

# **San Diego Community Power Plan**

## **Phase 1: Listening**

### **Business, Key Stakeholders, and Public Listening Workshops Summary**

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## 1. Overview

San Diego Community Power (SDCP) is developing a Community Power Plan (CPP) that will provide a decision-making framework to guide its strategy and development of local programs. Based on findings from a community needs assessment, the CPP will guide investments in developing local renewable generation, demand reduction, storage, and other distributed energy resources in SDCP's service territory.

The first phase of community engagement for the CPP focused on listening and information gathering about community priorities and needs around energy-related issues across different communities to inform the development of the community needs survey and CPP, including the community needs assessment. SDCP hosted five listening workshops between July and August 2022 to hear from a broad spectrum of community members including local businesses, key stakeholders, and the general public.

This summary documents the workshop objectives and meeting details, notification and outreach methods, format, and input themes. Input from each workshop can be found in the appendices.

## 2. Objectives

The listening workshops were targeted at three groups: local businesses (two sessions – one in the morning and one in the afternoon to allow for attendance flexibility), key stakeholders (one session), and the general public (two sessions – one in English with Spanish interpretation and one in Spanish with English interpretation). For all listening workshops, the general objective was to introduce SDCP as a long-term community partner that can help meet community needs, with a recognition that many communities have not been able to share in the benefits of clean energy customer programs and/or have been impacted by the power utility system.

The specific objectives for the **local businesses** listening workshops were to hear input and local knowledge regarding:

- What discussions local businesses are having around energy
- Energy trends in the region's business sector
- Businesses' evolving energy needs
- The kinds of power customer programs that could help local businesses meet their needs and accomplish their goals

The specific objectives for the **key stakeholders** listening workshop were to hear input and local knowledge regarding:

- What discussions major businesses/institutions are having around energy
- Energy trends in the region's business sector
- Businesses'/institutions' evolving energy needs
- The kinds of power customer programs that could help major businesses/institutions meet their needs and accomplish their goals

The specific objectives for the **general public** listening workshops were to hear input and local knowledge regarding:

- What communities are working on right now
- Communities' needs and challenges in general
- How people see climate change affecting their communities, residents, local businesses, and schools
- General concerns around electricity and power service
- The kinds of power customer programs that could help community members meet their needs and accomplish community goals

### 3. When and Where

The listening workshops were held virtually on the Zoom platform. Table 1 includes the target audience, dates, and times for each workshop, estimated attendees, and language the workshops were held in, including if interpretation was offered. Sessions were held on different days and times of the week to provide options and optimize convenience for participants.

**Table 1: Listening Workshops Information**

Workshop and Target Audience	Date/Time	Estimated Attendees	Language and Interpretation
Local Businesses Listening Workshops	Thursday, July 21, 2022 8:00-9:00 a.m.	15	English
	Thursday, July 21, 2022 4:00-5:00 p.m.	5	English
Key Stakeholders Listening Workshop	Thursday, July 21, 2022 12:00-1:00 p.m.	10	English
General Public Listening Workshops	Tuesday, July 26, 2022 6:00-7:00 p.m.	15	English with Spanish interpretation
	Wednesday, August 17, 2022 6:00-7:00 p.m.	0*	Spanish with English interpretation

*\*The second general public listening workshop, offered in Spanish with English interpretation, was originally scheduled for July 27, 2022. Due to low registration, the workshop was rescheduled to expand outreach efforts and encourage more participation. Although outreach efforts were expanded and there were registrants for the rescheduled workshop held on August 17, 2022, no members of the public attended.*

## 4. Notifications and Outreach

SDCP used a variety of methods to inform community members about the listening workshops and encourage participation, as shown in Table 2.

