



Investing in Resilience:

Climate Action and Regional Affordability

March 24, 2026 | 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM

[Notes](#)

Link to presentation slides:

<http://climatereadiness.info/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Presentation-CRC-March-24th-Workshop-Climate-Action-and-Affordability.pdf>

Evan Schmidt, CEO, Valley Vision - Welcome

- Valley Vision has a 30+ year history in helping strengthen collaboration across many areas that contribute to a higher quality of life in our region. Valley Vision brings together government, non-profit, business, and community leaders and partners to share information, build strategic alignment, and support coordinated action.
- The Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative (CRC) is a space for us to steward connections across the wide range of important climate efforts underway across our six-county region, and identify where we can better coordinate, support one another, and ensure our communities are prepared and resilient to the impacts of a changing climate we're already seeing today.
- Today's workshop will explore the relationship between our regional economy and climate investments, with emphasis on energy and utility costs experienced by individuals and households.

Gretchen James, Project Manager, Valley Vision - Introduction

- Today's workshop is an opportunity to learn about active projects and legislative activity, as well as connect and share how we can work together and support one another.
- Thank you to CRC Member, the City of Elk Grove, for welcoming CRC to host today's workshop at District56.
- CRC is a multidisciplinary network of local and regional agencies, representing public, private, and nonprofit organizations, who come together to advance climate mitigation and adaptation efforts in each of our communities and across the entire region.
- CRC guiding principles:
 - Strengthen regional capacity through cross-sector collaboration;
 - Prioritize investments and projects in frontline communities; and
 - Protect and restore natural systems.
- The Collaborative facilitates information and best practice sharing, and provides coordination support to ensure our region is effectively leveraging resources and opportunities to address climate impacts and vulnerabilities.

Case Study: Yolo County's Home Energy Score Pilot

Yuri Pantoja | Associate Administrative Services Analyst, Yolo County

- The [Home Energy Score \(HES\) Pilot](#) is a local example of how programs can connect residents to climate resiliency efforts and address affordability.
- Yolo County consists of 6,553 acres of farmlands, green lands, more, with the County's pilot focus in unincorporated areas.
 - 82% of units in unincorporated areas are single family units.
- The HES is developed by the U.S. Department of Energy, and focuses on the home's energy efficiency, not resident's habits and usage.
- The HES consists of an in-person assessment between 45 minutes to 1 hour.
 - Reviews the physical characteristics of the home.
 - Provided recommendations and information for upgrades.
- The HES is a tool to help residents understand their home, feel prepared to make decisions, and make informed actions aligned with climate resilience.
- The HES Pilot is a result of the County's work from the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan and associated community outreach.
 - In April 2024, the County Board of Supervisor approved the HES Pilot and Weatherization Program.
- The HES Pilot is supported by local partnerships with Cool Davis and De Colores Resource Center.
 - Local partnerships support residents through language access and comfort.
- A good program model is not only about technical design, how information is being communicated and how the community is resonating to the message are essential considerations.
- The HES is not a one-time assessment, but part of a long-time effort to empower residents.
 - Residents are provided explanation and navigation on energy programs and rebates.
 - The HES Pilot is one step into a residents pathway to empowerment in climate adaptation measures.
- Yolo County held its first Energy and Resilience Fair in Esparto.
- The County's HES Pilot is a model for equitable energy programs, and showcases what implementation looks like on the ground, especially within rural communities.
- Lessons learned:
 - The HES itself is not enough. Important to communicate what it means for residents: greater home comfort, lower bills
 - Outreach and trust mean just as much as technical programming. CBO support is essential.
 - Programs work well as a partnership. The HES Pilot is one of several programs in the [Yolo Energy Partnership \(YEP\)](#).
- Aligning with the [statewide HES program](#):
 - A voluntary program utilizing the same Department of Energy HES.
 - Led by Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) and Earth Advantage.

Q&A

- PG&E, a main provider, was not listed in the presentation. Why is that, as PG&E provides rebates?
 - The presentation focused on the CBOs who Yolo County Sustainability works with on everyday basis, but they are connected to PG&E through related efforts and the work of local CBOs, such as Valley Vision and the PG&E Resilient Together Initiative.

