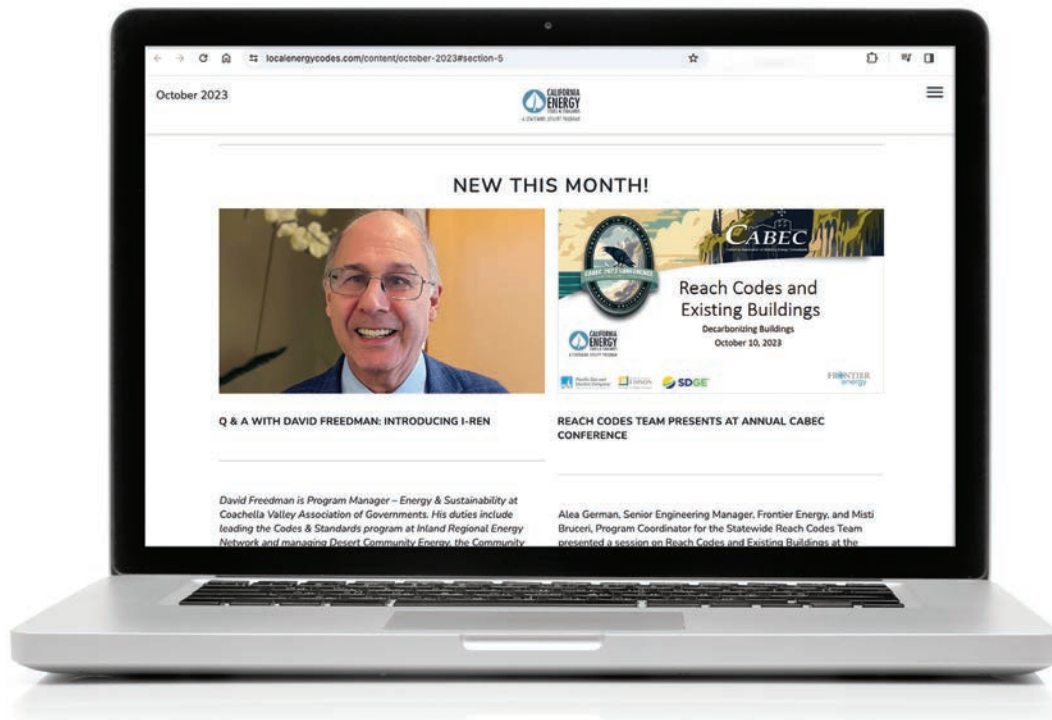


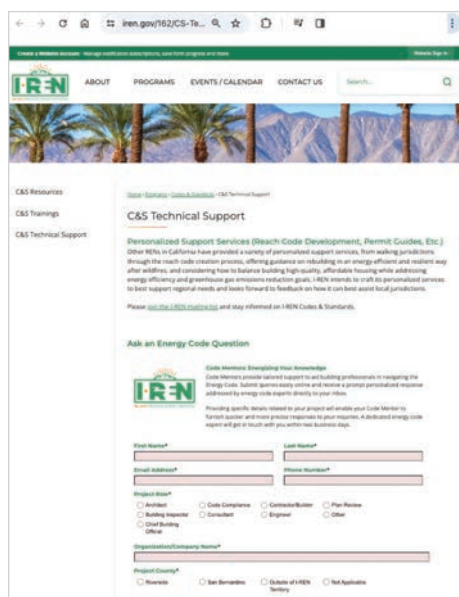
Reach Codes Support

The Inland Empire is not typically seen as a leader in pushing its constituents beyond the required code minimums. However, the Market Assessment survey showed that half of jurisdiction respondents are open to developing Reach Codes, and the I-REN team aims to support them. In 2023, I-REN has supported Palm Springs with two in-progress Reach Code items:

- **Supporting the early adoption of 2025 Code Controlled Environment Horticulture (CEH) lighting efficiency measures.** A draft ordinance and findings have been completed. Although there are currently a reduced number of cannabis growers in Palm Springs, this can be a model ordinance for other areas in the region where there are more cannabis growers. In connection with this effort, I-REN provided comments on the text of the proposed measure to the Codes and Standards Enhancement (CASE) Team. The measure is included in the 2025 Code Pre-Rulemaking Express Terms released by the CEC in November 2023.
- **Supporting enhancing the existing home EE requirements,** based on an updated 2023 cost effectiveness study for home EE.

I-REN also participates in the monthly reach code activities on behalf of its constituents, and was featured in the statewide [Reach Code News Brief](#) monthly newsletter.





Codes Assistance

Based on feedback and interest from jurisdictions received during orientations and the market assessment survey, I-REN partnered with the SolarAPP+ team to host a webinar on using its software to meet SB379 compliance requirements.

The webinar was I-REN's most-attended event in 2023.

I-REN soft-launched its “Ask an Energy Code Question” service in 2023. This service allows building industry members to request expert support on a specific code question and is in line with the 30% of private sector Market Assessment survey respondents who preferred to receive energy code expert support online. The goal of this service is to provide an easy way for public and private sector building professionals to access tailored support for codes assistance, while also building or strengthening relationships with the building industry.

Finally, I-REN worked with other RENs to customize a permitting guide on Heat Pump Water Heaters for the region. The resources were posted online for building industry use.

