

## Renewable Energy Advisory Council Agenda

**Hybrid meeting: in person at 421 SW Oak, Suite #300 and on-line using Zoom link below**

Wednesday, July 26th, 2023

9:30 – 11:20 a.m.

**We encourage you to attend the meeting in person. If you want to join via Zoom, you will need to register in advance:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlqfu2hpzgrGtwev0XI0p2c3k5TUIRd4Hv4>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

RAC members who come to the meeting in person may receive reimbursement for mileage and parking. Please email Elizabeth Fox at [elizabeth.fox@energytrust.org](mailto:elizabeth.fox@energytrust.org) for information on where to park.

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**9:30 Welcome and Announcements**

**9:35 Solar Ambassadors** *(presentation and feedback)*  
Staff will provide an update on the Solar Ambassadors pilot program.

**9:55 Deep Dive into Priority Topics for 2024-2025 Action Planning** *(presentation and discussion)*  
We are holding Deep Dive sessions with all three Advisory Councils to build a more concrete connection between the stakeholder feedback we receive and our budget process. We heard from members of the advisory councils, as well as other stakeholders, that they would like earlier and more actionable input into what we are planning and how we are prioritizing the work we are doing. These deep dives also support direction we received in HB 3141 to more closely tie our budget priorities to the priorities of the community members and industry experts who are our stakeholders.

**10:55 2023 Legislative Update** *(presentation)*  
The Policy Service Team will provide an overview of relevant bills that passed during the recent session.

**11:15 Public comment**

**11:20 Adjourn**

You can view this agenda and notes from previous meetings at: [energytrust.org/about/public-meetings](https://energytrust.org/about/public-meetings). If you have comments on meeting notes, please email [Alina Lambert](mailto:Alina.Lambert).

**Next meeting:** The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 20<sup>th</sup>.

## MEMO TO THE RENEWABLE ENERGY ADVISORY COUNCIL

### **Current and proposed renewable energy incentive offerings** July 2023

To inform the 2024-25 budget for renewable energy programs, staff are seeking input from RAC members regarding their goals for renewable energy projects in Oregon generally, and specifically related to Energy Trust's support. Following is information on current<sup>1</sup> and proposed program offerings. At the July meeting, staff are most interested in the RAC's thinking about the proposed new offerings. Information on current offerings and those in development are provided mainly for context.

#### Market-Ready Solutions offerings and initiatives

##### Current

- **Equity offerings** – Energy Trust operates the *Solar Within Reach* program, a higher-than-standard incentive for income-qualified customers (up to 120% of state median income). Currently, this offer provides up to \$5,400 for PGE customers and \$6,000 for Pacific Power customers. (Demand in PGE territory has been substantially higher than in Pacific Power territory, leading to moderate reductions in the incentive. The increased Pacific Power incentives have helped to slowly increase demand since last year and we are now seeing a steady application volume.) This offer is responsible for most of our compliance with the HB 3141 requirement that 25% of our funding benefit people with low and moderate incomes. Energy Trust also offers a higher-than-standard incentive for non-profits, affordable multi-family projects, and projects developed by tribes.
- **Commercial incentives** – We offer incentives to non-residential solar projects. The incentive is presently \$0.15/W up to a cap of \$15,000.
- **Utility contracts** – We have two contracts with PGE to promote advanced technology. The Smart Battery Pilot provides incentives for batteries for PGE customers. The Smart Solar study is looking at how smart inverters can be used to create grid flexibility for the utility.

##### New (development underway)

- **Residential battery incentive** – Staff are rolling out an incentive for residential batteries set at \$250/kWh up to \$3,000 for market-rate customers and \$750/kWh up to \$10,000 for Solar Within Reach customers.
- **Targeted Solarize campaigns** – The Solarize model is a way of building support for solar in a specific area, enabling trade allies to offer lower prices. Typically, Solarize campaigns have been run by community organizations or local governments. Staff are experimenting with Energy Trust driving the campaigns in partnership with utilities to meet locational deployment goals.

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the current offerings listed in the memo, Energy Trust offers project development assistance to commercial solar projects and community solar projects. We also have a variety of "solar-ready" incentives for new residential and commercial construction. These were not detailed in order to focus RAC attention on incentives that make up the bulk of our budget.

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- **Residential solar changes** – At the June meeting, the RAC discussed staff's proposal to phase out market-rate residential solar incentives and support the solar industry by providing business leads, outreach and education to customers, and training for trade allies. Staff are still working on the details of this plan, including the timing.
- **New offer for community solar** – Staff are working on an incentive to support community solar carve-out projects and other projects that go above the minimum requirement of 10% reserved capacity for customers with low incomes. We see this new offer as an important way to serve renters. Currently, there is more interest from people with low incomes than there is community solar capacity to enroll them. Staff will work with stakeholders and interested parties to determine the size and structure of the incentive.

### Proposed new offering

- **Financing for residential solar** – Staff are investigating a financing offer to help customers cover the out-of-pocket cost of a solar system. This could be a partnership with a local lender and elements may include Energy Trust using its resources to buy down lending rates and/or guaranteeing loans.

### Custom Solutions offerings and initiatives

#### Current

- **Municipal engagement and custom projects** – Staff provide information and expertise to many customers, most of them local and tribal governments, about pursuing renewable energy and resilience projects. Staff offer project development assistance incentives to help customers fund pre-construction development, such as applying for grants, funding feasibility studies, feedstock assessments, and design and engineering. Customers are also eligible for custom installation incentives for hydropower and biopower projects. They may apply for standard commercial solar incentives detailed above.

#### Proposed new offerings

- **New resilience offer** – Staff are interested in providing assistance to customers – mainly public entities (cities, municipalities, counties) and tribes – to study and develop projects that will provide energy resilience in communities during grid outages. This new offer would complement existing and future offerings from the state. The offer would also serve as a short-term complement to an anticipated longer-term three-year FEMA-funded program. This program would support communities in identifying and studying resilience projects with the goal of being able to apply to FEMA for project construction funding. Energy Trust is part of a state application to FEMA, but we have not yet received the funding for this three-year effort.
- **Expansion of Solar Ambassadors** – The Solar Ambassadors initiative is an effort driven by community organizations to identify, train, and compensate ambassadors from communities of color to do community outreach and education. The first phase of the project was funded by the National Renewable Energy Lab. Staff are looking at

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expanding the effort to include more community groups and energy efficiency training in addition to solar.

- **New low-income offer** – In addition to the community solar offer proposed above, staff are interested in developing another offer focused on customers with low incomes. This would likely involve partnerships with community groups or CAP agencies.

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