



Inland Regional Energy Network I-REN Executive Committee

AGENDA

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

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

Remote Meeting Locations:

**City of Rialto
City Hall
150 S. Palm Avenue
Rialto, CA 92376**

**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**

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. **SELECTION OF I-REN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR, AND 2ND VICE-CHAIR POSITIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024/2025**
 - A. **Selection of I-REN Executive Committee Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair Positions for Fiscal Year 2024/2025**

Requested Action(s):

1. Select leadership positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair for Fiscal Year 2024/2025.

5. 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.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

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

A. Action Minutes from the April 16, 2024, I-REN Executive Committee Meeting

Requested Action(s):

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

B. Approval of I-REN Executive Committee Meeting Schedule for 2025

Requested Action(s):

1. Approve the schedule of I-REN Executive Committee meetings for 2025.

C. I-REN Regulatory and Reporting Activities Update

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

7. 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. Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Activities Update

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

B. I-REN Public Sector Activities Update

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

C. I-REN Fellowship Activities Update

Requested Action(s):

1. Provide direction on the expansion of eligible Public Sector agencies' participation to non-City / County agencies in the I-REN Energy Fellowship Program.

8. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

9. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

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

10. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

11. NEXT MEETING

The next I-REN Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 15, 2024, at 2:00 p.m., at the WRCOG office located at 3390 University Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside.

12. ADJOURNMENT

13. AGENCY ACRONYMS

Inland Regional Energy Network Acronym Guide

3C-REN – Tri-County Regional Energy Network (Counties of Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo)

ABAL – Annual Budget Advice Letter

AHJ – Authority Having Jurisdiction

AVCE – Apple Valley Choice Energy

BayREN – Bay Area Regional Energy Network (nine county REN in Northern California)

BUC – Building Upgrade Concierge

C&S – Codes & Standards

CAEECC – California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee

CalChoice – California Choice Energy Authority

Cal ISO – California Independent System Operator
CARB – California Air Resources Board
CCA – Community Choice Aggregator
CCEC – California Climate & Energy Collaborative
CEC – California Energy Commission
COG - Council of Government
CPA – Clean Power Alliance
CPUC – California Public Utilities Commission
CVAG – Coachella Valley Association of Governments
DAC – Disadvantaged Communities
DACAG – Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group
DCE – Desert Community Energy
DER – Distributed Energy Resources
DOE – U.S Department of Energy
EE – Energy Efficiency
EM&V – Evaluation, Measurement, and Verification
EV – Electric Vehicle
GHG – Greenhouse gas
HTR – Hard To Reach communities
IID – Imperial Irrigation District
IOU – Investor-Owned Utility
I-REN – Inland Regional Energy Network
JCM – Joint Cooperation Memorandum
LGSEC – Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition
LGP – Local Government Partnership
MOA – Memorandum of Agreement
NEBs – Non-energy Benefits
NMEC – Normalized Metered Energy Consumption
NREL – U.S Department of Energy National Renewable Energy Laboratory
PG&E – Pacific Gas & Electric
PA – Program Administrator
POU – Publicly Owned Utility
REN – Regional Energy Network
RMEA – Rancho Mirage Energy Authority
RPU – Riverside Public Utilities
SBCOG – San Bernardino Council of Governments
SCE – Southern California Edison
SCG / SoCalGas – Southern California Gas Company
SDG&E – San Diego Gas & Electric
SJP – San Jacinto Power
SoCalREN – Southern California Regional Energy Network (all of southern California, administered by Los Angeles County)
TA – Technical Assistance
TOU – Time of use
TRC – Total Resources Cost
V2G – Vehicle to Grid
WE&T – Workforce Education & Training
WRCOG – Western Riverside Council of Governments



Inland Regional Energy Network

I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: Selection of I-REN Executive Committee Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair Positions for Fiscal Year 2024/2025

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

Date: July 16, 2024

Recommended Action(s):

1. Select leadership positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair for Fiscal Year 2024/2025.
-

Summary:

This item is for the selection of I-REN Executive Committee Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair positions for Fiscal Year 2024/2025.

Discussion:

Background

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

WRCOG has been approved by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to serve as the administrative lead COG as the fiscal agent, purchasing and contracting entity, and primary regulatory contact manager for I-REN, and as such, is responsible for administering I-REN day-to-day operations.