Research and Awareness-Building

In addition to hosting orientation meetings across the region, I-REN began developing materials to build awareness of C&S services. For example, rather than providing hard-copy flyers to permit desks, I-REN created and began working with jurisdictions to provide links to I-REN's website on their jurisdictions' permit pages – their “virtual permit desks.” The team also began researching stakeholders to support outreach efforts and completing research into jurisdictions to better understand if they have existing Climate Action Plans and thus their potential readiness for more support.

OPPORTUNITIES IN 2024 AND BEYOND

In 2024 the C&S Technical Support program will continue building on the groundwork laid in 2023. In particular, the program aims to grow in three main areas:

- **CODES ASSISTANCE**

Continue outreach to jurisdictions and stakeholders to generate interest and activity in the “Ask an Energy Code Question” service, providing building professionals with easy access to code expertise. Leverage the information from the Market Assessment survey to provide discrete services that fit jurisdiction needs, including developing permit guides and offering support for energy code compliance software needs.

- **REACH CODES**

Continue to work with Palm Springs to provide Reach Codes support services. Follow up with jurisdictions that expressed interest in Reach Codes support in the Market Assessment survey and offer additional support with the Cost Effectiveness Explorer to help them identify reach code opportunities in their region.

- **TRAINING & EDUCATION**

Continue outreach to jurisdictions to offer customized trainings upon request. Building on the success of the 2023 SolarAPP+ webinar, offer additional training around SB379 reporting compliance.

“ I attended your online training and found your program very useful. Please send me additional information for my jurisdiction to consider adopting and using the program. ”

– Building Official, City of Coachella,
following SolarAPP+ webinar



Workforce Education & Training

Through its WE&T cross-cutting sector programs, I-REN will serve as a vital link between workforce skills and training providers such as community colleges and employers to build a more robust market and increase the number of skilled EE contractors in the Inland Empire.

These activities will promote job market recovery and progress toward statewide goals regarding EE, air quality, and support for HTR, underserved, rural, tribal, and DACs. Both Senate Bill (SB) 350 and SB 535 prioritize these communities for initiatives to improve air quality, increase EE, and address economic conditions. SB 350 emphasizes workforce development and increased project penetration in underserved communities. I-REN has an opportunity to support these goals through its WE&T initiatives.

IREN-WET-001: WE&T Training and Education Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In its Training and Education Program, I-REN will assess the current training marketplace in the Inland Empire and work with local providers, including higher education providers, high schools, adult schools, and professional training companies to tailor content to be relevant to the region's needs and ensure that DACs are a focus. I-REN will collaborate with training providers to improve access to a broad spectrum of training opportunities in person, online, and in the field.

The Training and Education program creates a robust local network of training programs that increase capacity and knowledge related to EE in the building industry. I-REN focuses largely on entry-level offerings in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. I-REN and these offerings raise the value of EE training and career paths within high schools, community colleges, and universities; encouraging more people to enter an industry involving or relating to EE.

I-REN WE&T Training & Education Program Overview**COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT**

Help diverse job seekers find employment opportunities.

**NO-COST TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

Energy efficiency topics and trends.

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

Create job pathways to local companies.

**BENEFIT**

Improve access to training opportunities in person, online, and in the field.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2023**Workforce Market Assessment**

In 2023, I-REN explored bringing on a subject matter expert to conduct an energy-focused workforce assessment within the I-REN territory. This workforce assessment will identify the energy workforce resources and their jurisdictional scopes that currently exist within Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Given the large geographic area of the area, this assessment will also include a gap analysis of the resources and provide recommendations on the design, development and deployment of future I-REN WE&T programs. This assessment will be completed in 2024.

I-REN WE&T Program and Partnership Exploration

- **EXPLORE** resources and potential partnerships for K-12, community colleges, and universities for energy career pathways.
- **CREATE** and provide job training, certifications, and innovations related to the energy field with industry stakeholders.
- **POTENTIAL** energy efficiency job fair.
- **CREATION** of an online virtual training learning center for energy efficiency.

OUTREACH AND PRESENTATIONS

Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce Workforce Roundtable

The Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce hosted a local workforce roundtable in September 2023. The purpose of this roundtable was to address the workforce issues and how they may be addressed in the region. I-REN attended this roundtable event, which provided the opportunity to connect with possible local community and education partners.

DOE HVAC Paths Program Forum

The PATHS: Career Pathways to Advance the Trades in HVAC Services forum structures workforce education and training to target HVAC career pathways. The goal of this forum was to seek the latest information about HVAC resources in the region and to hear a local perspective regarding the industry as it pertains to Riverside and San Bernardino counties. The I-REN team attended this forum in September 2023, and connected with potential Inland Empire community and education partners.

Foresight: Envisioning a Future Ready Region Youth Action Project and Institute for the Future

I-REN staff were invited by Youth Action Project (YAP) to join local education and community leaders for the Foresight retreat in September 2023. This event was to address workforce issues and how they may be addressed in the Inland Empire region. This event played a unique role in I-REN's opportunity to provide outreach and network with local business and community leaders.

Inland Empire Desert Regional Consortium (IEDRC)

In December 2023, the I-REN staff led a breakout session presentation to discuss the current I-REN WE&T Program and the strategies to connect the educational providers and develop a market assessment to determine effective training methodologies for green job pathways. This event played a role in I-REN's opportunities to outreach and network with local educational providers in K-12 and the community college leaders.

