

December 19, 2023

Ventura County Board of Supervisors

**Agenda Item No. 64: Receive and File Second Planning Division Presentation Regarding General Plan Policy EV-4.4 and Programs COS-O and HAZ-O to Identify Suitable Lands and Priority Areas for the Development of Renewable Energy Generation and Storage Projects;**

**Seek Board Direction on Whether to Initiate General Plan and/or Zoning Ordinance Amendments to Implement These Programs and Policy** (*Case No. PL23-0075*)



**Resource Management Agency, Planning Division  
Donald Nielsen, Case Planner  
Area Plans and Resources Section**

# Presentation Overview

1. Project Background & Planning Director Determination
2. Board Guidance
3. Suitable Lands Review
4. Proposed Renewable Energy Program
5. Public Comment



# Project Background and Planning Director Determination

# Background



- February 2023 – Started General Plan implementation
  - COS-O: Assessment of Suitable Lands Near Electrical Transmission and Distribution Lines for Renewable Energy Priority Zone
  - EV-4.4: Identify Locations for and Encourage Renewable Energy Facilities
  - HAZ-O: Solar Concentration Restriction Near Naval Base Ventura County

Solar Arrays



Wind Turbines



Energy Storage



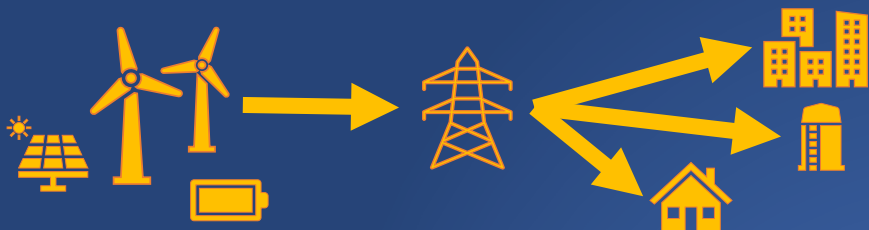
# Background



## September 2023 – Board of Supervisors 1<sup>st</sup> review of Renewable Energy Siting Assessment and Program for **grid-scale** facilities

### Grid

Energy Transferred from Facility into the Grid for Distribution



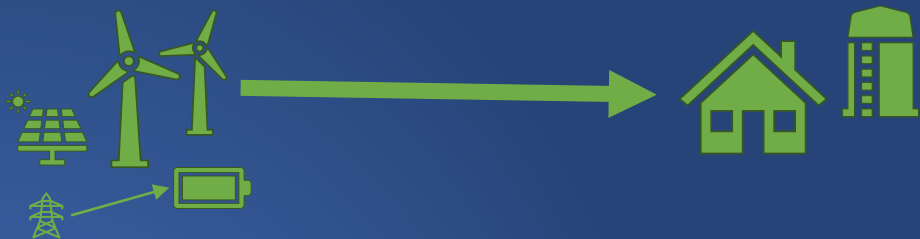
Beedy Street BESS



Fillmore Solar

### Accessory

Energy Transferred from Onsite Facility to Onsite Uses



Todd Road Jail



Limoneria Ranch

# Director Determination for Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance

- November 2023 – Planning Director Use Equivalency Determination Battery Energy Storage is Equivalent to:

## Energy Production from Renewable Resources

- Existing definition does not include “storage”
- Storage is necessary for production and transmission of renewable energy at night
- Now allowed in OS, AE, RA Zones

## Warehousing and Storage

- Energy storage similar in function (store product → distribute product) and flat, undeveloped land requirements

# Director Determination – Permit Pathway



Also can use AB 205 to process a permit through the California Energy Commission



# AB 205 (2022)



- Created new certification process for qualified projects
- Allows State Climate Energy Commission (CEC) to authorize:
  - Non-fossil-fueled powerplants,
  - Renewable energy generation and storage facilities, and
  - Facilities that manufacture, produce, or assemble specialized products, components, or systems of non-fossil-fueled powerplants and energy storage facilities