However, WRCOG has no more decision-making power than the other agencies and works through the committee structure to ensure equal engagement for the entire region.

Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair Selection

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

Present Situation

The Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair all serve on an annual basis, with a term that runs through the fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). The current Chair is WRCOG member Crystal Ruiz from the City of San Jacinto, Vice-Chair is CVAG member Oscar Ortiz, and 2nd Vice-Chair is SBCOG member Art Bishop. The current leadership was appointed August 15, 2023.

Prior Action(s):

August 15, 2023: The Executive Committee selected Crystal Ruiz, City of San Jacinto, as Chair; Oscar Ortiz, City of Indio, as Vice-Chair; and Art Bishop, Town of Apple Valley, and 2nd Vice-Chair, to serve through the end of Fiscal Year 2023/2024.

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

Financial Summary:

Costs related to I-REN are allocated in the WRCOG Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Agency Budget under the Energy and Environmental Department (Fund 180).

Attachment(s):

None.

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 2:01 p.m. on April 16, 2024, at WRCOG's office, 3390 University Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Ruiz led the Committee members and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

CVAG

- City of Indio - Tom Kirk

SBCOG

- City of Rialto - Deborah Robertson
- 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)

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

RESULT:	APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
MOVER:	Barajas
SECONDER:	Hagman
AYES:	Kirk, Hagman, Bishop, Casillas, Barajas, Ruiz
NO RESPONSE:	Robertson

A. Action Minutes from the January 16, 2024, I-REN Executive Committee Meeting

Action:

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

B. I-REN Regulatory and Reporting Activities Update

Action:

- 1. Received and filed.

6. REPORTS / DISCUSSION

A. Workforce, Education & Training Sector Activities Update

Action:

- 1. Received and filed.

B. I-REN 2023 Annual Report

Actions:

- 1. Received and filed.

C. Approval of Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Agency Budget

RESULT:	APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
MOVER:	Hagman
SECONDER:	Barajas
AYES:	Kirk, Hagman, Bishop, Casillas, Barajas, Ruiz
NO RESPONSE:	Robertson

Action:

- 1. Approved the proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Agency budget.

D. Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing Program

Action:

- 1. Received and filed.

7. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

Chair Ruiz announced that this is her last meeting as Chair and is proud of all that the Committee and staff has accomplished, and is honored to have served as the first Chair.

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Committee member Bishop thanked Chair Ruiz for her leadership. Member Bishop requested a report on the status of AB205, currently being reviewed by the CPUC, and AB1999 on cap fixed fees.

9. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

I-REN Energy Science Fair winners were gave a brief description of their projects. Members of the

Committee and the public were invited to attend the International Science and Engineering Fair, which will take place on May 16 at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

Casey Dailey, WRCOG Director of Energy & Environmental Programs, reported that June 25 - 26, 2024, the California Climate Energy Collaborative, of which I-REN is a funder of, is hosting a conference in Palm Springs. I-REN Fellows were selected to be a part of the spotlight Fellowship panel, and WRCOG's Karina Camacho was selected to moderate a panel on Uniting Forces: The Inland Empire's Approach to Energy and Climate Challenges.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next I-REN Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 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 3:28 p.m. in honor of Jack Warneke, a pillar of the community; former San Jacinto City Clerk Angela Walton; and Assemblyman Brian Nestande.



Inland Regional Energy Network

I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: Approval of I-REN Executive Committee Meeting Schedule for 2025

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

Date: July 16, 2024

Recommended Action(s):

1. Approve the schedule of I-REN Executive Committee meetings for 2025.

Summary:

All I-REN Executive Committee meeting dates are proposed for the 3rd Tuesday of the month, quarterly, at 2:00 p.m.

Discussion:

Following are the proposed 2025 meeting dates for the Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) Executive Committee. All I-REN meeting dates are proposed for the 3rd Tuesday of the month, quarterly, at 2:00 p.m.

Committee	Day	Time	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
I-REN	3rd Tuesday	2:00 p.m.	21	DARK	DARK	15	DARK	DARK	15	DARK	DARK	21	DARK	DARK

Prior Action(s):

None.

Financial Summary:

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

Attachment(s):

None.



Inland Regional Energy Network

I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: I-REN Regulatory and Reporting Activities Update

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

Date: July 16, 2024

Recommended Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

Summary:

WRCOG, on behalf of I-REN, is a party in 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 and Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen) rulemakings, 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.