FORMAL COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Science and Technology Education Partnership Conference

In 2023, The I-REN team entered a formal partnership with the Science and Technology Education Partnership Conference (STEP Con), which was established to bridge the skills gap

between the local K-12 students and high technology industry needs. The first of its kind in the region, this conference serves to ignite the imagination of thousands of students, so that they might pursue promising careers in high-technology fields. It also provides hands-on training to hundreds of K-12 teachers, ensuring they have the latest tools to keep students competitive in the global marketplace.

Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium

The I-REN team entered a formal partnership with the Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium (IEDRC) is a collective of workforce education and training providers led by the community colleges in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. The IEDRC partners include K-12, community college career and technical education and not-for-credit administrators, faculty, and staff. The IEDRC's projects and services support the work of not only community college and K-12 workforce stakeholders but extend to adult education, local workforce development boards, regional non-profit workforce entities, and others.

Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition

The Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition (LGSEC) is a statewide membership network representing local government interests related to EE, clean energy, and climate resilience to state regulatory agencies. Together, LGSEC members advance sustainable energy and climate solutions to meet California's decarbonization goals through knowledge exchange, targeted learning opportunities, and statewide collaboration. I-REN offers its member agencies a sponsored one-year membership with the LGSEC. As of February 2024, I-REN has signed up 12 cities for LGSEC membership and encourages their participation in the energy policy landscape. Participating cities include the Cities of: Canyon Lake, Colton, Corona, Jurupa Valley, Lake Elsinore, Palm Springs, Rancho Cucamonga, San Jacinto, Temecula, Twentynine Palms, the County of Riverside, and the Town of Apple Valley.

OPPORTUNITIES IN 2024 AND BEYOND

Workforce Market Assessment (Implementation)

Based on proposals solicited in 2023, in early 2024 the I-REN Team recommended three on-call providers to deliver a workforce market assessment expected to be completed mid-2024. The goal of the market assessment is to guide the I-REN staff on recommendations for future training programs related to energy job pathways.

I-REN-WET-002: WE&T Workforce Development Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

I-REN will convene and collaborate with state, regional, and local stakeholders, including workforce investment boards (WIBs) and economic development departments to develop a unified mission around the region's EE workforce, highlighting pathways for job seekers to enter the green jobs market and to increase access for DACs. I-REN will facilitate identifying opportunities for employers and local workforce partners to network and connect.

With its governing agencies' existing networks of contractors and training providers, I-REN is well positioned to help bridge the gap between the energy industry and the workforce. I-REN is building partnerships with local community colleges, local universities and local WIBs to establish a comprehensive network of WE&T offerings. I-REN also brings close connections with local government planning and building departments across the region. I-REN's proposed WE&T initiatives offer important opportunities for collaboration across other sectors through its work in the Public Sector and C&S --both of which are important drivers of EE and advanced energy activity and employment in the region.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2023

I-REN Energy Fellows

In 2023, the I-REN WE&T Program deployed a total of 11 I-REN Energy Fellows with member agencies. Historically, member agencies in the I-REN region have lacked the capacity to track, monitor, implement and comply with various energy and environmental statewide goals and requirements. The I-REN Fellows address this barrier by supporting and filling organizational capacity needs related to EE project identification, and energy building identification and benchmarking, climate/energy action planning, outreach of workforce, education & training into the communities, and other sustainability initiatives.

I-REN WE&T Energy Fellowship Overview

- Partnership with CivicSpark and AmeriCorps Program
- Minimum Associates Degree
- Fellowship Project Examples: facility audits, billing rate analysis, community outreach, energy efficiency facility identification

Job Fairs

I-REN attended approximately 17 job fairs from September 2023 through November 2023. Through these job fairs, the I-REN team collected more than 200 interested job seeker slips and about 50 potential interested partner contacts. Some of these job fairs were conducted in partnership with Energy is Everything. I-REN has a system to collect interested job-seeker forms from prospective candidates. The information is compiled into a list serv. I-REN notifies the candidates who are registered in the list serv when the Energy Fellowship application is open, which may result in an Energy Fellow placement with a member agency.

17

Job fairs

200

Interested job
seekers

50

Interested partner
contracts



COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

In 2023, the I-REN WE&T team met with over 20 community partners including the following:

- Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) Inland Empire Branch
- Barstow Community College
- California Baptist University
- CSUSB
- Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce
- CivicWell Climate Adaptation Forum
- Construction Trades Workforce Initiative (CTWI)
- Energy Code Ace
- Goodwill Career Resources Inland Empire
- Inland Empire Community Colleges Job Developers
- Inland Empire Desert Regional Consortium
- James Irvine Foundation
- Launch Apprenticeship Network
- Local Employment Development Department Veterans Division
- Mount San Jacinto College
- Riverside City College (RCC) Guardian scholars
- Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE)
- San Bernardino City Unified School District
- San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (SBCSS)
- San Geronimo High School (Jobs 4 California Graduates)
- Southern California energy Innovation Network
- Time for Change Foundation
- Tomorrow's Talent
- Youth Action Project

OPPORTUNITIES IN 2024 AND BEYOND

In 2024, the I-REN WE&T Team plans to provide additional training and resource opportunities for the I-REN Energy Fellows such as:

- Planned networking events
- Learning resource opportunities

Other Planned 2024 events:

March 2024 Energy & Infrastructure Showcase planned in partnership with IEDRC

The purpose of the event is to be a one stop energy workforce ecosystem that will bring together Inland Empire community colleges, local agency staff, workforce organizations who will focus on the issues, barriers and resources to help connect, identify, and have conversations to determine training opportunities that will help to develop a green energy pathway for job seekers in the region.