*Table 2: Listening Workshops Outreach Methods*

Method	Description
<b>Website</b>	Information about the listening workshops was posted on the CPP webpage, hosted by SDCP ( <a href="http://SDCommunityPower.org/CPP">SDCommunityPower.org/CPP</a> ).
<b>Email Invitations</b>	Invitation emails with a request to forward the listening workshops information were sent to several email lists, including SDCP's member agencies, Community Advisory Committee members, Board members, community-based organizations, and outreach partners including Chamber of Commerce's, Business Improvement District Managers, and Economic Development departments.
<b>Direct Engagement</b>	Key stakeholders were invited directly by SDCP's Account Manager.
<b>Social Media Posts</b>	Information about the listening workshops was posted on SDCP's Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn accounts.
<b>Paid Social Media Ads</b>	Paid social media ads ("boosted posts") were administered for social media posts on SDCP's Instagram and Facebook

## 5. Format

Each listening workshop generally had the same format. The workshop began with a short presentation about SDCP and the CPP process by SDCP staff and was followed by a Q&A and a set of discussion questions. Participants had the opportunity to provide input verbally or via the chat box. The discussion question format for each listening workshop was adjusted based on attendance; for smaller groups, input was shared through verbal comments and the chat box, and for larger groups, input was shared through polling software in addition to verbal comments and the chat box. An online comment form was also made available via email after each workshop to provide an additional input opportunity for community members.

The discussion questions varied slightly for each workshop depending on the target audience. All questions are shown below:

### Local Businesses

- What are some of the challenges your business is facing?
- What are local businesses discussing around energy and electricity?
- What are energy concerns that local businesses in the San Diego region are facing? How do you see future legislation or regulation impacting your business?
- How are you seeing your businesses' energy needs evolve in the future?
- How is climate change impacting your business?

- What kinds of power customer programs could help your business? How can SDCP help you?

### Key Stakeholders

- What are some of the challenges your business or organization is facing?
- What tools are needed to support your efforts in creating clean energy and decarbonization goals for your organization?
- How are you seeing your businesses or organization's energy needs evolve in the future?
- How is climate change impacting your business or organization?
- What kinds of power customer programs could help your business or organization?

### General Public

- What is your community working on right now?
- How can SDCP help you and your community?
- What issues do you face when it comes to electricity and energy at your house?
- What programs do you use to reduce your electricity use or your electric bill?
- What types of energy and climate solutions would you be most interested in? For example:
  - Electric vehicles and charging
  - More efficient appliances (like air conditioners/heaters and refrigerators)
  - Solar panels
  - Batteries (e.g., energy storage)
  - All-electric appliances (like electric induction stoves and heat pumps)
  - Improved comfort through insulation, efficient windows, or other weatherization
  - More efficient lights (like switching to LED bulbs)
  - Smart, internet-connected thermostats
- How is climate change affecting you?
- What interests you about clean energy or green energy?

## 6. Input

The following sections summarize the major input themes by target audience. All input is documented in the appendices (Appendix A: Local Businesses, Appendix B: Key Stakeholders, and Appendix C: General Public).

### Businesses and Stakeholders

- Businesses, like residents, are facing an energy affordability crisis with energy costs rising quickly and unpredictably. This is in addition to the challenging business environment created by the Covid-19 pandemic and rising business costs.

- The increasing cost of living and energy costs cause strain on San Diego residents and businesses. Reduction of energy costs is a priority.
- Many homes and businesses need infrastructure additions and upgrades, such as adding air conditioning units and switching to more energy-efficient appliances and equipment.
- Electrification will lead to significant upgrades not only to the electrical grid but also facility infrastructure and will require a reliable source of qualified maintenance resources for when issues arise. It would be helpful if SDCP could provide assistance to businesses and organizations to support cleaner construction projects and more energy efficient infrastructure upgrades.
- Solar panels are an asset to renewable energy except for their low battery storage capabilities. Investing in long-lasting battery storage for renewable energy will extend its usage window.
- Businesses and organizations are developing sustainability goals or have existing goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet sustainability targets. Renewable energy is a high priority in achieving their goals and there is a need for public-private partnerships to help meet sustainability goals.
- As reliance on the grid intensifies due to electrification, more energy storage options may be needed for backup power. Businesses and organizations are looking for alternatives and diverse sources of energy to large scale backup power plants and diesel generation.
- Educating residential and business customers about SDCP's rates and services offered, in addition to the benefits of transitioning to renewable energy, should be prioritized. There's a need for correct and clear information to be provided to overcome misinformation and misleading facts.