Discussion:

Background

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.

Also at its March 21, 2023, meeting, the I-REN 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 I-REN Executive Committee and report the comments at the next meeting of the I-REN Executive Committee.

Current Situation

Attachment 1 to this Staff Report provides an overview of I-REN's regulatory proceedings, summarizing developments in the proceedings to which WRCOG, on behalf of I-REN, is a party, as well as the proceedings that I-REN is monitoring that have taken place since the Regulatory and Reporting Activities Update included in the agenda packet for the Executive Committee meeting of April 16, 2024.

Attachment 1 also mentions the comment letters WRCOG recently filed on behalf of I-REN with the CPUC in the Energy Efficiency and SGIP proceedings and with the CEC in the 2025 Energy Code and CalGreen rulemakings. The table in Attachment 2 to this Staff Report illustrates the various reports that I-REN must file with the CPUC throughout the year.

Prior Action(s):

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

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

Financial Summary:

All costs associated with regulatory monitoring and reporting are included in WRCOG's adopted Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Agency Budget under I-REN Program (Fund 180) in the Energy & Environmental Department.

Attachment(s):

[Attachment 1 - I-REN 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. Status Update

- 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. The CPUC has not yet ruled on the Cal Advocates petition.
- 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.
- June 20, 2024 – The CPUC issued a Proposed Decision approving the application of a new energy efficiency portfolio administrator, San Diego Regional Energy Network. San Diego Community Power, a CCA serving the City of San Diego, six other cities in San Diego County and unincorporated San Diego County will serve as portfolio administrator on behalf of San Diego Regional Energy Network. WRCOG filed comments in support of San Diego Regional Energy Network.

4. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- 1st Quarter 2024 and ongoing – 2024-2027 Portfolio Oversight
- August 1, 2024 – The CPUC is scheduled to adopt the Proposed Decision approving the application of San Diego Regional Energy Network.

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 Decision (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. Status Update

- March 14, 2024 – WRCOG filed with the CPUC I-REN's Advice Letter on providing technical support to I-REN member agencies for integrated demand-side management (IDSM). The Advice Letter is still pending.
- May 21, 2024 – The CPUC Administrative Law Judge issued a Ruling seeking comment on a potential path forward for the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (Rural REN), in response to Petitions for Modification of D. 23-06-055 related to Rural REN filed by various parties have filed. Comments were due on June 14, 2024, and reply comments by June 28, 2024.

4. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

A CPUC Decision on RuralRen is expected in summer 2024.

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 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 proposed 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. Status Update

April 18, 2024 – The CPUC approved D.24-04-007 granting CalChoice’s Petition for Modification. 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. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

The proceeding is now closed. CalChoice is implementing D.24-04-007.

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) outlined in the Proposed Decision issued on May 24, 2024, referred to below.
- Continuing to improve the DER cost-effectiveness process.
- Taking part in the Data Working Group activities, 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. Status Update

- May 24, 2024 – The CPUC issued a Proposed Decision that adopts the SCT as an additional test for the CPUC to consider when evaluating the cost-effectiveness of DER programs and adopted required inputs in the SCT. The SCT with these inputs must be considered in all DER proceedings. This test will be used as one component to inform the broader framework of tests used as an input for determining cost-effectiveness for DER programs.
- June 13, 2024 – Deadline for submitting opening comments on the Proposed Decision. WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed comments broadly supportive of the Proposed Decision.
- June 18, 2024 – Deadline for submitting reply comments on the Proposed Decision. WRCOG did not file on behalf of I-REN.

4. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

July 11, 2024 – The CPUC is scheduled to adopt the Proposed Decision.

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. Status Update

- May 14, 2024 – Tariff On-Bill (TOB) Working Group consisting of the four large IOUs and CCA Silicon Valley Clean Energy submitted its Joint TOB Proposal to the CPUC. The Joint TOB Proposal is for two-year pilot programs to test the viability and the efficacy of the TOB model in California to install a variety of clean energy equipment upgrades in customer homes to help achieve California’s clean energy goals.
- May 29, 2024 – Several equity stakeholders filed a motion requesting that the CPUC provide direction for parties and stakeholders on how to appropriately develop a record and provide information to allow for proper consideration of the Joint TOB Proposal.

4. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

None scheduled.