California Climate and Energy Collaborative Forum

The 15th Annual California Climate and Energy Collaborative (CCEC) Forum will be hosted in I-REN territory for two days in Palm Springs and will bring together local leaders in energy and climate action s for in-depth conversations between local and regional governments, and their partners in State agencies, CBOs, NGOs, and private sector service providers. The strong connections and partnerships fostered together through the Forum provide a pivotal opportunity to cultivate climate action toward its full potential. The 2024 theme of “Collective Innovation: Cultivating Collaboration for Equitable Climate Action”, aligns with I-REN’s commitments to equity and cooperation among energy and climate stakeholders in the region and will explore innovative ideas and best practices for collaboration, increasing accessibility for DAC, and implementing climate action across sectors.

DRAFT



03.

Energy Savings

I-REN's Public Sector resource program began its program design and launch phase in 2023 and anticipates project activities beginning in 2024; therefore, there are no 2023 energy savings to report.

DRAFT



04. — Savings by End Use

I-REN's Public Sector resource program began its program design and launch phase in 2023 and anticipates project activities beginning in 2024; therefore, there are no 2023 energy savings by end use to report.

DRAFT



05. — Environmental Impacts

I-REN's Public Sector resource program began its program design and launch phase in 2023 and anticipates project activities beginning in 2024; therefore, there are no 2023 environmental impacts generated by the CPUC Cost-effectiveness Tool (CET).

DRAFT



DRAFT

06.

Expenditures

I-REN's 2023 budget, adjusted to include unspent funds from 2022, is shown in the table below.

I-REN 2023 Budget

PROGRAM ID	PROGRAM NAME	2023 BUDGET
IREN-PUBL-001	Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning Program	\$5,795,984.21
IREN-PUBL-002	Public Buildings NMEC Program	\$6,351,946.86
IREN-CS-001	C&S Training and Education Program	\$1,491,435.11
IREN-CS-002	Technical Support Program	\$1,015,470.44
IREN-WET-001	WE&T Training and Education Program	\$1,892,796.80
IREN-WET-002	Workforce Development Program	\$2,415,087.51
Program Subtotal		\$18,962,720.93
EM&V		\$230,045.00
Total I-REN 2023 Budget		\$19,192,765.93

I-REN expenditures in 2023 are shown below.

I-REN 2023 Actuals

PROGRAM ID	ADMIN	MARKETING & OUTREACH	DIRECT IMPLEMENTATION	INCENTIVES	TOTAL
IREN-PUBL-001	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
IREN-PUBL-002	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
IREN-CS-001	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
IREN-CS-002	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
IREN-WET-001	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
IREN-WET-002	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
IREN-EMV-001	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
I-REN Total					TBD



07.

Cost- Effectiveness

REN PAs are exempt from cost-effectiveness thresholds, as recently reaffirmed in D.21-05-031.⁴ However, I-REN manages its portfolio “with an eye toward long-term cost-effectiveness” as encouraged by CPUC,⁵ as a good steward of ratepayer dollars.

DRAFT

⁴ D.21-05-031 Conclusion of Law 8 at 75: “Program administrators, with the exception of RENs, should be required to ensure that their energy efficiency resource acquisition programs exceed a 1.0 TRC on a forecasted basis, in order for the Commission to approve the programs.”

⁵ D.16-08-019 at 12.



08. — Metrics

Unique Value Metrics

D.19-12-021 directed proponent RENs to...

“demonstrate new and unique value toward California’s energy, climate, and equity goals”⁶

...and then file their progress toward their proposed unique value metrics once they were approved and operating. Accordingly, I-REN described its unique value proposition and value metric concepts in its Business Plan. I-REN’s Business Plan is based on a foundational Strategic Framework that establishes I-REN’s mission, vision, goals, and strategies, to be accomplished with various tactics as detailed in the business plan. Each of these verticals connects to I-REN’s value proposition and informed I-REN’s initial value metrics concepts proposed in the Business Plan:

1. **BUILDING** local government capacity to implement EE upgrades for municipal buildings and for improving code compliance.
2. **SUPPORTING** economic sustainability and a strong local workforce by connecting effective and equitable opportunities for local EE training and demand for EE upgrades.
3. **ESTABLISHING** long-lasting, scalable tools through the BUC that can be used in every city in the region for purposes including but not limited to sharing timely and accurate EE information, identifying rebates and incentives available through any PA’s programs, and helping explain financing resources.

⁶ D.19-12-021 Conclusion of Law 9

I-REN Business Plan Strategic Framework



I-REN MISSION

To actively participate in California's Clean Energy initiatives and build a stronger clean energy economy and community.



OUR VISION

To connect residents, businesses, and local government to a wide range of energy efficiency resources to increase energy savings and equitable access throughout San Bernardino and Riverside Counties.



GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL 1: Build capacity and knowledge to enable local governments to effectively leverage energy efficiency services and to demonstrate best practices.

GOAL 2: Ensure there is a trained workforce to support and realize energy efficiency savings goals across sectors.

GOAL 3: Work closely with local building departments and the building industry to support, train, and enable long-term streamlining of energy code compliance.

In 2023 I-REN undertook a process to hone these concepts into measurable REN Unique Value Metrics (UVMs). I-REN reviewed each unique value concept and identified a range of measurable and unique outcomes related to each concept. From these ideas, I-REN prioritized identifying a metric for each sector based on the following criteria:

- Metrics that indicate I-REN's unique value and were distinct from existing metrics
- Metrics for which methodology can be readily clarified
- Metrics for outcomes that can be measured sooner rather than later, based on program activity launch timelines

The selected I-REN UVMs are shown below. Metric concepts not immediately selected as UVMs may be further developed for tracking as internal key performance indicators that could eventually be used as UVMs in the future.

I-REN Unique Value Metrics

Percentage of partner jurisdictions that use I-REN guides and tools for code compliance

Codes & Standards

One of I-REN's key unique strengths is its relationships with local governments through the founding agencies' work as councils/associations of governments. This metric is intended to show I-REN's progress on leveraging those relationships to engage with jurisdictions on C&S permitting and code compliance.

Number of BUC registrations in partner jurisdictions (total users)

Public Sector

BUC registration is the entry point to accessing I-REN technical assistance services—the BUC portal allows for exploring possible savings opportunities for projects that public sector program participants could pursue via I-REN NMEC program and/or other PAs' programs; BUC also offers ability to establish and maintain ongoing relationships and associated data.

Number of fellows placed within partner jurisdictions

Workforce Education & Training

I-REN fellowships are a crucial quick-start activity for WE&T and also provide cross-cutting benefits for Public Sector and C&S. Fellows play a role as EE champions at local jurisdictions to help advance EE projects in coordination with I-REN Public Sector technical assistance, such as benchmarking or strategic energy planning, and can supplement staff capacity to take on NMEC or other incentive projects and support permitting and code compliance with I-REN C&S support.

As part of the evaluation of RENs in 2023, the Commission's evaluators conducted an assessment of I-REN's evaluability. This assessment examined I-REN's initial value concepts from the Business Plan and their connection to I-REN's strategic framework, the process I-REN undertook for evolving its value concepts into UVMs as outlined above, and the selected UVMs and data collected to date.

In the resulting Draft Inland Regional Energy Network Evaluability Memo,⁷ the evaluation team found that I-REN's UVMs demonstrate its core values and are quantifiable and easily understandable. Moreover, the evaluation team recommended future RENs adopt a similar approach to the process that I-REN took to develop its value concepts into measurable UVMs, by aligning UVMs with core REN values, distinguishing the UVMs from other existing metrics, and proposing a limited initial set of UVMs that can grow over time as needed.

Equity and Market Support Indicators

D.23-06-055 adopted objectives and indicators for the market support and equity segments and designated how often indicators should be reported (quarterly or annually) and at what level (segment or whole portfolio). The decision also directed PAs to jointly submit a Tier 2 advice letter by no later than May 1, 2024 clarifying all of the adopted indicators. CAEECC subsequently formed an Equity and Market Support Working Group (EMSWG) charged with bringing together PAs and other stakeholders to address this and other topics in D.23-06-055. The EMSWG began convening in November 2023 and I-REN has been an active participant in all EMSWG meetings to date, has completed the homework assignments requested of PAs, and has responded to surveys and requests for feedback from EMSWG facilitators. I-REN is also an active participant in the parallel effort among the PAs to jointly develop other aspects of the May 1, 2024 advice letter.

D.18-05-041 Common Metrics

In addition to clarifying the adopted equity and market support indicators, D.23-06-055 also ordered PAs to examine the metrics and indicators adopted in D.18-05-041. The first of several PA Common Metrics Meetings was held in December 2023. I-REN has been an active participant in those meetings and completed the assigned homework to review all common metrics and provide input regarding potential modifications. Any modifications recommended by the PAs will be included in the May 1, 2024 joint advice letter, along with clarifications of equity and market support indicators as mentioned above.

⁷ California Public Utilities Commission Draft Inland Regional Energy Network Evaluability Memo. CPUC Deliverable 22: Year 4 Evaluation of RENs. Opinion Dynamics, Tierra Resource Consultants. October 27, 2023.

09.

Commitments

I-REN does not currently have customer commitments in the form of reserved incentive payments. However, I-REN has planned and budgeted for funds to be committed to numerous activities to support its portfolio in 2024 and beyond, including contracts with implementers, consultants, and vendors.

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Inland Regional Energy Network

I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: Approval of Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Agency Budget

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

Date: April 16, 2024

Recommended Action(s):

1. Approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Agency budget.

Summary:

The proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2025 I-REN budget is \$10,510,797 and is divided amongst the three authorized sectors: Public, Workforce Education & Training, and Codes & Standards. I-REN authorized funding is through 2027.