# Board Guidance

# Board Guidance



1. Open, simplify, & refine the permit pathways for renewable energy generation and battery energy storage facilities

- a. Simplify the development process
- b. Clarify the requirements of accessory uses

2. Protect residents and natural resources

- a. Avoiding an over-concentration
- b. Reducing risks of hazardous materials
- c. Limiting conversion of farmland
- d. Reduce aesthetic impacts

3. Be strategic about where to allow renewable energy facilities

- a. Quantify industrial land is vacant & underutilized
- b. Consider lands historically used for oil and gas
- c. Clarify LAFCo's role
- d. Consider proximity to the electricity grid



# Suitable Lands Review (Battery Energy Storage Focus)

# Suitable Lands Review (Battery Energy Storage Focus)



- Contacted Incorporated Cities, California Energy Commission (CEC), Clean Power Alliance, Southern California Edison (SCE), the California Independent System Operator (CAISO), and LAFCo (Exhibit 3, BH 2-1)
- Conducted Unincorporated Industrial Lands Review of Development Potential (Exhibit 3, BH 2-2)

# Suitable Lands Review – Agencies



## LAFCo

- Involved when city or district provide services outside jurisdictional boundaries
- Not Involved when
  - Services provided by private purveyor
  - Services provided on-site
  - Exempt services

## California Independent System Operator (CAISO)

- CAISO Permit required for tie-in
- Limited viable projects + fees

## Transmission Line Proximity and Water

- Projects technically feasible up to 13 miles away
- Closer to existing network = reduced development costs
- Location of facilities is not reliant on existing water lines

# Suitable Lands Review – Cities



City	Allowed	# of Projects	Existing / Proposed	Megawatts
Camarillo	Yes	1	Existing	11
Moorpark*	Yes	2	Proposed	635
Oxnard	Yes	0	N/A	0
Santa Paula	Yes	1	Existing	15
Simi Valley	No	1	Proposed	NA
Thousand Oaks	Yes	1	Existing	2
Ventura	Yes	0	N/A	0
<b>Total Existing</b>		3		28 MW
<b>Total Proposed</b>		2		635 MW