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

i. 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.

ii. 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.

iii. Status Update

- G. April 12, 2024 – Assigned Commissioner’s Scoping Memo and Ruling. The proceeding will cover the following issues:
- Proactive planning to accelerate transportation electrification
 - Refocusing ratepayer support in transportation electrification framework
 - Vehicle-Grid Integration
 - Low Carbon Fuel Standard
 - Timely energization of vehicle charging
- June 3 , 2024 – Administrative Law Judge’s Ruling initiating Track 1 and inviting party comment on whether the CPUC should pause implementation of the state’s Transportation Electrification Rebate Program.

4. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- July 2, 2024 – Opening comments due on ALJ Ruling.
- July 18, 2024 – Reply comments due on ALJ 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. Status Update

No recent developments.

4. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

None scheduled.

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. Status Update

None relevant to I-REN.

4. 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. Status Update

- 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 CPUC's Environmental and Social Justice 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.

4. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

The Proposed Decision will be issued within 90 days from submission of the Track 5 record.

D. CEC 2025 California 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

- 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. 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.

- April 16 - 18, 2024 – Lead Commissioner Hearings on 2025 Energy Code.
- May 13, 2024 – Deadline to submit comments on the 45-day language. WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed comments generally supportive of the 2025 Energy Code.
- June 13, 2024 – CEC published 2025 Energy Code 15-day language.
- June 28, 2024 – Deadline to submit comments on the 15-day language. WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed comments seeking clarification on the language around exceptions to the solar heat gain coefficient for fenestration relevant to Climate Zone 15 (CVAG territory).

4. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- August 14, 2024 – Adoption of 2025 Energy Code at CEC Business Meeting.
- December 17 - 19, 2024 – Building Standards Commission approval of 2025 Energy Code.
- January 1, 2026 – 2025 Energy Code effective date.

E. CEC 2025 California Green Building Standards Code Rulemaking [\(24-BSTD-02\)](#)

1. Proceeding Overview

The CEC proposes to update the voluntary energy efficiency provisions of the California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen). The proposed changes for CalGreen are amendments to example or model code language that are intended as templates and examples for local jurisdictions to use in considering above-code ordinances; the proposed changes do not have regulatory effect as local jurisdictions are not compelled to use or follow these examples.

2. Key I-REN Issues

- CalGreen contains model language that jurisdictions in I-REN's area can use to adopt voluntary reach codes that exceed the Energy Code requirements.
- The measure requiring a heat pump when replacing air conditioning systems in existing single-family homes is not cost-effective in Climate Zone 15 (CVAG territory). I-REN requests the CEC to provide technical assistance to jurisdictions in Climate Zone 15 so they can consider additional savings in their cost-effective analysis.

3. Status Update

- May 17, 2024 – CEC published 2025 CalGreen 45-day language and Initial Study and Proposed Negative Declaration for the 2025 CalGreen.
- June 5, 2024 – Lead Commissioner Hearings on 2025 CalGreen.

- July 1, 2024 – Deadline to submit comments on the 45-day language. WRCOG on behalf of I-REN filed the comments generally supportive of the 2025 CalGreen.

4. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- July – August 2024 – 15-day language comment period.
- September 11, 2024 – Adoption of 2025 CalGreen at CEC Business Meeting.
- December 17 - 19, 2024 – Building Standards Commission approval of 2025 CalGreen.
- January 1, 2026 – 2025 CalGreen 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. Status Update

- April 30, 2024 – EBD Direct Install Solicitation Manual, Scope of Work and Federal Terms and Conditions issued. The solicitation notes the CEC’s application to the United States Department of Energy (DOE) to incorporate funding from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Home Efficiency Rebates (HOMES) Program into the EBD Direct Install Program. This Solicitation may also provide recipients with federal HOMES funding for EBD Direct Install Program implementation, in addition to state funding. Projects and program activities supported by HOMES funding will be required to comply with the HOMES Program Guidance, CEC’s forthcoming application to DOE, and Federal Award Terms and Conditions.
- May 10, 2024 – Pre-Application Workshop.
- June 28, 2024 – Deadline to Submit Proposals.

4. Upcoming Filings / Decisions / Meetings

- August 2, 2024 – Notice of Proposed Award Posting Date.
- December 11, 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. Status Update

No recent developments.