Discussion:

The I-REN Business Plan, approved by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), establishes the \$65.6M, 6-year budgeting parameters of I-REN in terms of the revenue amount and spending categories that can be authorized. For the purposes of annual budgeting, the spending categories remain consistent throughout the 6-year authorization period and the spending amounts fluctuate. As funds from the 6-year authorization are drawn down, the remaining funds are spread over the remaining time. Lower spending levels in year one are offset by proportionally higher spending levels in future years. While the pace of spending fluctuates slightly from year to year, the cumulative spending total over the 6-year period is capped at \$65.6M.

For calendar year 2023, I-REN expended \$5,096,860 against \$10,204,704 in CPUC-approved revenues. Reasons for the under spending are the result of numerous conditions. The Executive Committee did not have its first meeting until December 13, 2022. The first several meetings largely consisted of discussions on I-REN formation, governance, sector budgets and approvals, and equitable resource allocation. It wasn't until February 2023 when the Executive Committee authorized the contracts with the consultants to begin the design of each of I-REN's programmatic elements. Additionally, once the consultants were onboarded, the next six months of 2023 were heavily focused on I-REN orientations. Eighteen orientations were conducted throughout the I-REN territory to introduce the programs, resources and services available to cities, counties, school districts and tribal nations. Another condition that has resulted in the underspending has been the sheer volume and magnitude of workload the I-REN team has assumed, which has resulted in the need to add additional consultant support to provide direct assistance to partner COGs.

Furthermore, most of the Public Sector Technical Assistance funds are linked to project development

and initiation, which can only be done by the cities, counties, and other public agencies or tribal nations. Directly linked to the Technical Assistance funds are the direct incentive funds (Normalized Metered Energy Consumption (NMEC)), which can only be expended once a project has been initiated.

All the conditions listed above are temporary and reflect the similar challenges faced by other RENs. Staffing and programmatic adjustments are being made to expedite the project development and initiation phases, which will lead to greater resources spent in Technical Assistance and NMEC. Outreach campaigns are being developed to communicate new offerings and opportunities directly to I-REN member agencies, with the goal of initiating action amongst member agencies to take advantage of I-REN. Outreach activities have ramped up significantly to the community colleges and universities throughout I-REN territory to inform students of the Energy Fellowship Program. Supporting the addition of Fellows to local governments helps to build capacity to engage with I-REN and its programs, resources and services.

On October 17, 2023, I-REN submitted its Annual Advice letter to the CPUC, as required, and approved by the I-REN Executive Committee. The Advice letter was approved by the CPUC on February 7, 2024. In its approval of the Advice letter, the CPUC approved a revised budget for I-REN for Years 2024-2027, as shown below.

Sector	2024	2025	2026	2027
Public	\$6,288,477	\$8,397,047	\$9,292,014	\$10,343,585
Workforce, Education & Training	\$2,979,532	\$3,299,149	\$3,374,649	\$3,418,519
Codes & Standards	\$1,740,936	\$1,826,214	\$1,850,278	\$1,862,863
Evaluation, Measurement & Verification (EM&V)	\$458,706	\$563,434	\$604,873	\$651,040
Total	\$11,467,651	\$14,085,844	\$15,121,814	\$16,276,007

The budget presented to the Executive Committee is based on the total amount of planned expenses expected to occur throughout Fiscal Year 2024/2025. As a result, the proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2025 budget is not the full amount authorized by the CPUC in its approval of the Advice letter. I-REN will submit its next Mid-Cycle Advice letter to the CPUC in 2025, which will adjust the remaining 2025-2027 budget commensurate with the unbudgeted and unspent funds from 2024. In the event I-REN expenditures exceed the proposed FY 2024/2025 revenue numbers, WRCOG, as lead Administrative Agency, can amend the I-REN budget to increase revenues to the amount required as a result of increased expenditures.

It is important to focus on the programmatic outcomes that have resulted in the past year of I-REN's first full year of activities and to understand I-REN is still in a ramp-up phase for many of its programs. The Executive Committee awarded three on-call contracts in January 2024 to support the expansion and buildout of the Workforce, Education & Training sector. These contracts include development of an energy workforce market assessment, establishment and facilitation of working groups to help guide program development, and to establish contacts and partnerships with the existing businesses and trades in the I-REN territory to support an ecosystem of business, workforce developers, career and technical training, and job seekers. Staff is including \$350,000 in the proposed FY 2024/2025 budget under Workforce, Education & Training to have available for proposed initiatives that result from the on-call contracts. No contracts would be awarded without prior approval from the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee approved the Public Sector Technical Assistance (TA) Policy in January 2024, and I-REN staff, along with its consultants, have been working diligently to introduce and deploy the TA resources to member agencies. One programmatic adjustment that was made to better meet individual agencies where they are in their respective energy journey, is to allow cities and counties that have already identified an energy saving project to initiate the site visit and energy audits at those facilities so they can move forward with their projects. To date, there have been nine Resilience Roadmaps that have been prepared on behalf of I-REN member agencies, five agencies have uploaded their utility data into the Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) platform, and site visits have been completed for three cities and the Santa Fe Depot in San Bernardino. To help drive member agency engagement and utilization of the energy planning services and technical assistance offered by I-REN, a targeted outreach campaign is being initiated to educate members on the resources available and to highlight early successes.

