



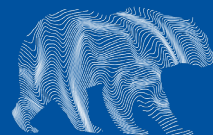
GO-Biz Clean Energy Permitting Initiative

Aligning Community Interests with Clean Energy Project Development

September 10, 2025
12:00 – 1:30 PM

Webinar Q&A

Ask questions anonymously via
<https://tinyurl.com/GO-Biz-Question>
or via this QR Code:



AGENDA

12:00 – 12:20

- Overview of the Clean Energy Permitting Initiative

12:20 – 1:00

- Aligning Community Interests with Clean Energy Project Development

1:00 – 1:20

- Questions and Discussion

1:20 – 1:30

- How to Stay Connected

Overview of the Clean Energy Permitting Initiative



Drivers for Improved Efficiencies in Permitting Processes

California's Energy and Climate Goals

- California has set the nation's first state-wide target of reaching carbon neutrality and to decarbonize the state's electrical grid by 2045.

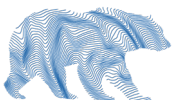


Expected Growth of New Energy Resources

- 2025 | ~3500 MWs
- 2026 –2028 | 17,000MWs

Tracking Energy Development (TED) Task Force

- Consists of GO-Biz, CEC, CPUC and CAISO
- Provides assistance for clean energy project development needed to meet state's reliability needs
- Information collected shows that long permitting timelines is one of the main issues delaying project deployment



Clean Energy Permitting Initiative

PURPOSE

- Provide best practices and set of tools and resources for local planning authorities (LPAs) to accelerate clean energy project development across California

OUTCOME

- GO-Biz Clean Energy Permitting Playbook and Toolkit
 - Report of findings
 - Resource Toolkit for LPAs

SCOPE



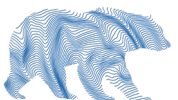
Onshore Wind



Large-scale Solar



Battery Energy
Storage Systems



GO-Biz Clean Energy Project Permitting Initiative

Process & Timeline

Phase

Outcomes

Jan - Apr 2025

Complete



Discovery & Data Collection

Stakeholder Engagement:

Conduct surveys and interviews with local planning authorities, developers, and community-based organizations.

Permitting Process Evaluation:

Evaluate the permitting processes of local jurisdictions for large-scale renewable energy projects.

Information Synthesis:

Compile and analyze the gathered data to derive actionable insights.



Apr - Sept 2025

In Progress



Playbook and Toolkit Development

Playbook Development:

Developed based on findings from outreach. Seek feedback through focus groups. Develop actionable recommendations.

Playbook and Toolkit Development:

- Best Practices: Methods to streamline and optimize permitting workflows.
- Guidance and Support Resources: Tools, templates, and guidance materials to assist local planning authorities throughout the permitting process.



Oct - Nov 2025

In Progress



Playbook and Toolkit Publication

Playbook Launch

- Draft Release: Targeted for summer 2025 to allow early engagement and review.
- Final Version: Scheduled for release in late fall 2025, incorporating stakeholder input.

Stakeholder Engagement

Solicit feedback on both the draft report and toolkit to ensure relevance, clarity, and usability.



Discovery & Data Collection

Surveys, Interviews, Webinars, Focus Groups & Conferences

Complete



SURVEYS

- ~200 responses across 4 surveys for:
 - Local Planning Authorities (LPAs)*
 - Developers
 - Community-based organizations and other stakeholders
 - Native American Tribes

***Survey Response Rate for LPAs: 18.7%**

INTERVIEWS

- Conducted 80+ interviews for in-depth insights with:
 - Local Planning Authorities
 - Developers
 - Trade Associations
 - Native American Tribes
 - Community-based Organizations

WEBINARS, FOCUS GROUPS & CONFERENCES

- GO-Biz BESS Webinar
- REACH IE Conference
- Focus groups: Solar Model Ordinance, BESS Model Ordinance, Community Benefits Guide

California
ACCELERATING RENEWABLE ENERGY PERMITTING (AREP)
Toolkit for Local Jurisdictions

Your Opinion Matters
GO-Biz is seeking input from permitting agencies and developers on the challenges faced when permitting large-scale renewable energy projects. Please use the QR code to share your thoughts by December 27th.