4. 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.	Filed.
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.	Submitted, disposition forthcoming from ED.
2023 Annual Report	4/15/2024	Narrative and spreadsheet format report on overall Portfolio performance and Program level accomplishments.	Filed.
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.	Filed.
2023 Annual Monthly Report	4/18/2024	"Month 13" report to align savings and expenditures with annual claim true up and annual report.	Filed.
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	Filed.

Annual Report Overview Presentation to CAEECC	5/14/2024 & 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.	Completed.
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.	Submitted, disposition forthcoming from ED.
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.	In progress.
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.	In progress.
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.	In progress.
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	
Semi-Annual Progress Update to CAEECC	TBD (approx. 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: Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Activities Update

Contact: Stacey A. Morales, Management Analyst II, San Bernardino Council of Governments, smorales@gosbcta.com, (909) 884-8276

Date: July 16, 2024

Recommended Action(s):

1. Receive and file.

Summary:

The Energy Coalition (TEC) will provide an update of the I-REN Public Sector Technical Support activities and accomplishments regarding the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG).

Discussion:

Background

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 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 to the Inland Empire region. On November 18, 2021, the CPUC formally approved the I-REN Business Plan through program year 2027. Work on the various I-REN programs began in earnest in the fall of 2022. I-REN initiatives are guided by the I-REN Executive Committee, which is comprised of a committee of elected officials from both COG partners. The I-REN portfolio consists of three sectors: Codes & Standards, Public Sector, and Workforce Education & Training.

Present Situation

The I-REN Public Sector offering strives to establish robust and comprehensive services for the local jurisdictions in the I-REN territory. The existence of I-REN has opened up opportunities to leverage the framework and communication channels for additional grant and incentive funding. The technical assistance I-REN has offered for the Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant (EECBG) is in alignment with the I-REN Business Plan Tactic 1.1.1: "Establish person-to-person support for local governments to

get higher levels of assistance and support for their energy efficiency projects.” The Department of Energy (DOE) deployed \$550M of EECBG funds in January 2023 designed to help states, local governments, and Tribes reduce energy use, reduce fossil fuel emissions, and improve energy efficiency.

Of the \$550M, a total of \$6.2M was allocated to eligible I-REN member agencies in a formula allocation. Several eligible uses for these grant funds include, but are not limited to, energy efficiency retrofits and renewable energy technologies related to government buildings, traffic signals, and street lighting. The I-REN Public Sector team has been providing on-going technical assistance to I-REN member agencies for the EECBG funding.

Public Sector technical support for the EECBG funding to member agencies includes:

- Facilitating the application processes
- Providing sample applications
- Technical assistance and guidance
- Hosting information sessions
- Coordination with the DOE and the California Energy Commission (CEC) Navigating funding options
- Enhancing community energy strategies

The types of EECBG projects supported have included battery systems, streetlights, building retrofits, solar charging stations, HVAC and lighting controls, electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, and solar light poles.

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 2024/2025 Agency Budget under the I-REN budget (Fund 180) in the Energy & Environmental Department.

Attachment(s):

None.



Inland Regional Energy Network

I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: I-REN Public Sector Activities Update
Contact: Karina Camacho, WRCOG Analyst III, kcamacho@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6724
Date: July 16, 2024

Recommended Action(s):

1. Receive and file.
-

Summary:

This update covers I-REN's two Public Sector Programs, Cash for Kilowatts and Technical Assistance. Key milestones will be shared to include gathering historic energy data, creating energy resilience roadmaps, presenting to city councils, discussing energy projects with cities, site visits, and uploading facility data into the Building Upgrade Concierge software.

Discussion:

Background

The I-REN Public Sector Program launched in February 2023 with the contract approval of program implementers. Since then, the Program has launched various initiatives to provide energy-efficiency services and resources to I-REN member agencies.

Present Situation

I-REN's two Public Sector Programs are the Normalized Metered Energy Consumption Program, known as Cash for Kilowatts, and the Technical Assistance Program. The Cash for Kilowatts Program provides incentive funds to agencies for holistic energy efficiency projects. Additional incentives are offered for cooling centers and emergency operation centers. For every kilowatt of energy that an emergency operation or cooling center project saves, I-REN will give up to \$2.00/kWh of incentives to offset project costs.

I-REN is also conducting zero-cost energy audits to help member agencies become resilience-ready. An energy audit will help agencies identify opportunities to reduce energy usage at facilities and will help identify the energy-saving upgrades that will save agencies the most money over time. The I-REN Technical Assistance Program provides agencies with support services on their energy efficiency projects and researching funding opportunities.