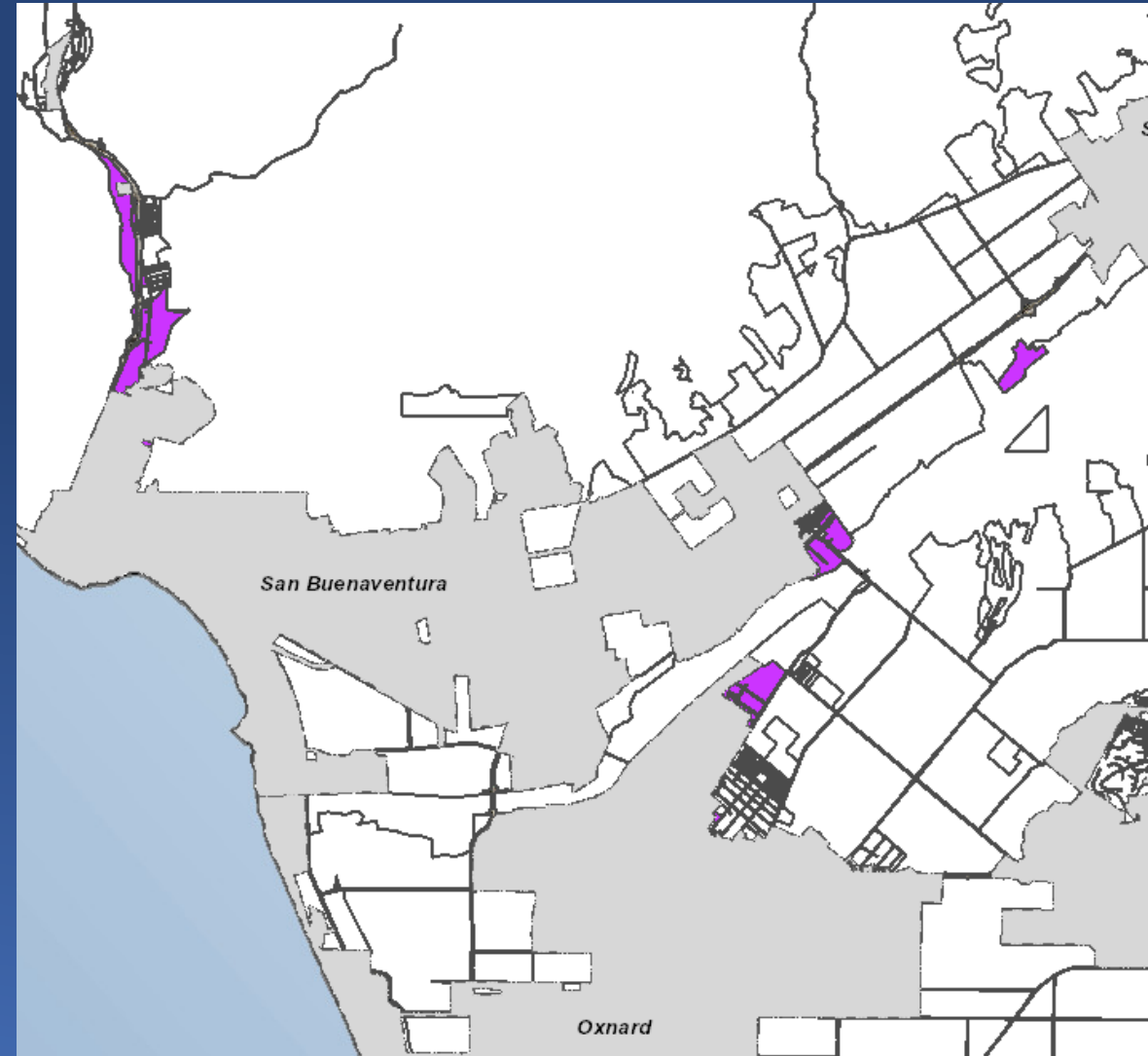




# Suitable Lands Review – Industrial Zoned Lands



- Reviewed:
  - General Plan Alternatives and Background Reports: Commercial and Industrial Zones
- Completed
  - Renewable Energy Siting Assessment
- Conducted an industrial land review





# Suitable Lands Review – Industrial Zoned Lands



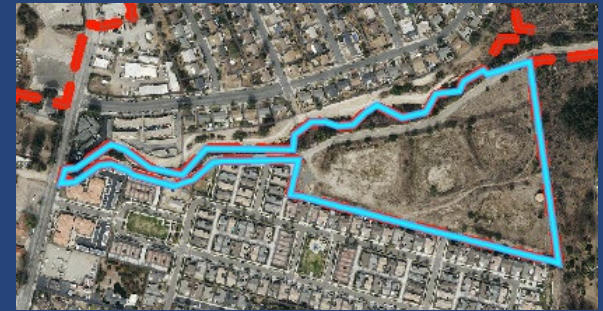
General Plan  
Alternatives Report (Commercial  
and Industrial Zones)

Industrial Lands Review of  
Development Potential  
(Industrial Zones)