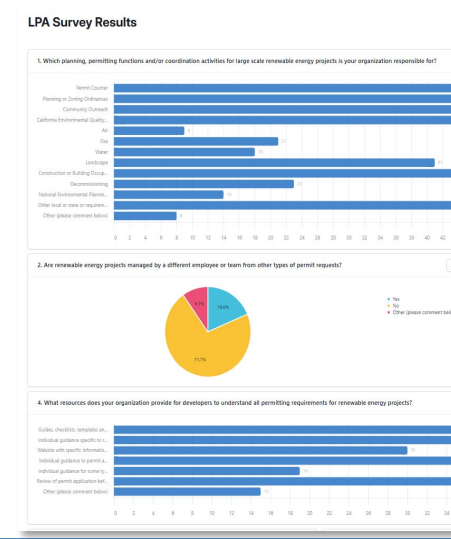
The State of California has adopted some of the world's most ambitious climate policies

The Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) has identified the permitting process for renewable energy as a potential area for improvement.

The goal of the project underway now is to create a toolkit with resources to help agencies attract and support the development of renewable energy projects within their localities, that maintain environmental stewardship, comply with regulations, and protect public safety.

Senate Bill 100 requires **100% carbon-free energy by 2045**. This means adding **7,000 MW** of carbon-free energy capacity **every year**.
*Compare this to the approx 3,700 MW/year added from 2009 through 2023, per CANSO data compiled March 7, 2024.

Questions or comments?
Contact Gabrielle Stevenson, Assistant Deputy Director of Energy and Climate at GO-Biz: gabrielle.stevenson@go-biz.ca.gov



California
BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WEBINAR
March 26, 2025
9:30 AM – 12:30 PM PST

Join GO-Biz for a Discussion on BESS

As part of the GO-Biz permitting initiative, this webinar will bring together state and local permitting authorities as well as industry experts to discuss challenges, lessons learned, and best practices in permitting BESS projects.

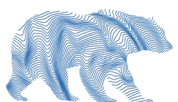
Webinar Registration:
<https://tinyurl.com/go-biz-webinar1>

Take the Survey

We want your feedback. The input gathered will help GO-Biz in the development of resources for local agencies to use when permitting large-scale renewable projects. Share your feedback by filling out our survey.

Participate in the survey via the link <https://tinyurl.com/go-biz> or QR code.

Contact: energyunit@go-biz.ca.gov for information about the permitting initiative or upcoming webinars.



Findings: Pain Points for Permitting Authorities

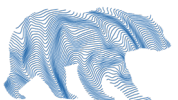
45% of local planners feel equipped to handle an influx of permit applications

Planners:

- Have responsibilities across all types of projects (not just clean energy) permitting
- Perform time intensive permit reviews - including multiple iterations for incomplete permits
- Experience varies with power system and technical clean energy knowledge (e.g. BESS)
- Seek assistance to develop ordinances, codes, & standards.

Largest impacts to project development & timelines:

- Assessing the project's wildlife, habitat, environmental impacts and mitigation determined by the state
- Community concerns/opposition including negative media coverage
- Navigating and coordinating with other local (e.g. fire department) and state entities





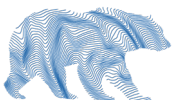
- Alignment of community interests and statewide goals
 - Early & collaborative engagement between parties (developer, planner, community)



- Model ordinances for large scale clean energy projects
 - BESS, solar, and onshore wind

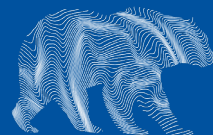


- Application resources and checklists
- Factsheets
- Clean energy development and permitting processes