## General Public

- With increasing electricity costs, reducing electric bills is a high priority for community members.
- Residents are interested in ways to transition to 100% renewable energy. SDCP should invest in programs that help communities access clean, renewable, and affordable energy, especially low-income communities. The community noted the importance of converting from [natural] gas to electric and expressed interest in heat pump technology and electric appliances such as [induction] stovetops, especially for renters and the need for financial assistance.
- The community is concerned about health impacts (e.g., increased asthma rates and allergies), rising temperatures due to worsening air pollution, less rainfall, and increased heat related events. The need for cooling (air conditioning) and the importance of weatherization programs were noted.
- Infrastructure additions, adding rooftop solar to complexes and homes, expanding electric vehicle charging stations (especially at apartments), and adding battery energy storage needs to be supported for renters as well as homeowners. Energy efficiency upgrades should be expanded for renters.
- In addition to offering SDCP-specific energy rebates and bill reduction programs, partnerships with existing discount programs should be considered, such as OhmConnect and Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH), to help residents with utility bills.

- The community also noted the importance of increasing access to electric vehicles for low-income residents, access to electric bikes (e-bikes), and creating transportation hubs to decrease traffic speed and increase road safety.



# Appendix A

## Local Businesses Input

### General Questions and Comments

- Could you explain what the options are with renewable energy battery storage systems?
- For a business that might be on the fence about opting into Power100, what are the talking points you might use to help the business understand that it is beneficial?
- What plans are there to invest in nuclear power using uranium or thorium, so you can provide less expensive and more reliable power?

### What are some of the challenges your business is facing?

- Lower enrollment compared to pre-Covid-19 enrollment numbers
- Outrageous electric bills
- Achieving sustainability goals, reducing air emissions, and cleaner energy
- Getting correct and clear information, not “misleading” facts about SDCP
- Safety
- High energy costs
- Deciding between different options to best meet our corporate sustainability goals
- Energy costs are rising very quickly
- The electrical union is always looking for people for apprenticeship programs and getting journeymen electricians. Educating and reaching out to the community about electrician vocational careers, especially to students in the County of San Diego’s Communities of Concern.

### What are local businesses discussing around energy and electricity?

- High cost and alternative sources of energy
- More dialogue about getting the chambers involved
- What can we do to reduce electricity costs and upgrade the efficiency of our current equipment?
- Are heat pump water heaters considered another form of energy storage?
- Adding a white coat sealant on the roof to reflect off some of the heat to make systems work better, adding two more air conditioning units, and replacing light switches to try to reduce the energy bill
- The cost of living in San Diego County is the highest in the nation. Residents want lower energy costs. How can SDCP help with that?

### What are the energy concerns that local businesses in the San Diego region are facing?

- The drastic increase in costs seems to be the biggest concern

- High costs
- Is enough power being produced for everyone to enroll and still get the amount they need?

### **How are you seeing your businesses' energy needs evolve in the future? How do you see future legislation or regulation impacting your business?**

- Climate change affects the need for heating and cooling due to shifts in weather.
- Electrification of building requirements
- With the potential for more electric vehicles, adding charging stations will be important to bring in customers and support employees.
- More appliances and more air conditioning units are needed for tenants
- Replacing appliances with appliances that are energy efficient; added solar systems but still working on the energy storage capabilities

### **How is climate change impacting your business?**

- Infrastructure is beginning to fail for coastal businesses due to flooding, sinkholes, and disrupted roads to and from businesses.
- Removing valuable resources
- Now installing air conditioning units at beach properties as more people are concerned about making sure they can control their environments
- The local, state, and federal governments have guidelines and goals for decarbonization and moving to electrification. Electrification is not the whole answer; there are alternative energy sources such as hydrogen. However, with electrification comes upgrades to the electric grid and increased partnerships with solar and wind power.

