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Permit streamlining, low-income charging access, and community led infrastructure programs

CEC staff's thoughtful presentation on 12/2 highlighted EV charging permit streamlining, low-income residential charging access, and community-led EV infrastructure programs as three distinct categories of inquiry and investment. We believe that these are directly linked, and that permit streamlining and strategic city-scale EV planning should be designed specifically for lower-income communities to ensure equitable deployment of state investment that directs state resources toward the communities most in need of subsidies, incentives, and technical assistance to drive EV adoption. The lack of charging infrastructure in lower-income communities--where residents are more likely to live in multifamily homes, lack individual driveways, and lack workplace charging--is a direct impediment to EV adoption in these areas, adding to significant affordability and informational barriers. CEC's EV Ready Communities Blueprints were a fantastic effort to develop local EV deployment strategies, but they are only a first step toward addressing the particular needs of lower-income communities. We believe California local governments should be investing in EV infrastructure investment and permit coordination plans specifically designed to address the needs of lower-income communities and ensure that these communities benefit maximally from state initiatives. The Center for Law, Energy & the Environment (CLEE), an environmental policy research institute based at UC Berkeley School of Law, is actively seeking to develop an initiative for policy research and strategy development for lower-income community charger access and would be glad to communicate further with CEC staff as appropriate.