Aligning Community Interests with Clean Energy Project Development

Introduction & Purpose



Introduction and Purpose of Guide

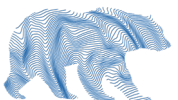
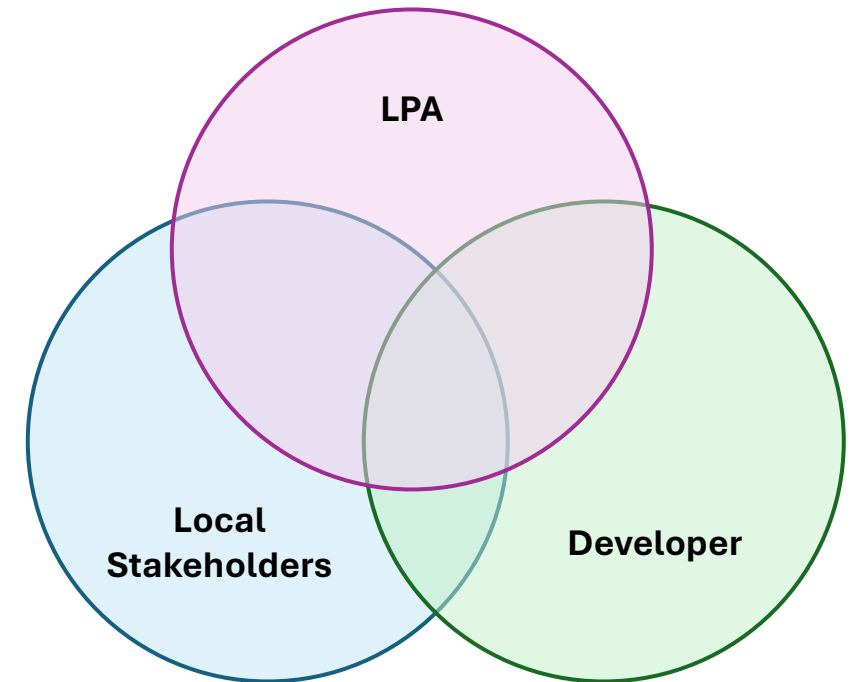
PURPOSE

- Feedback from stakeholder interviews highlighted common questions in the local permitting process on community benefits of clean energy projects

“Aligning Community Interests with Clean Energy Project Development: A Guide for Local Planning Authorities” will be part of the GO-Biz Clean Energy Permitting Toolkit to serve as a resource for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs).

- Each local jurisdiction will have different needs. This guide aims to provide options and considerations, rather than specific recommendations
- The guide is focused on the **local** permitting process for **large-scale clean energy projects** (solar, wind, BESS)
- The purpose of the guide is to discuss how alignment of differing interests through clear communication and understanding can advance projects through the permitting process and produce successful outcomes

How to align interests in clean energy project development?



Development of Guide

RESEARCH

- The guide was developed based on detailed research on:
 - Benefits of clean energy projects and how communities currently experience or access these benefits, including property tax revenue
 - Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) used in California and other jurisdictions
 - Other benefit frameworks (such as PILOTs) used in other jurisdictions

OUTREACH

- Drafts of the guide were presented to focus groups of stakeholders, including LPAs, developers, and community groups
- Feedback from the focus groups was incorporated to ensure the guide presents a range of perspectives, particularly with regards to tradeoffs between benefit types

Aligning Community Interests with Clean Energy Project Development: A Guide for Local Planning Authorities

Overview

As California continues to deploy more clean energy projects to achieve the state's decarbonization targets, planning authorities, developers, and stakeholders must balance local community interests with statewide priorities for reliable, equitable, and cost-effective clean energy access. While clean energy projects can bring benefits to the communities that host them, they may also result in changes to land use, alter the visual landscape, and prompt questions or concerns from residents. Without clear communication and alignment strategies, such concerns can delay or block projects, and impact whether or not host communities experience project related benefits.

Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) must evaluate several factors when permitting clean energy projects, including environmental impacts, land use designations, local, state and federal ordinances, and benefits such as tax revenue and economic development opportunities. With information from research and stakeholder interviews, this guide aims to provide practical context to help LPAs understand the benefits that clean energy projects might offer local communities and tradeoffs between options. The focus is on large-scale clean energy projects, including solar, onshore wind, and battery storage going through local permitting processes. Projects obtaining permits through the California Energy Commission (CEC) AB 205 Opt-In Certification Program must adhere to the community and labor requirements within that process.

California Energy Commission's State-led Opt-in Certification Program (AB 205)

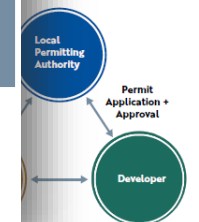
Established in 2022, AB 205 allows developers to opt-in to a consolidated environmental review and approval process for large-scale clean energy projects through the CEC's Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) and Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) are required for projects undergoing consolidated permitting through this program.