### **What kinds of power customer programs could help your business? How can SDCP help you?**

- Save on costs
- Anything to reduce electric bills
- Solar power and battery storage
- Learning more about the benefits of Power100
- Grants for upgrading infrastructure and equipment
- Reliable maintenance if issues arise with equipment
- Can battery storage be used to store energy during off-peak time and run equipment during peak times?

## Appendix B

### Key Stakeholders Input

#### What are some of the challenges your business or organization is facing?

- The cost of energy and the volatility of that cost in the USA and Europe
- The erosion of success in creating green spaces
- There are challenges from every business area such as overhead costs, staffing, and supplies. For every dollar that businesses can save on energy, it goes back into the community.
- Reducing energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions
- Hoping that SDCP can offer rebates and discounts that are like SDG&E
- A rise in Covid-19 cases
- Working around construction and infrastructure projects, particularly with the cost of capital
- We are extremely sensitive to electricity costs. Proud customer of SDCP's Power100 program.
- Being active in decarbonization efforts
- Getting creative with grant funding opportunities
- The public is becoming more interested in how energy works. The dispersal of energy information and where energy comes from will become vital as SDCP continues to provide services.
- We are looking at becoming a Power100 customer. There is a balance between staying profitable as an organization while also being aware of the external pressures to reduce gas emissions.
- Making upgrades to facility infrastructure
- How can SDCP partner with large organizations and companies in their efforts to reduce their carbon footprint? Being a local agency is a benefit to connecting with the community and helping local companies meet their sustainability goals.

#### What tools are needed to support your efforts in creating clean energy and decarbonization goals for your organization?

- Educating company executives that clean energy should be a high priority
- Clear understanding of SDCP's rates in comparison to SDG&E's rates; SDCP can provide healthy competition to SDG&E.
- Explaining the benefits of investing in renewable energy to a company's bottom line

#### How are you seeing your businesses or organization's energy needs evolve in the future?

- A few other Community Choice Aggregations are working on battery storage programs: <https://cal-cca.org/cca-programs/#toggle-id-10>

- As more facilities are electrified and electric vehicles become more common, reliance on the electric grid intensifies. These changes create a need for backup generators. It opens the door for looking into energy storage and long-lasting batteries.
- Many people do not want to hear that adding too much electricity to the system could lead to more problems someplace else.
- Under Navy regulations, there is an emphasis on emergency preparedness, resulting in a large diesel generator at the San Diego Port. Interested in alternative solutions to a diesel generator and would like to diversify its sources of energy.
- Creating large-scale plants for backup power

### How is climate change impacting your business or organization?

- The San Diego International Airport has a resiliency plan that looks at heat and sea level rises, but it also looks at airplanes' effects on climate change. It is an idea called flight shaming. A Good Traveler program has been implemented that helps passengers consider the impacts of climate change and offset their carbon footprint.
- Due to the pandemic, many employees are still working at home, which decreases the cost of buildings and their operations.
- The health of people is inherently tied to the health of the environment. Pollution, mosquitos, food supply shortages, etc. all have a ripple effect on the health of the population.

### What kinds of power customer programs could help your business or organization?

- Funding infrastructure projects that reduce energy usage
- Prioritizing clean construction projects
- Educating customers on the benefits and structure of SDCP's services
- Moving to electric-only is a time-consuming and costly process. Programs that help companies convert their infrastructure to electric or take advantage of discounts and rebates as part of this journey.

# Appendix C

## General Public Input

### General Questions and Comments

- Please describe the structure of SDCP in more detail. Particularly, who is the customer paying – SDCP or SDG&E?
- Can SDCP explain more about the projected \$10 million reinvestment back into the community? What is the breakdown of sources between SDCP revenue, grants, and state or federal funding that makes up the \$10 million?
- Is SDCP well situated to compete for state and federal funding compared to other utility companies?
- What is the difference between the services SDCP offers now and the CPP?
- Are there going to be opportunities for customers to take advantage of programs that reduce electricity bill costs, such as OhmConnect, through SDCP?
- Is SDCP able to share how many have signed up for Power100 so far?