In addition to the programmatic accomplishments from I-REN, in October 2023, the CPUC conducted an assessment of I-REN's preparedness to collect and report tracking data, including value metrics and statewide market support and equity metrics. The memo provided an assessment of I-REN's progress regarding the setting, measuring, and tracking of its value and statewide metrics and an assessment of I-REN's preparedness to report on these metrics. I-REN received high marks regarding its program design and aligning program outcomes with those metrics. The CPUC has also been complimentary regarding the development and adoption of the I-REN Five Year Strategic Plan, adopted by the Executive Committee in January.

The proposed FY 2024/2025 I-REN budget of \$10,510,797 is segregated into three components, based on the approved sectors in the Business Plan: Public, Workforce, Education & Training (WE&T) and Codes & Standards. Several funding items appear separately in more than one sector in order to reflect the costs associated with a particular function and provide greater transparency about the staffing activities of I-REN.

Public Sector	Expenditures
The Energy Coalition	\$2,500,000
Normalized Metered Energy Consumption (NMEC) Incentives	\$400,000
Alternative Energy Systems Consulting, Inc. (AESC) - BUC Software	\$218,333
ICF Resources (Marketing & Outreach)	\$83,333
Frontier Energy (I-REN Implementation contract)	\$83,333
CivicPlus (Website Development)	\$20,501
Legal Counsel	\$20,000
COG Educational & Outreach Sponsorships	\$50,000
CVAG Staffing Reimbursement	\$500,000
SBCOG Staffing Reimbursement	\$500,000
WRCOG Staffing Reimbursement	\$1,114,218

WRCOG Overhead	\$543,519
Miscellaneous Expenses (supplies & materials, computer equipment, travel, conferences, mileage reimbursements, etc.)	\$211,000
Total Expenditures:	\$6,244,237

Workforce, Education & Training proposed expenditures are \$2,797,670. These expenditures consist of the below authorized contracts, staffing costs, overhead and other miscellaneous expenses. The WE&T Initiative amount of \$350,000 is anticipated to be utilized to support new initiatives related to the WE&T Sector following direction from the Executive Committee. A decision does not need to be made at this time to allocate the funding and staff will return at a later date to discuss and receive direction.

Workforce, Education & Training	Expenditures
CivicSpark (I-REN Energy Fellowship Program)	\$837,000
Fellowship Reimbursements	\$20,000
The Energy Coalition	\$75,000
Riverside Community College District	\$100,000
Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce	\$50,000
IREN WE&T Initiative	\$350,000
CCEC and Annual Memberships	\$302,000
Energy Certification Program	\$70,000
Webinars/Virtual Certifications	\$60,000
ICF Resources (Marketing & Outreach)	\$83,333
Frontier Energy (existing contract)	\$83,333
CivicPlus (Website Development)	\$20,501
Legal Counsel	\$20,000
COG Educational & Outreach Sponsorships	\$25,000
Miscellaneous Expenses (supplies & materials, computer equipment, travel, conferences, mileage reimbursements, etc.)	\$74,000
CVAG Staffing Reimbursement	\$125,000
SBCOG Staffing Reimbursement	\$125,000
WRCOG Staffing Reimbursement	\$244,210
WRCOG Overhead	\$133,292
Total Expenditures:	\$2,797,670

Codes & Standards revenues are \$1,468,890 and proposed expenses are \$1,468,890. These expenditures consist of the following authorized contracts, staffing costs, overhead and other miscellaneous expenses.

Codes & Standards	Expenditures
Frontier Energy	\$791,333
ICF Resources (Marketing & Outreach)	\$83,333
Frontier Energy (existing contract)	\$83,333
CivicPlus (Website Development)	\$20,501
BB&K (Legal Counsel)	\$20,000
COG Sponsorships	\$25,000
CVAG Staffing Reimbursement	\$125,000
SBCOG Staffing Reimbursement	\$125,000

WRCOG Staffing Reimbursement	\$128,908
WRCOG Overhead	\$61,482
Miscellaneous Expenses (supplies & materials, computer equipment, travel, conferences, mileage reimbursements, etc.)	\$5,000
Total Expenditures:	\$1,468,890

As the Administrative Lead agency, the I-REN budget 'lives' in the overall WRCOG budget. Staff presented the FY 2024/2025 budget to the WRCOG Executive Committee at its April 1, 2024, meeting, and the item was recommended for approval by the WRCOG General Assembly at its upcoming meeting on June 20, 2024. The WRCOG Executive Committee only authorized the maximum revenue and expenditure levels, leaving the line item details to the I-REN Executive Committee.

Prior Action(s):

None.

Financial Summary:

Approval of the I-REN budget will authorize the proposed expenditures for Fiscal Year 2024/2025 of \$10,510,797, which consists of \$6,244,237 in the Public Sector, \$2,797,670 in Workforce, Education & Training Sector, and \$1,468,890 in the Codes and Standards Sector.

Attachment(s):

None.



Inland Regional Energy Network

I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing Program
Contact: Karina Camacho, WRCOG Analyst III, kcamacho@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6724
Date: April 16, 2024

Recommended Action(s):

1. Receive and file.
-

Summary:

The Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH) Program provides financial incentives to all qualified affordable multi-family apartment homes throughout California to aid in solar installation costs. There are more than \$250M of incentives available for the 200+ potentially eligible properties in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. I-REN staff is working with SOMAH staff to identify strategies to increase awareness of SOMAH incentives within the I-REN territory.

