

Andrea Pizano

From: Eric Veium <eric@sloclimatecoalition.org>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 1:24 PM
To: Andrea Pizano
Cc: Louise Auerhahn; Tim Frank; Leslie Austin
Subject: Public Comment – SVCE Board Meeting, Item 3 (April 9, 2025)
Attachments: SVCE April 9 2025 Board Meeting _Item 3 PPA Project Selection Policy_ CCA W&EJ Alliance Public Comment Letter.pdf

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Hello Clerk Pizano,

I am writing on behalf of the CCA Workforce & Environmental Justice Alliance regarding **Agenda Item 3** for the **Silicon Valley Clean Energy Board Meeting on April 9, 2025**.

Please find attached our comment letter addressing the **proposed PPA Project Selection Policy**. We respectfully request that this letter be shared with the SCVE Board of Directors.

Thank you,

~Eric Veium
Co-Director
CCA Workforce & Environmental Justice Alliance



Eric Veium, MPP

he | him ([why do pronouns matter?](#))

Board Chair

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CCA Workforce & EJ Alliance



April 7, 2025

Chair Tyson and Honorable Directors
Silicon Valley Clean Energy
333 W. El Camino Real, Ste 330
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

Re: ITEM 3: Adopt SVCE's Power Purchase Agreement Project Selection Policy

Dear Chair Tyson and Honorable Directors,

We begin with sincere appreciation for Monica Padilla, Bena Chang, Kris Van Vactor, Britta Bradshaw and other supportive staff who have been instrumental in the collaborative effort that has delivered SVCE's PPA Project Selection Policy for your consideration. We are still requesting a few small refinements, requiring your direction, that we believe deliver greater value for SVCE, its customers, and the communities it serves. We are confident that the remaining issues can be resolved and see an opportunity for joint celebration of what we think is a proud moment for SVCE. We are looking forward to our continued collaboration.

Outstanding Issues in the Proposed Policy

We strongly support the labor, workforce, environmental, and community provisions included in the current proposed policy. To help ensure project success in cases where a project has not yet reached the permitting or entitlements phase, we recommend two additions:

1) Consider environmental impacts for earlier stage projects.

The proposed policy recommends prioritizing projects “Where the developer and local land use authority have established an enforceable development agreement which, in part, sets forth measures to mitigate impacts to sensitive habitats or environmentally sensitive areas.” However, when RFP/RFO responses are being evaluated, not all projects may yet be at this stage. We suggest adding language similar to the following:

“Or for projects that are in earlier stages of the development process, where the developer has adequately assessed likely impacts and addressed potential mitigants to sensitive habitat or environmentally sensitive areas, as for instance by committing to compliance with applicable Habitat Conservation Plans.”

2) Assess community engagement for earlier stage projects.

Similarly, the proposed policy recommends prioritizing projects that “Commit to meaningful engagement with local communities throughout the entitlement and construction processes”, but does not address the pre-entitlement phase. We suggest adding language similar to the following:

“Demonstrate commitment in their offer plans to meaningful engagement with local communities throughout the pre-entitlement, entitlement and construction processes”

A Risk-Reduction, Cost-Saving, and Market-Smart Strategy

The policy is preference-based – not mandates. This simple framework articulates SVCE’s preferences for what great projects look like *alongside* financial and technical considerations, at the very beginning of the procurement process. This clarity attracts stronger, more thoughtful proposals from developers, helps avoid costly oversights such as environmental conflicts or community opposition, and produces higher overall value aligned with the agency’s commitments and long-term goals. **This is not just a ‘values’ exercise—it’s a strategic approach to procurement that reduces risks to SVCE, its customers, and the clean energy industry as a whole.** Peer CCAs, including Sonoma Clean Power, Ava Community Energy, CCCE, and Clean Power SF have adopted similar standards. Clean Power Alliance—the largest CCA in the State—has included similar preferences in its RFOs for years - demonstrating that this policy is practical and achievable.

This approach is an important response to challenges facing the clean energy industry. There are a growing number of examples of projects that have been delayed, denied, or otherwise failed due to avoidable issues that might have been identified and addressed during project selection. In fact, according to a [recent study by LBNL](#), surveying clean energy project developers, after interconnection, community opposition due to misalignment with or lack of

community, economic, and local workforce benefits is the second leading cause of costly project delays, litigation, or denial.

At its core, this policy provides SVCE with a flexible, transparent structure that:

- **Avoids delays and cost overruns** by prompting early attention to labor, permitting, and community expectations.
- **Reduces costs** for both SVCE and developers by identifying and addressing opportunities and risks early in the process while minimizing time-consuming negotiation and project revisions or other delays later on.
- **Protects long-term value** by avoiding misaligned or poorly scoped projects that carry delivery, financial, or reputational risks.
- **Strengthens the competitive field** by encouraging developers to align with SVCE's goals, as other leading CCAs have successfully done.

Through clear, upfront guidance to developers regarding best practices promoted by SVCE and other CCA industry leaders, SVCE can elicit more projects that align with its preferences while retaining full discretion and flexibility for the staff and board to accommodate projects needed to meet technical requirements.

Clarifying What This Policy Does and Doesn't Do

- **It is not a mandate.** The policy signals preferences—not hard rules. SVCE retains full discretion to pursue any project necessary to meet technical, financial, or regulatory requirements.
- **It builds on existing public standards.** Cities and counties in SVCE's territory already require prevailing wage and apprenticeship on small public works projects. These practices are well-established.

We urge the Board to adopt this policy framework as a **market-smart and risk-conscious strategy** to improve project quality, reduce risks, and protect SVCE's fiscal and community priorities. Thank you for your continued leadership in building a clean energy future that works for everyone.

Sincerely,

Eric Veium, Tim Frank, & Leslie Austin
Co-Directors, CCA Workforce & Environmental Justice Alliance

Louise Auerhahn
Director of Economic and Workforce Policy, Working Partnerships USA



Jean Cohen, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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April 8, 2025

Chair Tyson and Honorable Directors
Silicon Valley Clean Energy
333 W. El Camino Real, Ste 330
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

Re: April 9, 2025, Board Item 3: Adopt SVCE's Power Purchase Agreement Project Selection Policy

Dear Chair Tyson and Honorable Directors,

On behalf of the South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council, I thank the Silicon Valley Clean Energy leadership for your work on the PPA Project Selection Policy, and urge the board to approve the proposed policy.

Silicon Valley Clean Energy's Power Purchase Agreements support billions of dollars worth of energy production and storage projects, creating large-scale impacts on workers and communities where the projects are located. Done right, these can be hugely positive impacts, creating good family-supporting jobs generating clean, renewable energy and building career pipelines for community members. However, there is also the danger of a "low-road" approach to project development which can lead to worker exploitation and damage to nearby communities.

By creating a preference for projects that meet strong labor, workforce, community, and environmental standards, the PPA Selection Policy will enable SVCE to send a signal to project developers. We strongly support the focus on high-road projects built with standards that will ensure availability of a skilled workforce, effective project delivery, and high quality of work needed for reliable operations over the long term.

We further support the additions proposed by the Workforce and Environmental Justice Alliance in their public comment letter, which would help ensure that the policy includes a framework to adequately assess early-stage projects. We ask the Board to include those two suggested additions.

Sincerely,

Jean Cohen
Executive Officer
South Bay Labor Council

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