Other  
Considerations

165 Acres

71 Acres



771 Acres

168 Acres

Projected  
industrial land  
demand deficit

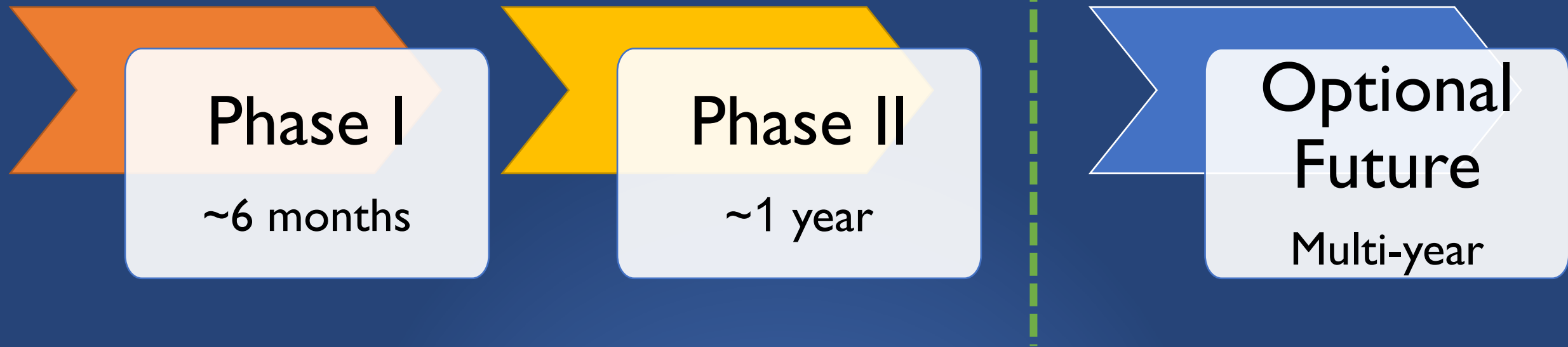
Vacant

Underutilized



# Proposed Renewable Energy Program

# Renewable Energy Program



 Indicates Board Decision Item



- Codify Planning Director Determination

- Include energy 'storage' in the definition of “energy production from renewable resources”

- **Acres Limitation for Battery Energy Storage:** Article 7 – In OS, AE, and RA Zones

- a. **30 acres** – meets energy needs of countywide population through 2035
- b. **50 acres** – Option (a) + additional holding capacity for economic development opportunities and electrical demand
- c. **100 acres** – Option (a) + Option (b) + additional space for green technology & new statewide goals
- d. **Or other amount selected by Board of Supervisors**



# Renewable Energy Program –

## Phase I



30 Acres



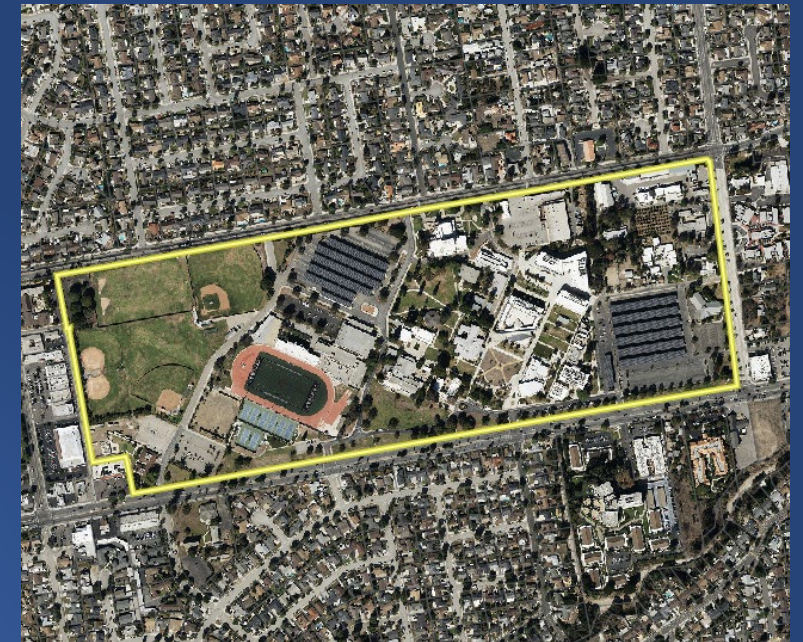
Topa Financial Plaza, Oxnard

50 Acres



Thousand Oaks High School,  
Thousand Oaks

100 Acres



Ventura Community College,  
Ventura



- NCZO Amendments:
  - Renewable Energy Permit Type Simplification
    - Planning Commission CUP to Planning Director PD, possibly Zone Clearance
  - Renewable Energy Development Standards for hazards, safety, environment, military compatibility, etc.
  - Accessory Renewable Energy
    - Clarify difference between accessory and grid scale uses
    - Examine permit pathway options for accessory uses
- **General Plan Amendment:** 5% Lot Coverage Exception for Battery Energy Storage in In OS, AE, and RA Zones