Discussion:

The California Public Utilities Commission oversees SOMAH, which is funded at up to \$100M annually from the investor-owned utilities' share of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions auction proceeds. SOMAH was created by Assembly Bill 693 in 2015.

To be eligible for a SOMAH incentive, a property must:

1. Have at least five units
2. Be deed-restricted, low-income residential rental housing, including but not limited to manufactured and mobile home properties.
3. Satisfy one of the following:
 - 66% of the property residents have incomes at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI), OR
 - Property is in a defined Disadvantaged Community (DAC) that scores in the top 25% of census tracts statewide in the CalEnviroScreen including property that is located on tribal land and is federally recognized, OR
 - The property is owned by a California Native American tribe, OR
 - The property is rental housing property that is owned by a public housing authority or public housing agency.

Jurisdictions with Highest # of Properties in Disadvantaged Communities		
Jurisdiction	No. of Properties	COG Agency
San Bernardino	20	SBCOG

Fontana	10	SBCOG
Ontario	10	SBCOG
Victorville	9	SBCOG
Rialto	8	SBCOG
Perris	5	WRCOG
Blythe	4	CVAG
Lake Elsinore	4	WRCOG
Unincorporated Riverside	4	WRCOG or CVAG
Unincorporated San Bernardino	4	SBCOG
Adelanto	3	SBCOG
Barstow	3	SBCOG
Corona	3	WRCOG
Rancho Cucamonga	3	SBCOG
Upland	2	SBCOG
Chino	1	SBCOG
Hemet	1	WRCOG
Highland	1	SBCOG
Montclair	1	SBCOG
Moreno Valley	1	WRCOG
Redlands	1	SBCOG
TOTAL	98	

Additional Properties Not in Disadvantaged Communities		
Jurisdiction	No. of Properties	COG Agency
Palm Springs	12	CVAG
Moreno Valley	11	WRCOG
Cathedral City	9	CVAG
Hesperia	9	SBCOG
Temecula	9	SBCOG
Beaumont	7	SBCOG
Desert Hot Springs	6	CVAG
San Jacinto	6	SBCOG
Blythe	5	CVAG
Corona	5	SBCOG
Loma Linda	4	SBCOG
Rancho Cucamonga	4	SBCOG
Fontana	4	SBCOG
Hemet	4	SBCOG
Twentynine Palms	3	CVAG
Victorville	3	SBCOG
Yucaipa	3	SBCOG
Lake Elsinore	3	SBCOG
Murrieta	3	SBCOG
Perris	3	SBCOG
Unincorporated Riverside	3	WRCOG or CVAG
San Bernardino	2	SBCOG
Chino	2	SBCOG

Yucca Valley	2	SBCOG
Norco	2	SBCOG
Indian Wells	1	CVAG
Rancho Mirage	1	CVAG
Grand Terrace	1	SBCOG
Montclair	1	SBCOG
Unincorporated San Bernardino	1	SBCOG
Redlands	1	SBCOG
Menifee	1	SBCOG
Wildomar	1	SBCOG
TOTAL	132	

Prior Action(s):

None.

Financial Summary:

All costs associated with the development and implementation of I-REN are included in WRCOG's adopted Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Agency Budget under the I-REN budget (Fund 180) in the Energy & Environmental Department.

Attachment(s):

[Attachment 1 - SOMAH Program Overview Flyer](#)

SOMAH will help you save money on your property's utility bills



SOMAH Program overview

The Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH) Program provides financial incentives for installing photovoltaic (PV) energy systems on multifamily affordable housing. The program will deliver clean power and energy bill savings to affordable housing providers and their tenants.

Program offerings

- ✓ Incentives to substantially offset the cost of solar PV systems for affordable housing
- ✓ Comprehensive no-cost technical assistance throughout the project lifecycle that is designed to make going solar easy. Technical Assistance and Support Services can include:
 - Solar Feasibility Assessment
 - Tenant Education Support
 - Clean Energy Program Referrals
 - And more!

"We are excited for our residents who will be saving nearly \$50 a month on their utility bills. This means more money in their pockets for other necessities such as groceries and transportation."

- Tom Collishaw, CEO of Self-Help

Learn more at CalsOMAH.org/owners

✉ contact@calsomah.org

☎ 858-244-1177, ext. 5

SOMAH is administered by the SOMAH Program Administrator under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission. © 2024 California Public Utilities Commission. All rights reserved.

Eligibility requirements

- ✓ Property must be an existing housing property or retrofit.
- ✓ Property must have a qualified affordable housing regulatory agreement, and have five or more rental units.
- ✓ Property is in PG&E, SDG&E, SCE, Liberty Utilities or PacifiCorp service territory.
- ✓ Property must have separately metered units eligible for Virtual Net Energy Metering (VNEM).

Satisfy one of the following:

- ✓ 66% of the property residents have incomes at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI).

OR

- ✓ Property is in a defined disadvantaged community (DAC) that scores in the top 25% of census tracts statewide in the CalEnviroScreen including property that is located on tribal land and is federally recognized.

OR

- ✓ The property is owned by a California Native American tribe.

OR

- ✓ The property is rental housing property that is owned by a public housing authority or public housing agency.