While there are currently no specific requirements regarding the location or contents of the CBAs, several projects in the opt-in process are developing or have already signed agreements with local communities. For example, the Darden Clean Energy project in Fresno County has signed benefit plan agreements with local organizations, such as Fresno Housing Ed Corps, Fresno Rural Transit Agency, and Tree Fresno. Another example is the Perkins Renewable Energy project in Imperial County, which plans to distribute funding over the next ten years to local organizations.

tion of selecting recipients and sometimes competing) s have also expressed concern ure to enter CBAs during local As are required in the CEC Program as part of the permitting process, and due to tax exclusion for solar on January 1, 2027. LPAs, in al community groups, can rganize and prioritize needs, ective discussions with

ustrates the existing process and for project stakeholder consideration and development he left panel illustrates an holder engagement process, vents can increase project s passed down to ratepayers, e delays. The right panel ordinated, d approach. If a CBA or other greenents are pursued in the cess, this process can ns and benefit both the community groups.

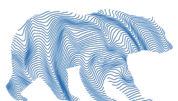
Voluntary Ad Hoc Community Benefits or CBAs



Voluntary Coordinated CBA

¹ CEC "Opt-In Certification Program" <https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/ topics/power/standards/opt-certification-program>
² CEC Licensing Authority Pursuant to AB 205" <https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/ topics/power/standards/opt-certification-program>
³ "Perkins Renewable Energy Project", CEC Docket, <https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/Lists/DocketLog.aspx?DocketNumber=24-017-01>

⁴ Original graphic idea adapted from: Good Asia First, "CBA: Making Development Project Accountable" <https://goodasiafirst.org/community-benefits-agreements-making-development-projects-accountable/>. Graphic revised for this guide.



Local Permitting Considerations

Local Planning Authorities have several factors to consider when permitting clean energy projects:

- **Environmental and other impact mitigation requirements** – local air quality and other ecological benefits, as well as requirements under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- **Local, state, and federal ordinances** – covering fire safety and other regulations
- **Land use designations** – defining allowable, restricted, and potential alternative site uses
- **Tax revenue** – including property and sales taxes
- **Other community benefits** – including local job creation and job training opportunities, or funding for local groups nearby development projects

LPAs should evaluate these factors together throughout the permitting process to consider each project's impact holistically



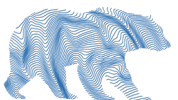
Additional Context

California Energy Commission's Opt-in Certification Program (AB 205)

- Established in 2022, AB 205 allows developers to opt-in to a consolidated environmental review and approval process for large-scale clean energy projects through the CEC, requiring the CEC to complete an Environmental Impact Report within 270 days
- Each project undergoing consolidated permitting through this program is required to have **at least one** Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) and Project Labor Agreement (PLA)
- Projects undergoing permitting through **local** processes are **not** required to have CBAs or PLAs

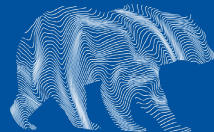
California Property Taxes for Active Solar Energy Systems Starting January 1, 2027

- California's Revenue and Taxation Code currently excludes solar energy systems from new property tax assessments.
- This means that the installation of a qualifying solar energy system does not result in an increase in the property tax assessment of the existing property.
- New solar projects will become subject to property tax assessments starting January 1, 2027



Aligning Community Interests with Clean Energy Project Development

Content Overview



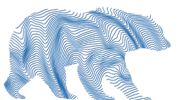
Overview

Large energy infrastructure projects are complex, and LPAs must consider many different factors in the permitting process.

The guide walks through key questions that LPAs should consider when evaluating the benefits of clean energy projects alongside other permitting factors:

- What benefits, including tax revenues, will clean energy projects provide to local communities?
- Are beneficial impacts communicated effectively to local communities?
- What are the options for projects to provide additional benefits?
- If pursued in the local permitting process, how can Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) be structured to support both communities and developers?

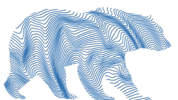
Each section of the guide provides additional details and considerations.



Benefits of Clean Energy Projects

What benefits, including tax revenues, will clean energy projects provide to local communities?

