



## CPUC Releases Proposed Decision to Improve the Utility Distribution Planning (R.21-06-017)

On September 13, 2024, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) released a Proposed Decision to approve new planning and execution processes for Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Southern California Edison, and San Diego Gas & Electric.

- **Goal:** Make planning for the electric grid more proactive so that upgrades to the grid can keep up with increasing demand and the growth of electric usage.
- **Result:** A reduction in the number of customer projects that have to wait for upgrades before they can be completed.

The Proposed Decision also includes improvements to technical maps to help customers find the best places to install distributed energy resources, like solar panels.

### Proposed Decision Overview

The CPUC's Proposed Decision includes the following key elements:

- **Better Forecasting:** Establish longer and consistent forecasts for grid needs, use existing data more effectively, and advance forecasting methodologies to enhance utility planning and better meet customer needs.
- **New and better data:** Use information from customer applications and other reliable sources to plan for future grid needs. This approach balances proactive planning with smart investment decisions.
- **Enhanced Outreach and Coordination:** Create a standard approach for utilities to engage with local and tribal governments and communities to align distribution planning with local needs. Set expectations for distribution planning coordination with key stakeholders, including the California Energy Commission, transportation electrification initiatives, and internal utility workstreams.
- **Faster Connections:** A proactive planning approach will decrease the frequency of capacity projects being the cause of delay for connecting customers to the grid. Utilities will also investigate alternative strategies such as load flexibility and distributed energy resource bridging solutions that can reduce utility costs and mitigate customer project delays. Bridging solutions let customers receive some or all of their requested service while a grid upgrade is completed to accommodate their full service.
- **Transparency Measures:** Adopt new data reporting requirements to facilitate CPUC oversight of distribution planning and inform future improvements. The new data being reported will also be available to stakeholders.
- **Enhanced Integrated Capacity Analysis Usefulness and Improved Data Portal Design:** Increase the accuracy of presented data, increase the level of detail and context provided to users, and improve the design and consistency across data portals. These improvements will help the tool achieve its intended purpose to support customer use of clean energy technologies and streamline the interconnection process.



# California Public Utilities Commission



## Background

- This Proposed Decision marks the culmination of two years of work by the CPUC and parties to review the current distribution planning and execution processes of the utilities and helps to fulfil legislative requirements.
- Following a series of Rulings and comments to review and better understand the current distribution planning process, on March 13, 2024, a [Ruling](#) was issued that included CPUC Energy Division's [Staff Proposal](#) to improve the Distribution Planning and Execution Process.
- On March 27, 2024, Energy Division hosted a [public workshop](#) on the Staff Proposed Decision. In response to the Staff Proposed Decision, opening comments were filed on May 28, 2024, and reply comments on June 18, 2024.

## Legislative Background

- Senate Bill 410 (Becker) and Assembly Bill 50 (Wood) were passed in 2023 to establish energization timelines and distribution planning improvements. The requirements of these bills are being addressed across three proceedings: [R.21-06-017](#) High DER, [R.24-01-018](#) Energization, and [A.21-06-021](#) PG&E General Rate Case.
- These bills define “energization” to include the utility distribution planning and execution process and require utilities to consider in this process: decarbonization and electrification goals, plans of local governments and developers, and forecasts of load provided by, and in excess of, the California Energy Commission.
- This Proposed Decision, in part, satisfies requirements of AB 50 and SB 410 by requiring utilities consider additional data and information in the distribution planning process and coordinate with local and tribal governments and communities.

## What's Next

- **Comments:** Opening comments are due on Oct. 3, 2024, and reply comments are due on Oct. 8, 2024.
- **Public Participation:** The public is invited to submit comments via the [Docket Card for this proceeding](#).
- **Upcoming Meeting:** The Proposed Decision will be on the CPUC's Oct. 17, 2024, Voting Meeting agenda.

## More Information

- [Proposed Decision](#)
- [Proceeding Documents](#) (R.21-06-017)
- [Distribution Planning website](#)

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