

To: Office of Planning and Research
 PO Box 3044
 1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Energy Commission
 715 P Street
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Applicant: Marin Clean Energy (MCE)

Project Title: Marin Clean Energy’s Virtual Power Plant: Valuing People Power (VPP 2X) project

Project Locations:

Address	City	County
1125 Tamalpais Ave	San Rafael 94901	Marin
1 Cyclotron Rd	Berkeley 94720	Alameda
TBD, East Solano County	Various locations	East Solano
TBD, Solano County	Various locations	Solano
TBD, Contra Costa County	Various locations	Contra Costa

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The purpose of this project is to reduce the cost and increase the uptake of energy-efficiency building retrofits and distributed energy technologies by residential, and commercial electricity customers. The proposed project will enhance Marin Clean Energy’s (MCE) enterprise-level distributed energy resource management system (eDERMS) software platform by incorporating advanced features such as automated and predictive controls. The platform is responsible for orchestrating the operation of devices that can be controlled for demand response by MCE, and these enhancements will enable optimized energy utilization, integration of a more diverse portfolio of Distributed Energy Resources (DERs), and strategic participation in CAISO markets.

The alterations of existing buildings will consist of the installation of promising emerging technologies (including but not limited to photovoltaic (PV) solar energy, building controls, smart thermostats, smart heat pump water heaters (HPWH), electric vehicle (EV) chargers, solar inverters, home area network (HAN) devices, non-intrusive load monitoring systems (NILMS), and energy storage such as battery systems).

Utilizing the enhanced eDERMS platform, the project will expand to encompass all 37 MCE member communities, prioritizing the nine Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) within the "refinery corridor." This targeted approach will serve as a proof-of-concept for the potential of community-based energy programs to increase value creation such as reduced energy costs for the customer, reduced procurement costs for energy providers as well as the many benefits associated with improving grid reliability. To maximize the project's impact, MCE’s goal is to enroll a minimum of 3 MW of flexible load into its market-integrated virtual power plant (VPP). The project will also explore opportunities to enroll customers equipped with solar and battery storage systems, enabling optimized energy consumption and active participation in energy markets including CAISO.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Marin Clean Energy (MCE)

Exempt Status: *(check one)*

- Ministerial Exemption (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(1); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(a));

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Emergency Project (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(4); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(b)(c));

Categorical Exemption. State type and section number

Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15301 ; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15306

Statutory Exemptions. State code number. PRC 21080.35

Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15061(b)(3))

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project consists of a technology demonstration and deployment implementation in homes, businesses, schools and community facilities by expanding distributed energy resources products and services to achieve 3MW load shifting. Throughout the course of the project data will be collected from buildings and other distributed energy resources that are recruited to be part of the project under 14 CCR § 15306 for Information Collection.

The project includes the operation, maintenance or minor alteration of existing structures, facilities, mechanical equipment or topographic features consisting of the installation of promising emerging technologies including building controls, smart thermostats, smart heat pump water heaters, EV chargers, solar inverters, and battery systems in existing buildings and involves negligible or no expansion of the existing use under 14 CCR section 15301. The retrofits will consist of interior and exterior alterations to the existing buildings similar those which are currently performed on existing buildings in the normal course of maintenance and minor improvement and involve negligible expansion of use.

The project involves installation of PV solar systems either on the roof of an existing building or an existing parking lot and may include associated equipment with a footprint of 500 square feet consistent with Pub. Resources Code section 21080.35. No plants protected by the Native Plant Protection Act will be located on the site of the solar PV system and no native trees over 25 years old will be removed from the site.


This project does not involve impacts on any particularly sensitive environment; does not involve any cumulative impacts of successive projects of the same type in the same place that might be considered significant; does not involve unusual circumstances that might have a significant effect on the environment; will not result in damage to scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway; the project site is not included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5; and the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, none of the exceptions to categorical exemptions listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply.

Public Agency

Contact Person: Brad Williams **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** 916-776-0825

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature:  **Date:** 04/09/2025 **Title:** Project manager

Signed by Responsible Agency

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____