

## REMARKS TO THE BOS ON 12-19-23

Good Afternoon Board. My name is Todd Collart

I have been a strong supporter of SOAR, but my priority is to practically respond to the Climate Crisis. My hope is that these two potentially competing interests can be resolved favorably without a public SOAR vote.

I spoke to your Board on this matter when you last discussed it. I was pleased that you sent the staff back to develop additional options for expeditiously permitting renewable energy production and storage facilities given the regulatory constraints in the Zoning Ordinance and General Plan.

I have read through the Board Letter and broadly support the two Phased approach staff outlined. I have several minor concerns and recommendations that I hope can be addressed in your action today:

1. The demand for backup electrical energy storage is expressed in terms of Mega Watts needed by the entire County population or the unincorporated population, but the duration of this level of power is not established. For example, how many megawatt hours are needed for a potential black out or brown out? A night's worth, one day, or several days. I did not see this issue discussed in the staff report. This is a key consideration because it determines how many acres of land would possibly be needed to supply electrical energy storage. I recommend the staff be directed to discuss such duration needs with emergency service personnel and Edison and incorporate options in future work products.
2. The staff report mentions three different amounts of acreage needed for battery backup storage, but I did not see that these acreages were linked to a desired duration of backup power needed. Supplying back up power for longer durations would logically require more battery backup capacity and acreage. I recommend the acreage amounts be specifically linked to the backup power duration and optional acreages be incorporated in future work products.
3. The amount of battery backup acreage discussed on pages 5 and 6 is only defined in terms of electrical batteries, such a lithium-ion batteries. There are other forms of electrical energy storage mentioned in the staff report such as pump storage to bodies of water, compressed air, and mechanical kinetic energy devices. The total acreage envisioned necessary for backup power should not be limited to just electrical batteries. I recommend future work products refine acreage amounts considering the variety of potential energy storage systems.
4. Board Direction on page 5 #3 "Strategic location of renewable energy facilities" is useful, but I recommend it be expanded to include an item 3 d considering backup power for sub-grids fed by sub-stations to provide finer control of power distribution during emergencies.

5. I recommend your Board broadly endorse the staff recommendations for Phase 1 and 2 work, but with sufficient flexibility to optimize future recommendations that reflect the need for renewable energy projects while respecting SOAR interests.

My hope is that County staff can work closely with SOAR leaders to craft language for the Zoning Ordinance and General Plan to regulate renewable energy production and energy storage facilities that would result in minimal on the ground land use changes. Doing so would honor SOAR objectives while also allowing for the ready processing of permits for renewable energy and storage projects.

Taking such a collaborative approach would ideally make a public SOAR vote unnecessary because the functional outcome of any new regulatory language would be diminished.

I hope a SOAR vote should be avoided because:

- It is costly
- It delays worthy and necessary Climate mitigating projects
- The election could be subject to mischief-making by interests opposed to decentralized renewable energy production and storage facilities.
- Failure to have a validating SOAR vote would drive project applicants to the State Energy Commission (CEC) for approvals and pre-empt local oversight of these projects.