## ☉ Solar Concentration Facility Prohibition

- Prohibits solar concentration arrays countywide
- Implements Program HAZ-O
- Could be substituted for a Renewable Energy Restriction Overlay Zone

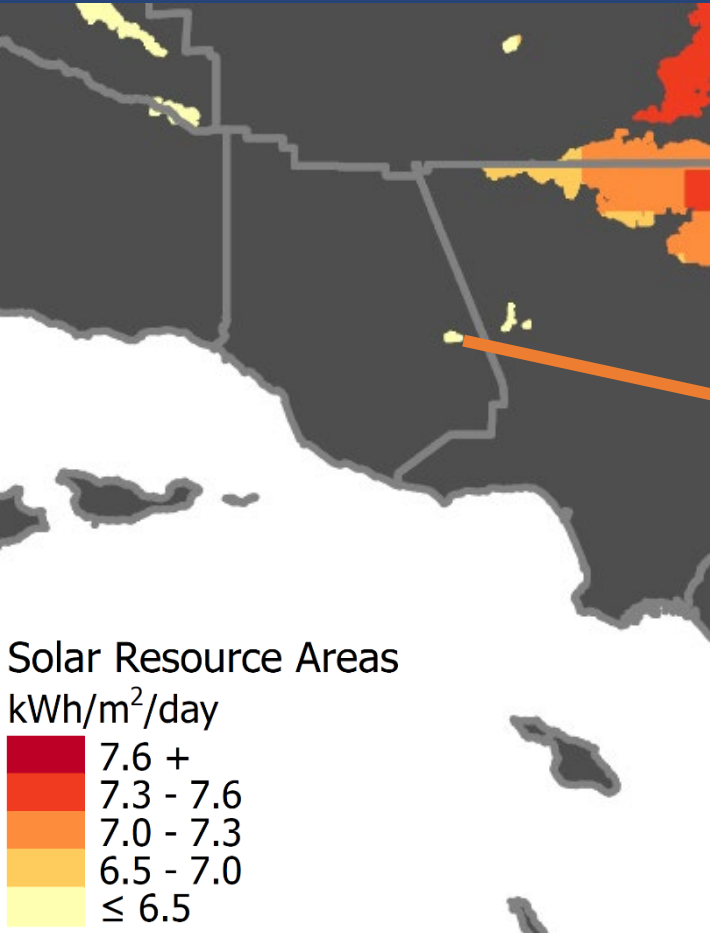




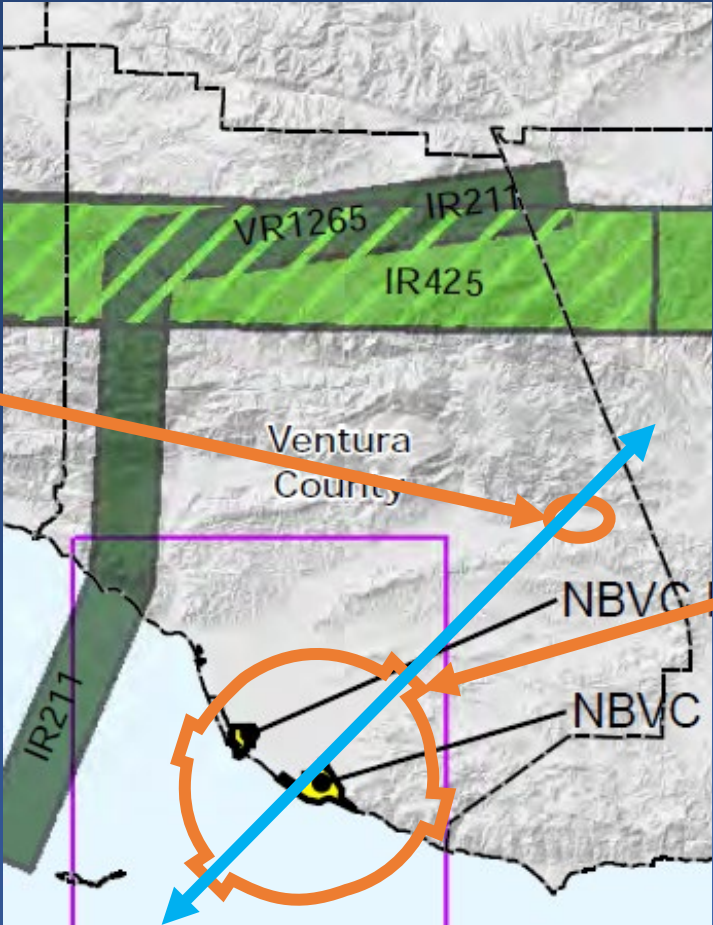
# Renewable Energy Program – Phase II



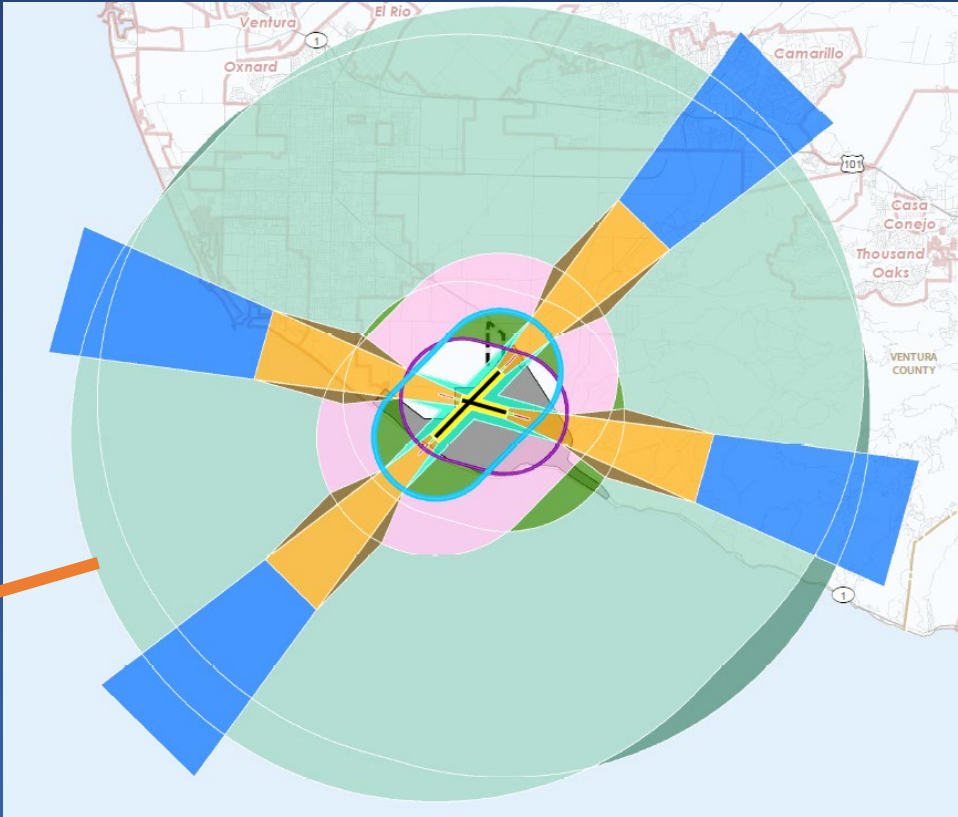
Concentrating Solar Power  
Prospects  
California Energy Commission



