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CONSULTANTS



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# Fresno County Rural Transit Agency Microgrid Feasibility Study

## Advisory Committee Meeting

February 27, 2024

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### Meeting Minutes

#### 1:00: Welcome

FCRTA welcomed members of the Advisory Committee

#### 1:05: Project updates

Walker provided a general overview of the microgrid/multi-modal resiliency hub feasibility study, including defining resiliency hubs, the purpose of the study, and project updates since the last meeting, including:

- Conducted community outreach
- Successfully submitted FCRTA EV Fleet Transition Plan to CARB and Federal Transit Administration.
- Conducted energy assessments for FCRTA's service area, including 13 cities and 39 unincorporated areas.
- Conducted financial and ownership structure evaluation.
- Determined five sites for future evaluation (Biola, Lanare, Fowler, San Joaquin, Parlier).
- Conducted energy, civil, cost, and feasibility assessments at five sites.
- Developed criteria methodology and ranking.
- Determined top 2 sites for further study for Phase I.

#### 1:15: Community engagement findings

Walker conducted a community survey to gain input on microgrid/multi-modal resiliency hub locations and amenities (the survey was conducted online and on paper) and held pop-up events in Parlier, Fowler, Reedley, Kerman, Firebaugh, and Huron with over 1,000 people attending events.

When asked what amenities should be at a multi-modal resiliency hub, the most frequent responses were:

- Wi-Fi
- Public transportation
- Phone charging
- Heating and cooling centers
- Community gardens
- Childcare
- Medical
- Alerts

When asked about the destination they most frequently visit to gain input on locations for a multi-modal resiliency hubs, the most frequent responses were:

- Parks
- Shopping centers
- Health care centers
- Post Offices
- Library
- School
- Downtown core areas

Other significant findings include:

- **Many do not feel prepared for disasters**, least prepared for wildfires
- **Many community members need additional assistance in the event of a disaster**
  - 43% indicated they or their neighbors need additional assistance (e.g., they are elderly, dependent on medical equipment, etc.)
- **During disasters**, the top five items respondents indicated should be included at Resilience Hubs:
  - **Emergency food/clean water/pet food**
  - **Shelter**
  - **Medical supplies**
  - **Heating/cooling**
  - **Information**
- On a **day-to-day basis**, the top five items respondents indicated should be included at Resilience Hubs:
  - **Food vendors or food trucks**
  - **Wi-Fi/internet**
  - **Heating/cooling**
  - **Childcare**
  - **Retail stores**
- **78 respondents indicated they would be interested in taking a leadership role** at resiliency hubs, and 18 provided their contact information

Electric Vehicle-Related Responses:

- **91% do not own an electric vehicle**
- **81%** are not considering purchasing an electric vehicle
- **80%** lack access to electric vehicle (EV) charging
- 26% said EV charging would incentivize them to purchase a vehicle
  - 15% said EV charging would incentivize them to purchase, but only if it were free to charge my vehicle
- 33% would be willing to pay for electric vehicle charging.

### **1:30: Site Energy Assessments and Analysis**

- Energeia reviewed the site energy assessments and analysis, including microgrid load analysis and resource optimization, as well as economic and operating costs based on reliability needs for the five sites.
  - FCRTA commented that the site selection process was also based on equity and the need for partners to support site operations.
- Walker reviewed the site assessment conducted for each site, including the following:
  - Civil review (by Provost & Pritchard)
  - Transit: All sites will be microtransit locations, with two vehicles
  - Charging infrastructure
  - Power supply to critical infrastructure
  - Power Reliability
  - Site infrastructure improvements, including paving, lighting, fencing, security, electrical connection, conduit, and trenching
  - Microgrid
- FCRTA explained that one of the reasons the team chose San Joaquin is given the proximity to other unincorporated communities, including Cantua Creek, El Porvenir, and Three Rocks, and the ability to provide a central multi-modal resiliency hub and micro transit service.
- Leadership Counsel is actively pursuing funding for the Lanare Community Center.

### **1:50: Microgrid Site Ranking Framework**

- Energeia reviewed the site ranking criteria used to narrow the list of five sites down to two.
- Criteria include a range from impact on community resilience, investment in the community to date, project cost, stakeholder complexity, collaboration, permitting and engineering, and leverage from the community.
- The top two ranking sites include Parlier and San Joaquin.
- FCRTA mentioned that for sites not selected, local communities can explore funding for implementation or be part of a Phase II process.

### **2:05: Wrap up and next steps**

- Walker reviewed the next steps for the project, including conducting a cost/benefit analysis of San Joaquin and Parlier and also evaluating funding sources available to fund construction and ownership structure.
- FCRTA mentioned that funding is available for EV vehicle purchases through the Air District.
- FCRTA mentioned how the project will help FCRTA be partially or wholly independent of the grid.
- FCRTA mentioned the Selma Maintenance Facility and how it will be a test of the technology, including solar infrastructure and inverters.
- FCRTA is looking to pursue a study to look at repurposing batteries.
- Dr. Chow (CARB) commented that the study will help other entities to think about the next steps for their electrification efforts.
- Draft report in March, which will be reviewed at the April Advisory Committee meeting.



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### **Attendees**

Janelle Del Campo – FCRTA  
Moses Stites – FCRTA  
Christopher Xiong – Caltrans  
Nicholas Isla - Caltrans  
Lorena Mendibles - Caltrans  
Yachun Chow, CARB  
Jing Gao - CARB  
Kay Bertken – League of Women Voters  
Simran Jhutti – Fresno Council of Governments  
Jennifer Rodriguez - Fresno Council of Governments  
Lupe Macias - City of Selma  
Matt Flood – City of San Joaquin  
Stan Bulla – City of San Joaquin  
Kamara Biawoga, City of Selma  
Thomas Gaffery – City of Fowler  
Mariana Alvarenga - Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability  
Thomas Dunlin – Fresno EOC  
Gabe Tabarez – MV Transportation  
Jerry Buckley - Reedley College  
Thomas Dulin, Fresno EOC  
Zander Mrlik, Intertie  
Chrissy Mancini Nichols – Walker  
Tania Schleck – Walker  
Ben Weber – Walker  
Bernard Lee – Walker  
Eric Haggett - Walker  
Ezra Beeman – Energeia  
Nick Auerbach – Energeia  
Aubree Nygaard – Energeia  
Paul Hubbs - Energeia  
Brayden Lovik - Provost & Pritchard  
Michael Osborn – Provost & Pritchard