Energy Data Requests

As part of the Public Sector programs, I-REN staff have been working with agencies to obtain historic energy data from SoCal Edison and SoCal Gas to better understand the agencies' energy use and provide recommendations for energy savings. I-REN has received historic energy data from the following jurisdictions:

- CVAG: City of Indian Wells and the County of Riverside
- SBCOG: Cities of Barstow, Chino Hills, Fontana, Grand Terrace, Highland, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga, San Bernardino, Victorville, and Yucaipa, the Town of Apple Valley, Colton Joint Unified School District, and SBCOG / SBCTA
- WRCOG: Cities of Beaumont, Canyon Lake, Corona, Jurupa Valley, Lake Elsinore, Menifee, Murrieta, Norco, Perris, Temecula, and the County of Riverside

I-REN staff have been working with the other member agencies to process the remaining historic energy data requests.

Energy Resilience Roadmaps

Once I-REN has the agency's historic energy data, staff will produce a Preliminary Energy Resilience Roadmap with charts summarizing the agency's energy usage including lighting, buildings, and water pumping. The roadmap will also identify the agency's top energy users and provides next steps for gathering additional information and scheduling site visits.

I-REN has presented Preliminary Energy Resilience Roadmaps to staff from the following jurisdictions:

- CVAG: City of Indian Wells
- SBCOG: Cities of Chino Hills, Fontana, Grand Terrace, Highland, Rancho Cucamonga, San Bernardino, Victorville, and Yucaipa, and the Town of Apple Valley
- WRCOG: Cities of Calimesa, Canyon Lake, Corona, Lake Elsinore, Murrieta, Norco, Perris, and Temecula

I-REN staff are developing Final Energy Resilience Roadmaps for the Town of Apple Valley, and the Cities of Norco and Indian Wells.

Site Visits

Once I-REN and agency staff identify the top energy-using facilities, I-REN conducts a site visit and energy audit for one or more facilities. I-REN has completed site visits for the following jurisdictions:

- CVAG: Cities of Indian Wells and Palm Springs
- SBCOG: Cities of Barstow, Fontana, Grand Terrace, Redlands, San Bernardino, and Victorville, the Town of Apple Valley, and SBCOG / SBCTA
- WRCOG: Cities of Canyon Lake, Murrieta, and Norco

Building Upgrade Concierge

The Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) web-based tool offers analytics, modeling, and measurements

and verification performance features for public agency benchmarking and project development.

I-REN has uploaded facility portfolio data into the BUC for the following jurisdictions:

- SBCOG: Cities of Chino Hills and Rancho Cucamonga, the Town of Apple Valley, and SBCOG / SBCTA
- WRCOG: Cities of Canyon Lake, Murrieta, and Norco.

I-REN staff are currently working to upload BUC data for the Cities of Barstow, Beaumont, Calimesa, Corona, Highland, Lake Elsinore, Perris, and Temecula.

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 2024/2025 Agency Budget under the I-REN budget (Fund 180) in the Energy & Environmental Department.

Attachment(s):

None.



Inland Regional Energy Network

I-REN Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: I-REN Fellowship Activities Update
Contact: Tyler Masters, WRCOG Program Manager, tmasters@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6732
Date: July 16, 2024

Recommended Action(s):

1. Provide direction on the expansion of eligible Public Sector agencies' participation to non-City / County agencies in the I-REN Energy Fellowship Program.

Summary:

In March 2023, the I-REN Executive Committee authorized a partnership with CivicSpark to establish the I-REN Energy Fellowship, aiming to deploy up to 27 Fellows annually across I-REN member agencies to enhance energy efficiency efforts as outlined in I-REN's Business Plan. In the first year, 11 Fellows were placed in I-REN member agencies. Notably, the Fellows worked on 28 unique energy efficiency, water / energy nexus, electric vehicle, and renewables projects over their time in the Fellowship. Participation grew in the second year to 15 jurisdictions, where up to 16 Fellows are to be placed. Lessons learned from the first year emphasized the need for broader outreach through local colleges and universities, which resulted in increased interest and participation.

