

Community Choice Has Got the Power

Eight Community Choice energy aggregators partner to form California Community Power, SLO County increasingly out in the cold



Community Choice Aggregators, or CCAs, provide competitively priced, clean energy choices to their communities while reinvesting revenues into local and statewide projects and programs, supporting sustainability, and enhancing their local economies. There are 23 CCAs in California serving more than 10 million customers.

Now, northern and central coast Community Choice Aggregators (CCAs), including [Central Coast Community Energy](#), have joined forces by forming a new Joint Powers Authority (JPA): California Community Power. The JPA allows the CCAs to leverage combined buying power for large-scale clean energy procurement and provide cost-effective clean energy and reliability resources to advance local and state climate goals.

The CCAs forming California Community Power represent 2.6 million customer accounts and 6.6 million people across more than 140 municipalities spanning from Humboldt County to Santa Barbara County. The CCAs serve a combined annual load of 32,600 gigawatt hours, which represents about 40% of PG&E's annual electric load. The member CCAs include Central Coast Community Energy, East Bay Community Energy, MCE, Peninsula Clean

Energy, Redwood Coast Energy Authority, San José Clean Energy, Silicon Valley Clean Energy and Sonoma Clean Power. CleanPowerSF is pursuing membership.

Additional benefits of the new JPA include enhanced negotiating power, larger renewable and storage project procurement, shared risk mitigation, and increased opportunities for innovation, as demonstrated by the first, major joint procurement for 500 megawatts (MWs) of long-duration energy storage.

“California is a policy leader in the fight against climate change. CCAs have helped local communities meet their climate goals by building new renewable resources and implementing programs that reduce emissions from transportation and buildings,” said State Senator Josh Becker (D-Peninsula). “As we work to achieve the clean energy goals set by SB 100, CCAs will continue to play a crucial role to reduce emissions for communities across the state. It is encouraging to see CCAs come together to develop long duration storage, a crucial resource for achieving our 100% clean energy target.”

“Over the years, as the CCA movement has grown, there has been an increase of CCA joint procurement efforts for large-scale renewable and energy storage projects and reliability resources,” said Beth Vaughan, executive director of the California Community Choice Association (CalCCA). “The creation of California Community Power represents a truly community-led approach to advancing cleaner energy, greater reliability, and reduced costs for ratepayers.”

CCA climate goals are typically more aggressive than the state mandate to achieve a 100% clean energy grid by 2045. Many CCAs already meet or exceed state mandates for eligible renewable resources and some have set targets to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2030, or match supply with load on a 24/7 basis with renewable or carbon-free generation.

California CCAs have done this while saving their customers tens of millions of dollars annually on their utility bills, developing thousands of megawatts of new wind and solar power projects, and offering innovative energy programs.

Sadly, while many residents of SLO County will be able to take advantage of these and all future benefits because the city they live in is a member of Central Coast Community Energy (see “Electrify Your Ride” elsewhere in this issue), the residents of Atascadero and the county’s unincorporated areas are not among them. That’s because when the opportunity to join the regional CCA program was before them, the County Board of Supervisors turned it down. In Atascadero, the City Council declined to agendize a discussion or a vote. Constituents may want to have a chat with them.

Each CCA in California Community Power maintains its community-driven, local autonomy to meet the needs of their customers and region. More information will be available on the California Community Power website (cacommunitypower.org), currently under development.