NBVC Joint Land Use Study  
Military Training Routes



NBVC Air Installations Compatible  
Use Zone Study  
Imaginary Surface Layers



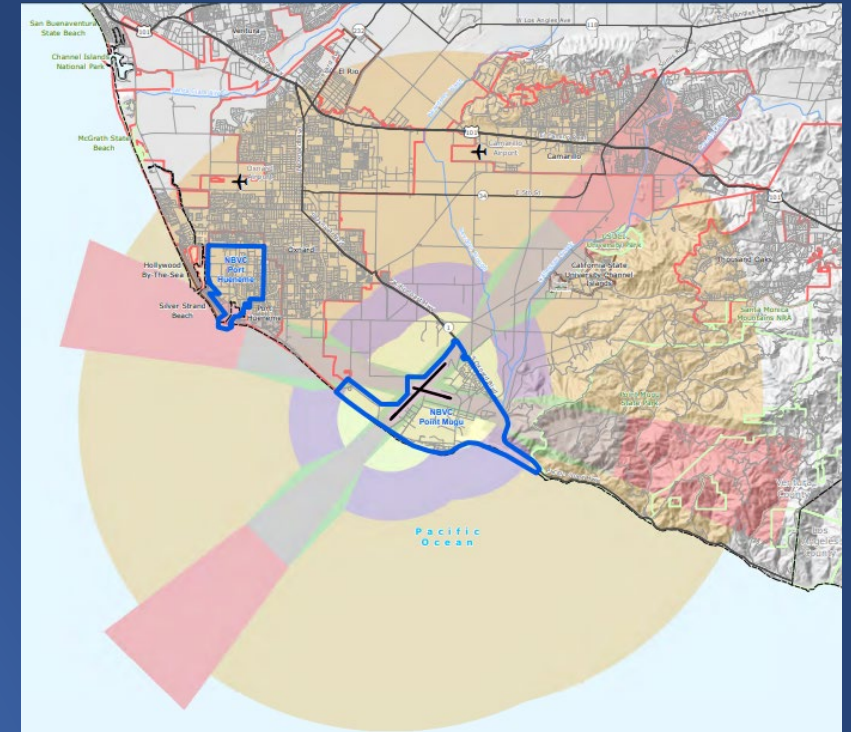
# Renewable Energy Program – Future Options



- Coastal Zoning Ordinance Consistency Update
  - Amend “energy facility” use definition & establish development standards
  - Requires Coastal Commission certification

## • Renewable Energy Restriction Overlay Zone

- Restrict types of renewable energy facilities near Naval Base Ventura County and other areas
  - Establishes additional development standards
- Adding either of these would require the Division’s 3-Year Workplan to be modified



# Renewable Energy Program Summary



## Phase I (~6 months)

- OS, AE, and RA Acres Limitation
  - 30, 50, 100, etc. Acres?
- Codify Director Determination

## Board Decision Points

## Phase II (~1 year)

- Solar Concentration Prohibition
- 5% OS, AE, Lot Coverage Exception
- Permit Simplification
- Accessory Uses Development Standards
- Possibly Concurrent Processing

OR

## Optional Future Phases

- Renewable Energy Restriction Overlay (alternative)
- Coastal Zoning Ordinance Consistency Update



# Public Notice and Public Comments

# Public Noticing & Comments



- December 4, 2023 – Published in VC Star
- December 15, 2023 – Emailed General Plan’s interested parties list (1,150 recipients) and the Program’s interested parties list
- As of December 18, 2023, at 12:00 noon, staff has received one public comment



December 19, 2023

Ventura County Board of Supervisors

## Board Discussion and Guidance

Staff is Available for Questions:

Dave Ward, AICP, Planning Director

Aaron Engstrom, Planning Manager

Donald Nielsen, Case Planner

Jeffrey Barnes, Chief Assistant County Counsel

Jaclyn Smith, Assistant County Counsel