Discussion:

Background

On March 21, 2023, the Executive Committee authorized staff to enter into an agreement with CivicSpark to support the Energy Fellowship Program and to identify, recruit, and place up to 27 Fellows within the I-REN service territory every year. The development of the Energy Fellowship, a strategy identified in Workforce, Education & Training section of I-REN's Business Plan, is intended to ensure there is a trained workforce to support and realize energy efficiency savings goals across all sectors. This strategy, the placement of Fellows with up to 27 I-REN member agencies, allows for flexible yet impactful results, as these Fellows will create capacity and Public Sector agency expertise, but will also support cities in a wide range of energy efficiency initiatives where cities and their communities need it most (e.g., internal project identification, community outreach, codes & standards, green business workforce projects, etc.).

Present Situation

Year 1 Results: A total of 11 Fellows were placed at 11 member agencies throughout all three I-REN

COG partner member agencies. Participating host sites include the Cities of Beaumont, Canyon Lake, Chino Hills, Corona, Grand Terrace, Norco, Ontario, Palm Springs, Perris, Rancho Cucamonga, and San Bernardino. These 11 Fellows were tasked with roughly 28 projects across their 11-month Fellowship. Of their projects, 75% were related to energy efficiency, followed by 14% for Electric Vehicles, 7% for water / energy nexus, and 4% related to renewable projects (streamlining solar permitting, etc.).

I-REN is also committed to providing the Fellows with meaningful professional growth opportunities. One highlight of this includes a March 2024 trip to the ESRI Campus in Redlands, where the Fellows learned about data visualization and geographic information systems as it applies to energy efficiency. Additionally, I-REN financially sponsored its interested Fellows to attend the 15th Annual California Climate and Energy Collaborative (CCEC) Forum June 25 - 26, 2024, in Palm Springs. Each year, 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. One Fellows even joined I-REN staff on a panel and presented on his participation in the Fellowship.

I-REN will continue to find opportunities to provide the Fellows with support of their growth professionally and technically.

Year 2: At the time of host application deadline (June 7, 2024), there are currently 15 jurisdictions that have completed applications and are currently in the process of interviewing Fellowship candidates. These include the Cities of Apple Valley, Chino Hills, Corona, Grand Terrace, Menifee, Moreno Valley, Norco, Ontario, Palm Springs, Riverside (2 Fellows), and Temecula, the County of Riverside, as well as CVAG and WRCOG. Up to 16 Fellows will be deployed across these 15 jurisdictions.

One of the biggest lessons learned from year one of the Energy Fellowship Program was the depth of outreach to potential Fellows. While I-REN's programs partners do a wonderful job of reaching far and wide, sometimes the materials and information were not making the way directly to students through their local community colleges, universities, or community centers. To support the penetration of the information in the Riverside and San Bernardino communities, I-REN staff continued to foster relationships with the 12 community colleges in the subregion and became employer partners at three local universities (California State University - San Bernardino, California Baptist University, University of California Riverside, and 2 of the universities in Palm Desert locations). These partnerships allowed I-REN to be actively participate at over 35 career and community fairs over the last year, where we received signed interest forms from 440+ individuals that would be interested in hearing more about the Fellowship Program and future opportunities to participate in it.

Staff is also working with CivicSpark to quantify the impact of the outreach that I-REN provided through the universities and community colleges. Staff will provide the results to the I-REN Executive Committee at its July 16, 2024, meeting.

Future Fellowship Participation in Public Sector Agencies (non-City / County): The budgeted goal of the Fellowship is to place up to 27 Fellows at I-REN member agencies. Now that staff have gone through two cycles of outreach to confirm host agency participation, staff have a few findings to share with the Executive Committee for discussion.

I-REN and each COG have provided additional and extensive outreach to all of the member agencies to secure site hosts. This outreach has included but is not limited to multiple presentations and e-mails to

various committees at each COG, as well as many conversations on the Fellowship Program to member agency staff. At closing of the current year host agency application (June 7, 2024), I-REN staff was informed that there is at least one non-City / County organization, the San Bernardino Community College District, that developed an application to host a Fellow. While their participation as a host is not currently tied to I-REN, staff wants to bring up this item in case the Executive Committee has an interest in including non-City / County agencies into the Energy Fellowship Program cohort in this or future years.

Prior Action(s):

None.

Financial Summary:

Activities related to the Workforce Education & Training Sector are included in the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 budget under the I-REN Budget in Fund 180, under the Workforce Education & Training Sector.

Attachment(s):

None.