

**VALLEY CLEAN ENERGY ALLIANCE  
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Staff Report – Item 7**

---

**TO:** Community Advisory Committee

**FROM:** Mitch Sears, Executive Officer  
Rebecca Boyles, Director of Customer Care and Marketing  
Sierra Huffman, Program and Community Engagement Analyst

**SUBJECT:** Progress update on 3-Year Programs Plan and introduction to 2024 Program Concepts

**DATE:** September 28, 2023

---

**RECCOMENDATION**

This item is informational.

**OVERVIEW**

The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update on VCE's 3-Year Programs Plan and to introduce potential 2024 programs concepts.

**BACKGROUND**

Plan Development

The 3-Year Programs Plan was adopted by the Board in June 2021. The Plan was designed to be consistent with and support the goals and objectives of the VCE Strategic Plan adopted by the Board in November 2020. The Plan built on the initial VCE Programs Plan developed in 2019 that guided early informational-based actions by VCE on energy efficiency and electric vehicles (EVs). Staff has continued to update these educational items, and they have served as important resources for VCE's customers.

3-Year Programs Plan Progress

Since the Programs Plan was implemented in June 2021, 3 educational programs have remained active, and 4 new programs launched. Of the 4 new programs, two have seen overwhelming success and may be expanded within the next year: AgFIT and the Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebate Program. One new program has been approved by the Board and is due to launch within the next year. Staff is exploring several concepts for 2024 detailed below.

**Active Educational Programs:**

- [EV Information](#) has been updated regularly, including customer reference material about EV benefits, EV facts, Savings calculator (compared to internal combustion vehicles), EV model comparisons, CO2 reduction calculator, Rebates and incentives, and an EV charger finder.

- [Energy Efficiency Information](#): the interactive graphic on VCE's website has served as a resource for customers seeking to make their homes more energy efficient. This page is being revamped to include new informational resources in late 2023.

#### Active Programs and Pilots:

- [Electrify Yolo: Electric Vehicle \(EV\) Chargers](#) are being installed through a Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) \$2.9M grant: chargers were installed in Winters; and Woodland, Davis and Yolo County have made significant progress toward installation. Because of supply chain- and covid-related delays, the team has requested a one-year extension to finish the installations by December 2024.
- [Agricultural Flexible Irrigation Technology \(AgFIT\) Pilot](#): VCE and pilot partners received \$3.94M from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to incentivize farmers to save money while shifting peak irrigation load. The team, led by VCE, provides lucrative automation incentives, an easy-to-use irrigation scheduling application, and a dynamic pricing pilot tariff designed to save agricultural customers money when they shift load to less expensive times of the day. Launched August 2022, and due to initial success in load shift, the CPUC is proposing to expand the pilot, extend its reach to all of PG&E's service territory, and remove the participation cap. A second pilot proposed by the CPUC would expand the AgFIT pilot to other (non-ag) customer classes. Staff is working on proposed budgets and program design for the expansion pilots, and a CPUC decision is expected in Q4 2023, with a potential launch in summer 2024.
- [OhmConnect](#): VCE is working in partnership with OhmConnect to offer our residential customers incentives to shift load off of peak times of stress for the grid. Participating customers receive a \$50 sign-up bonus for participating, as well as the opportunity for cash and prize incentives for participating in load-shifting events. Launched August 2021.
- [Heat Pump Pilot Program](#): Staff worked with stakeholder organizations on marketing, education and outreach to contractors, customers, and other stakeholders on home electrification rebates, incentives, financing and electrification strategy. Launched June 2022, though activity slowed in 2023. Staff may recommend re-vamping this program in Q2/3 2024.
- [Electric Vehicle \(EV\) Rebate Program](#): VCE launched this program in September 2022 and provided \$120,000 in rebates to customers who purchased a new EV. Due to overwhelming demand, funds were exhausted in summer of 2023. Staff was preparing to seek Board approval to launch Phase 2 with an increase in budget, but the program that VCE used as a proxy for eligibility requirements (the California Clean Vehicle Rebate Project, or CVRP) was closed abruptly in early September 2023. Staff is exploring new ways of administering the program and is planning to return to the CAC and Board with their proposal in the next 3 months.

#### Programs Launching (Board-approved):

- **Electrification Retrofit Rebate Outreach Program (ERRO):**  
VCE is working with Yolo County on an American Rescue Plan-funded program designed to connect low-income residents with existing rebates to electrify their homes, as well as make them more energy-efficient, saving them money on utility bills. VCE's role will mainly be

marketing, education and outreach, and the program is due to launch within the next six months.

### **2024 Program Concepts**

- **Video Bill Explainer:** Staff is evaluating a proposal by a firm that has worked with utilities nationwide to offer a service that uses customers' usage information to design a video bill explainer. The explainer describes some of their usage in detail and gives actionable tips on how to conserve electricity and save money, e.g. *"if you delayed the start of your dishwasher by 3 hours, you could save up to \$10/month."* The service could also be used to target low-income customers to promote rebates for the ERRO program. Staff anticipates bringing this concept before the Board in late 2023/early 2024 after receiving Programs/Outreach Task Group (POTG) feedback.
- **Customer Concierge Service:** Staff is evaluating a proposal by SMUD to provide a service for customers that includes high-touch ("white glove") service for customers interested in EVs, electrification and energy efficiency. The service would use customer-specific usage and billing information to provide personalized recommendations and could be used by customers for a range of inquiries, from frequently asked questions to in-depth tech support. Staff anticipates bringing this concept to the Board in late 2023/early 2024 after receiving POTG feedback.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Because the Board approved a large increase to the Programs budget in July of 2023, and there may be another Programs budget increase in 2024, staff will likely recommend that the Board allocate 60-75% of the remaining Programs budget to Phase 2 of the EV Rebate Program as well as the 2024 Program Concepts.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Continue all active programs and continue to develop 2024 programs concepts, get feedback, and bring before the Board. Update the 3-Year Programs Plan in June of 2024.

### **ATTACHMENT**

1. VCE 3-Year Programs Plan