Beneficial Impact	Description	Considerations
Sales and Use Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Local sales tax revenue from purchases of materials, equipment, and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Benefits occur primarily during the construction of the projectDevelopers can maximize local benefit by setting up sales and use tax collection at the project site
Local Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support of local economies through procurement of services and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Typically, not quantified as a monetized benefit
Local Air Quality and Other Ecological Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved air and water quality from displacement of fossil fuels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Non-monetized benefit
Property Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Property tax revenue from clean energy project sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wind and BESS projects pay property taxes. Beginning January 1, 2027, the value of solar energy systems will also be included in property tax assessments.Due to government allocation formulas, funds are not directly allocated to the specific community hosting the clean energy project.



Property Tax Revenue

Clean energy projects can contribute significantly to local tax revenue through their property taxes.

Property taxes are typically allocated through the local government to school districts, county government, cities, and special districts.

Leveraging or modifying property taxes can be a way to fund community benefits in a cost-neutral way, but these techniques require legislative action or special local government approval:

- **Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs):**

- Projects pay reduced property taxes, in exchange for providing other financial benefits to local communities
- Common approach in other states (e.g., New York)
- PILOTs face legal questions in California and would likely require legislative action to enable.

- **Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD):**

- A special financing mechanism that freezes the base-level property tax revenue and puts future incremental revenue in a dedicated funding pool, which can be used to finance community initiatives
- Requires state and local government approval. May be limited in impact since funds are from incremental increases in taxes over time

The Darden Clean Energy Project, which will include 1,150 MW of solar coupled with 4,600 MWh of BESS, is estimated to provide at least **\$232 million** in property tax revenue over ten years.¹



1. "Darden Economic Impact, May 2025", Intersect Power, Filed in Docket #23-OPT-02, <https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/Lists/DocketLog.aspx?docketnumber=23-OPT-02>

Interviews with LPAs, developers, and other industry stakeholders indicate that the beneficial impacts of clean energy projects are not always understood or recognized by local communities.

This disconnect may stem from a lack of transparency about how these benefits directly impact the local area, as well as limited communication about the scope and nature of those benefits.

LPAs should seek to communicate beneficial impacts to their local communities:

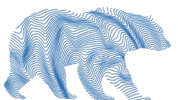
- ✓ Distribute information as widely as possible, using tactics such as factsheets, brochures, public workshops, webinars, or online dashboards
- ✓ Coordinate with local community-based organizations to deliver information in methods that are best suited for the local community
- ✓ Provide quantitative details whenever possible (tax revenue, job creation, etc.)



Negotiated Community Benefits

What are the options for projects to provide additional benefits?

Additional Community Benefits	Description	Considerations
Community Benefit Plan (CBP) or Ad Hoc Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provides additional benefits to identified local groups without the legally binding structure of a CBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">May not be seen as credible or sufficient by stakeholdersRequires evaluation and coordination across stakeholder groups
Community Benefit Agreement (CBA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A legally binding agreement between a developer and community representatives to provide specific benefits (e.g., funding, programs, jobs), typically in exchange for a shorter permitting timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Requires identification of appropriate and representative community spokesperson(s)Needs evaluation and coordination across stakeholder groupsCan potentially increase project cost, which is ultimately passed through to electric customers, if not negotiated through an efficient process
Project Labor Agreement (PLA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">An agreement between a developer and labor union(s) to ensure fair wages, training opportunities, and other labor practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Requires participation between developer and labor union(s)



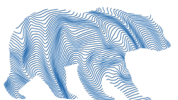
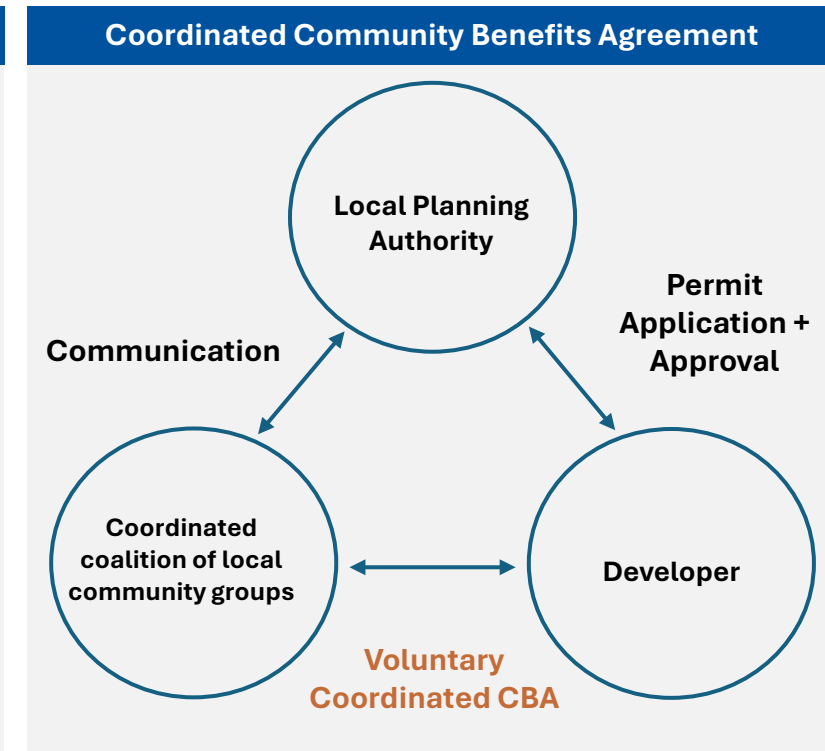
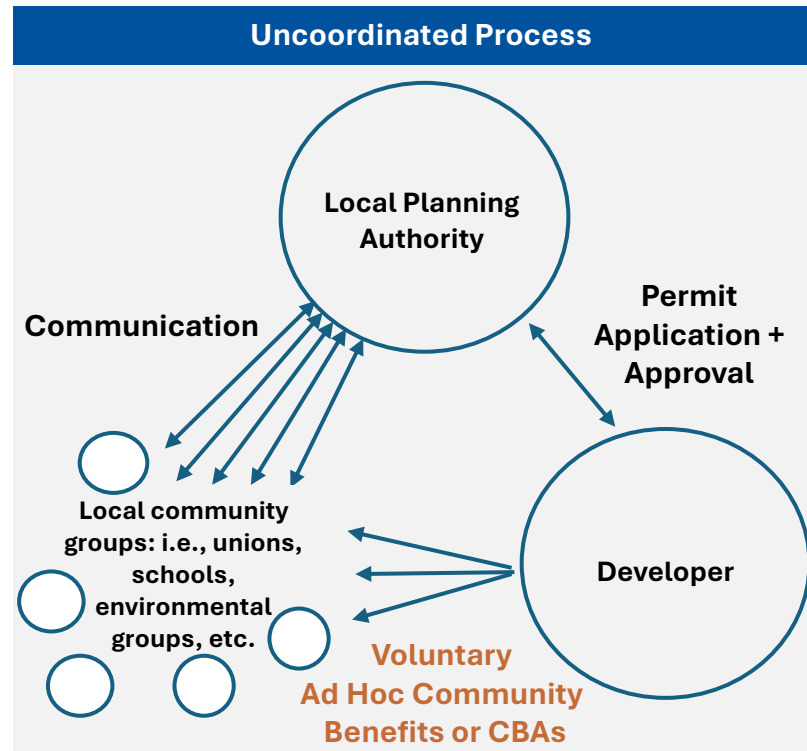
Considerations for CBAs

If pursued in the local permitting process, how can CBAs be structured to support both communities and developers?

If CBAs are pursued in the local process, an **uncoordinated** approach may cause delays and increase project costs, which are ultimately passed to electric customers.

This type of uncoordinated process can also put developers in an uncomfortable position of selecting benefit recipients among many worthy (sometimes competing) causes.

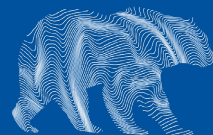
A **coordinated** approach can help give local stakeholders a voice in the process and gain local acceptance of the project. This approach help streamline permitting and align objectives of local communities, developers, and LPAs.



Webinar Q&A



Ask questions anonymously via
<https://tinyurl.com/GO-Biz-Question>
or via this QR Code:



How to Stay Connected



Feedback on this Webinar & Provided Tools

Downloadable Draft Guide:

- <https://business.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/Aligning-Community-Interests-with-Clean-Energy-Project-Development-Draft-Sept-5-2025.pdf>
- Send comments to energyunit@gobiz.ca.gov by October 10th, 2025.



Upcoming Webinars

Supporting Land Use Permitting Processes: A Guide to Developing Clean Energy Ordinances
9/17

Overview of the Clean Energy Permitting Playbook and Toolkit – A Walkthrough
10/15



Email

Contact for any questions:
energyunit@gobiz.ca.gov