### What is your community working on right now?

- As an advocate in National City, residents in affordable housing want to participate in the Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH) program and get solar on these housing complexes.
- Awareness of increases in utility bills, solar affordability, and accessing electric vehicles for low-income residents
- Creating transportation hubs to encourage slow-speed streets and bike safety
- Transition to 100% clean energy by 2035 in our city
- Converting from gas to electric

### How can SDCP help you and your community?

- Reduce costs of electricity
- Invest in clean energy jobs and businesses
- Prioritize community-based organization informed programs for under-resourced communities
- Help secure city, regional, and state funding
- Financial support for putting in electric vehicle charging stations for renters
- Easier access to e-bikes
- Provide competition to SDG&E to reduce costs
- Invest in programs that help low-income communities access clean, renewable, and affordable energy

- Keeping rooftop solar beneficial to households (single family)

### What issues do you face when it comes to electricity and energy at your house?

- Keeping it cool amidst rising utility costs
- Trying to conserve energy due to high prices
- Unpredictable costs in the future with SDG&E rates
- There are limited efficiency upgrades or options when renting a home.
- The need to keep the air conditioning on during hot days
- Energy rates are continuing to increase while many residents are on fixed incomes
- Want the cleanest energy possible for an affordable price
- Renters struggle with staying warm in the winter without good heating and staying cool in the summer without air conditioning.

### What programs do you use to reduce your electricity use or your electric bill?

- OhmConnect – a program to reduce energy when it is most expensive and start saving on electricity bills
- Using cooling strategies such as closing the windows and shades or blinds to keep the stifling air and sunlight out during hot days
- Turning off the lights when not in the room
- Putting solar on the rooftop
- Energy discount programs from SDG&E

### What types of energy and climate solutions would you be most interested in?

*For example, 1) Electric vehicles and charging; 2) More efficient appliances (like air conditioners/heaters and refrigerators); 3) Solar panels; 4) Batteries (aka energy storage); 5) All-electric appliances (like electric induction stoves and heat pumps); 6) Improved comfort through insulation, efficient windows, or other weatherization; 7) More efficient lights (like switching to LED bulbs); and 8) Smart, internet-connected thermostats.*

- All the above examples
- Rooftop solar and heat pumps
- Solar and zero electric vehicles
- All-electric appliances
- Storage of batteries
- Batteries and more energy-efficient appliances
- Solar and battery storage in municipal-owned facilities to serve as a resilience hub and/or cooling centers
- Adding electric vehicle charging stations at apartment buildings

- Helping to pay for electric appliances such as stovetops, especially for renters
- Energy-efficient heat pumps
- Weatherization programs for buildings, electric vehicle charging, and battery storage
- Battery storage by utility services
- Financial assistance to support electrifying homes

### How is climate change affecting you?

- Hotter days mean worse air pollution, which triggers allergies.
- Water conservation
- Drought
- Getting so hot that the air conditioning must be on 24/7
- Concerned how the rising heat will impact children, plants, and animals
- Concerned about wildfires and drought
- It is getting hotter and drier with less rainfall. More water use is needed for landscaping.
- Residents in National City are suffering from poor air quality resulting in extremely high rates of asthma.
- Habitability of certain areas moving forward will decrease.

### What interests you about clean energy or green energy?

- Clean energy will help ensure a future for me and my community.
- How can our cities rapidly transition to 100% clean energy?
- Survival for future generations
- Achieving 100% clean energy
- Leaving a healthier planet for our children and future generations
- Reduce household greenhouse gas emissions
- Energy usage to be at least mostly clean
- Creating electric grid resiliency
- How can we promote localized, community-based energy programs?
- It is an environmental justice issue. A healthy, clean, and sustainable environment is a human right, not just for affluent communities.
- How can we pull from multiple sources and use energy storage to achieve 100% clean energy?
- Will new clean energy jobs pay livable wages?
- Integrating 100% clean energy for low-income and government housing for free

- Need to avoid ruining our habitat