- The California Energy Commission is developing rulemaking related to the HES. Are you engaged with the rulemaking proceeding? Are you working with regional realtors to show how to make home improvements?
 - Networks are engaged with rulemaking. Connecting with realtors is an active conversation, especially as the County is adopting a related ordinance. Would be speaking with realtors to emphasize benefits, and how to share information on predicted energy costs in the future for homeowners.
 - Thinking about this work alongside displacement efforts and keeping residents in homes and inter-generational transfer of homes. How do we help homeowners identify the value/equity in their home?
 - The HES Pilot is centered on single family homes, but would like to expand to multi-generation dwellings to support anti-displacement. In conversation with jurisdictions on how to support that.
 - Cool Davis held an electrification home tour last year, can you speak on that?
 - Not aware of the program, and cannot speak on it. Highlights Cool Davis' community impact through efforts related to HES Pilot.
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Panel: Climate Investments and Affordability Across Scales

ThienVinh Nguyen (moderator) | Director of Clean Air & Climate, Valley Vision

Rohimah Moly | Deputy Director of Energy & Climate, Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)

Maria Kelly | Local Government and Community Affairs Liaison, California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)

- ThienVinh Nguyen: Panel will explore climate action and affordability across scales, focusing on policy efforts at a state level that advance renewable energy while passing on savings to consumers.
- Q1: With your work, can you give us an overview of how you're working at the intersection of climate action and affordability?
 - Moly Rohimah:
 - Go-Biz facilitates and accelerates critical energy projects at the utility scale. Examples include wind farms, solar farms, and other projects that generate power to the electric grid. Works with California Independent System Operator (CAISO), California Energy Commission (CEC) and CPUC.
 - Expecting more projects as the State winds down fossil fuels. The scale Go-Biz works at equates to hundreds of projects, supporting projects providing around 20,000 megawatts. Project process takes 3-4 years, from permitting to interconnecting to final grid connection.
 - Maria Kelly:
 - CPUC is a regulatory agency, focused on implementation. CPUC's work includes collaborating with local and regional governments, as well as utilities.
 - Activities include New Clean Energy Initiative, such as [TECH Clean California](#).

- Q2: The Governor signed into law SB 254 in Sept 2025 and SB 1221 in Sept 2024. Can you elaborate more about these pieces of legislation?
 - Thienvinh Nguyen:
 - Infrastructure support is needed for renewables.
 - Rohimah Moly:
 - SB254 is an extensive legislation. Extends the Wildfire Liability Fund, in response to the Eaton fire and to provide support for future extreme weather events. Other parts of SB 254 include directing the CPUC to create enforcements on energization targets, and the Transmission Accelerator led by Go-Biz. The goal of the Transmission Accelerator is to support new green fill builds and reduce costs to ratepayers by having the state provide low-cost financing for transmission projects.
 - The low-cost financing provided by the Transmission Accelerator would lower the project cost and support developers as a tax credit, and lower the request rate determined by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commissioner (FERC), which determines rate based on infrastructure build cost.
 - Maria Kelly:
 - SB1221 creates a two-year timeline for the CPUC to develop a neighborhood decarbonization pilot program. Funding was not allocated in legislation and projects cannot cost the ratepayers. The pilot program will be conducted in 30 neighborhoods across the state.
 - The pilot program fits under the CPUC's [long-term gas planning rulemaking](#), to meet the State's 2045 decarbonization goals. The rulemaking is intended to determine the pilot project's requirements. What should be required at scale? Should only the replacement of heat pumps be required, or full scale home electrification?
 - The larger goal for the pilot program is to support efforts on ramping down what we rely on for gas. It's a practice pilot program to help determine how to do this program at scale. How do we do 60-150 homes at one time? How do we move homes to 2045 goals?
 - The determined scope of work will be released by the CPUC by July.
 - The outcomes of the pilot program will help scale efforts for the next twenty years.
 - Additionally, the CPUC released rulemaking on building decarbonization pilots.
- Q3: Any other efforts we should be aware of?
 - Moly:
 - Go-Biz developed the [Clean Energy Permitting Playbook and Toolkit](#), with input collected from local planners and developers, with over 100 surveyed and several workshops held.
 - The main issue, determined from input, was capacity issues at local level and the broad scope of projects they often review for.
 - The Toolkits support local jurisdictions looking to make processes more effective. The Toolkits feature resources such as a model ordinance for battery or solar projects and community benefits agreement guidance, best practices checklist, and more.
 - Maria:

