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The Next EPIC Challenge - ConSol Questions and Comments

Questions related to the proposed minimum design requirements:

â€¢ A minimum of 20% of the peak load must be available to be temporarily managed or curtailed

Will participation in demand response be mandatory for all tenants? Will the demand response signal come from an external source (from an IOU), or can it be determined/generated by the building owner/operator/microgrid controller?

â€¢ Peak demand must be met through a combination of onsite renewables, onsite storage, and load management

Please define peak demand (annual? daily?). How many hours must this peak demand be met? Is this connected to the islanding requirement? If there is not enough area available for the solar generation required, can (off-site) community solar be used for the required renewable generation?

â€¢ Home energy management system capable of responding to real-time pricing signals (simulated real-time pricing is acceptable)

Please define â€œresponding.â€ Is this referring to automated demand response (ADR)? If so, will the participation in ADR be mandatory or opt-in for tenants?

â€¢ Microgrid controller(s) that are interoperable with DER aggregation platforms such as Virtual Power Plants.

Please elaborate on this requirement. Is this referring to DERs within the microgrid â€œislandâ€ or external DERs?

â€¢ Able to island from and provide a minimum of 8 hours of electricity to critical loads using onsite renewables, storage, load management, and electric vehicles.

Will participation in EV vehicle-to-grid/microgrid be mandatory?

â€¢ All parking spaces must have access to EV-charging stations that can respond to grid- and building-signals.

This may not be cost-effective given the current projections for EV ownership rates (especially in low-income areas). A better requirement would be to require all spaces to have infrastructure (conduit) for EV chargers and to install EV chargers for all tenants

that have (or later acquire) an EV. This would be more cost effective and would ensure the latest technology chargers are installed as they are needed.
General Comments:

1) The inclusion of advanced energy technologies (solar, storage, ADR, energy management, microgrid controllers etc.) will make affordability difficult to achieve. If the CEC wants to achieve affordability for this project, we strongly recommend waiving the prevailing wage requirement in the terms and conditions.

2) It generally takes several years to get a mixed-use development fully approved and ready for construction. The scoring criteria for Phase I should have â€œschedule realismâ€ as a pass/fail criterion. Otherwise, the $1M grants may be wasted on projects that have no chance of meeting the Phase II schedule. Teams that cannot clearly demonstrate how they can realistically meet the Phase II schedule should not be considered for Phase I funding.