- The [Equity and Access Grant Program](#) is funding outreach and community education efforts related to decarbonization and electrification. Important for communities to be familiar with decarbonization and electrification, as residents will be asked to make changes, especially with adopting new equipment that is electric not gas.
 - Outreach and communication is a huge lift. Communicating with communities about healthy homes and reducing reliance on gas.
 - The grant program is helping to figure out how to organization, how to talk about decarbonization and electrification, getting residents to care about a healthy home, helping communities rise up, and sharing about incentives.
 - These efforts take time and require working with local governments and trusted messengers.
- Q4: How can key stakeholders, including those in this room, support this work?
 - Maria:
 - Convening roundtables and conversations with agencies.
 - Working the agencies to support fact-based messaging about the work ahead and to communicate impacts to economic development, community health, and more.
 - Sharing programs and resources such as the TECH Initiative, local utilities incentives, [switchison.org](#). Supporting practices such as stacking incentives.
 - Huge effort needing outreach and communications is workforce development in the decarbonization space.
 - Moly:
 - Agrees with Maria. Local input is needed as lots of programs are underway. If projects don't work, efforts become ineffective.
 - Go-Biz is looking to support a [California Permitting Academy](#). No funding or grants available, but the Academy is a week-long workshop to support local planners develop and implement processes for projects like clean energy and manufacturing. Go-Biz also provides attendees with technical assistance to help implementation after the plan is established.
 - The goal of the Academy is to identify efficiency and middle ground to further the State's economy and move things forward.

Q&A

- City of Elk Grove engaged in CPUC's rulemaking related to SB1221 and had difficulties navigating the rulemaking process. Is there an opportunity to gather information differently for this pilot, such as convenings outside of the formal structure of proceedings?
 - For this rulemaking, becoming a party is not necessary to comment. The rulemaking is determining the scope of work for the pilot program, there is still opportunity for engagement following completion of the pilot program and developing a permanent program.
 - The pilot program requires agreement from 66% of homeowners in the neighborhood project areas. Utilities have to request that consent and the engagement of CBOs is important for building support.

- Tahoe Spark is not included in conversations and program opportunities, such as energy modeling with the California Energy Commission, rebates, or CPUC pilot programs, due to not being considered an energy utility.
 - Encouraged continued conversation following the panel.
 - RFP to purchase energy within an energy balancing authority.
 - Regulatory process matters.
 - When discussing large scale infrastructure builds for renewable energy, how does biomass energy fit in? What are the challenges?
 - Biomass energy projects are not at a large scale to be seen by Go-Biz, which supports projects at 50 megawatts or more.
 - Within the CPUC, a proceeding re-opened about biomass regarding open access. Biomass is a part of efforts related to the development of alternative energy to meet decarbonization needs.
 - CPUC is determining how to integrate biomass, such as integrated resources planning, exploring pilots to bring biomass to scale and infrastructure to connect biomass to the energy grid. A lot of processes and efforts to assess since the state is at a shift in renewable energy and timeline to expand electrification.
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Group Discussion

Discussion Prompts:

- Write about how your organization is engaged in climate action and affordability.
- Please share opportunities for this group to collaborate together on relevant initiatives.

Table Share-outs:

- Incentives program and education tools that assist on thinking about the effects of climate resilience activities on affordability:
 - Project evaluation tool;
 - Repository of resources on a website;
 - Resources such as: composting, waste reduction, energy efficiency; and
 - Sample outreach toolkits with language that has worked for residents, and support on navigating community-facing outreach on the challenges of affordability.
- More brainstorming, information sharing, and engagement from CRC
- Learned about diverse projects going on, from community action on-the-ground to development projects. Such as, resilience hub in South Sacramento.
- Discussion around how do we keep this going?
 - Supporting community organization and inviting community in.
 - Highlighting technical work to better connect with one another
- How do we continue to connect as a group and keep resource sharing going outside of meetings?
- Discussion focused around EVs and its future.
 - Current related organizational activities: Installing chargers locally and expanding fleet, making it happen despite funding.

- Organization highlight: Placer County's busy with affordable housing projects, working with developers. Also, biomass projects are underway with the Placer County Water Agency.
 - Discussions on the challenges getting through the grant process and request to state agencies to continue funding and provide better guidelines.
 - Opportunity to collaborate through a CRC-led grant application for Prop 4.
 - Competitive grant with a stronger funding opportunity through a joint effort.
 - Identified through discussion that some CRC members submitting competing applications for extreme heat grant under Prop 4.
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Please reach out to Gretchen.James@valleyvision.org to join the Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative.