

# Silicon Valley Clean Energy - Best Practices Guide for Streamlining Electrification Permitting

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# Silicon Valley Clean Energy

The Community Choice Energy agency for 13 communities in Santa Clara County providing clean electricity and innovative programs to fight climate change locally



**Campbell | Cupertino | Gilroy | Los Altos | Los Altos Hills | Los Gatos | Monte Sereno**



**Milpitas | Mountain View | Morgan Hill | Santa Clara County | Saratoga | Sunnyvale**

# Permitting Central to Decarbonization

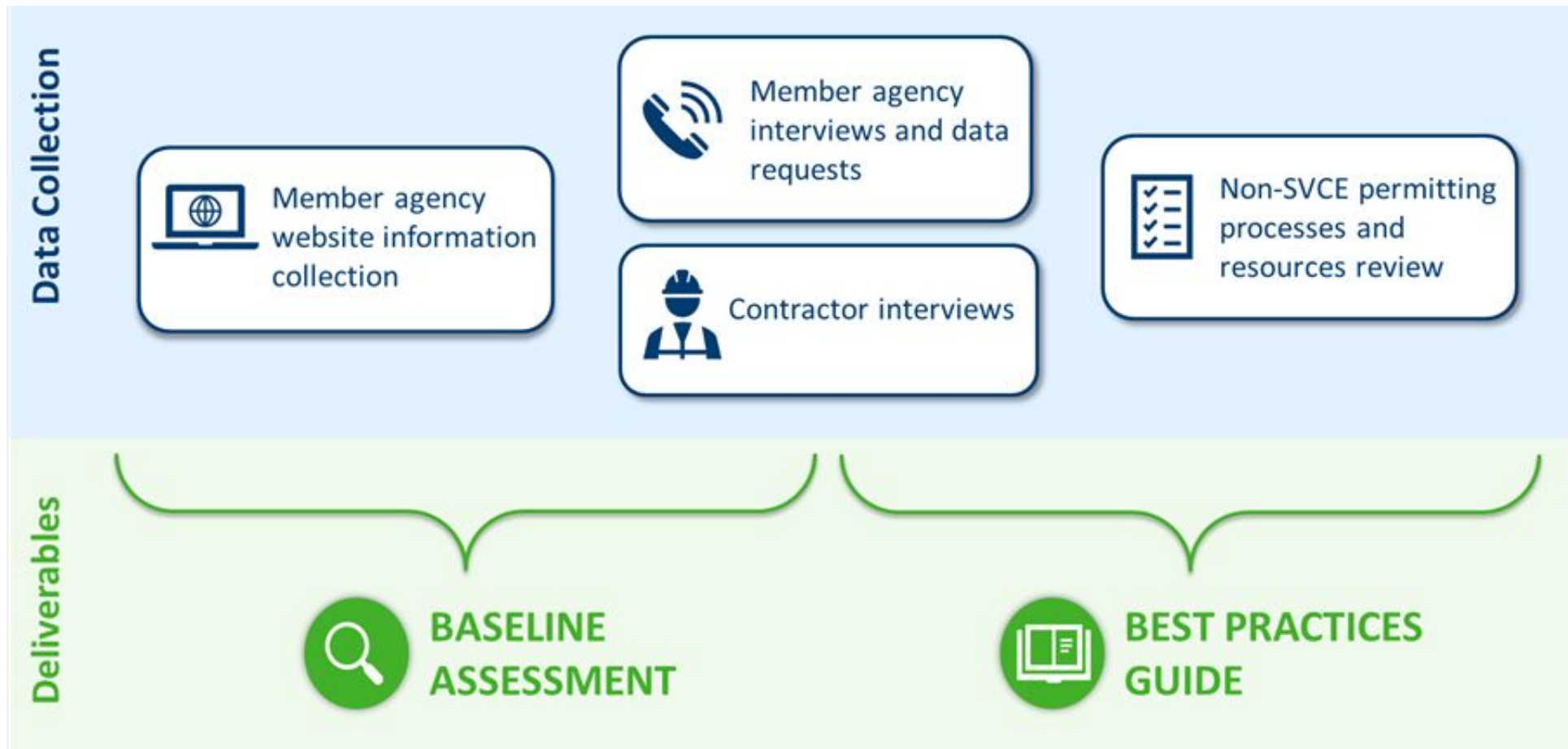
Permit streamlining is becoming an increasingly prominent topic

- All new buildings need to be all-electric by 2030 and at least 20% of buildings will need to be retrofitted to all-electric\*
- This will increase the demand of permits on building departments
- SVCE developed recommendations to support building departments and prepare for the transition to electrification



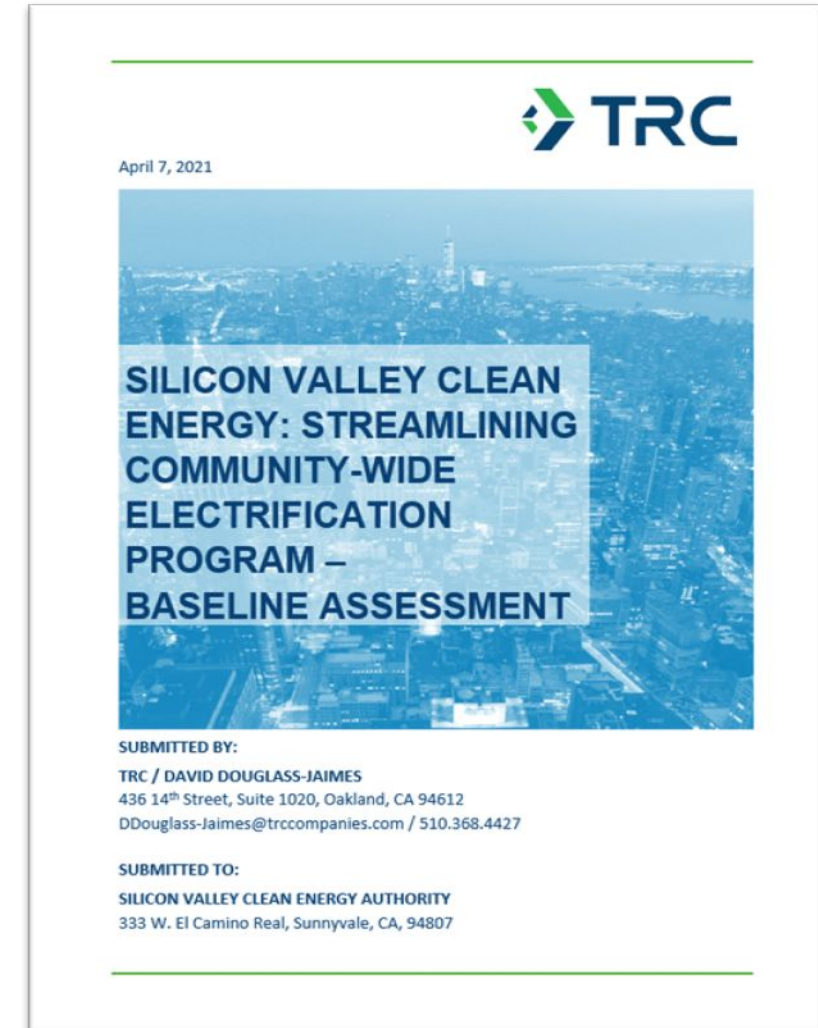
# Permit Streamlining Program Activities

Contracted TRC to administer program



# High-Level Findings from Baseline Assessment

- Permit and inspection processes relatively consistent
- Most agencies do not comply with AB 1236 (permit streamlining for EV charging)
- One agency is tracking electrification permits
- Staff trainings were severely impacted by COVID; jurisdictions would like trainings on electrification



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# Best Practices Guide for Streamlining Electrification Permitting





# Best Practices Guide Overview Cont.

- Review best practice recommendations in four groupings:
- Staff trainings
- Customer service process
- Align processes with public policy objectives
- Regional collaboration



# Best Practice Recommendations – Staff training

- Seek out training resources and support staff training to keep up to date on electrification technologies
  - Ensure staff are well-equipped to review and inspect electrification technologies
  - Battery storage and EV charging systems identified as particular needs
  - Leverage third-party support for training and educational materials
- Develop and support training resources
  - Helping agencies stay up to date on the latest technologies



# Best Practice Recommendations – Customer service process

- Identify electrification projects at the outset of the process, and provide pre-application resources
  - Create awareness of potential challenges related to electrification
  - Especially helpful for known challenges, such as combined PV / battery / EV projects

Potential strategies include:

- Dedicated application and review structures
- Pre-application checklists or guidelines

# Best Practice Recommendations – Customer service process cont.

- Develop dedicated electrification application, permit review, and inspection processes
  - Streamline application processes by focusing customer and staff attention on specific needs of electrification measures
  - Variable strategies to best meet agency needs:
    - Dedicated check boxes for electrification on standard forms
    - Dedicated application forms for electrification or alternative energy projects  
(Example: Cupertino’s dedicated “Alternative Energy” permit application for PV, EV, battery)
- Track electrification permit trends
  - Identify which electrification measures are most in-demand and prioritize streamlining efforts for most common application types

# Best Practice Recommendations – Align processes with public policy

- Evaluate permit fee structures to achieve parity between electric and NG equipment, or to favor electrification
  - Flat fees or combined permits
    - Example: combined MEP permits at Santa Clara County, and others
  - Fees based on project type rather than project valuation
  - Preferential fees for high-priority measures
  - May require subsidy or other funding sources based on cost-recovery model



# Best Practice Recommendations – Regional collaboration

- Align requirements and procedures across jurisdictions
  - Help to reduce effort for customers to learn new requirements, and minimize potential for customer error in applications
  - Likely requires support and coordination from a third-party entity
- Provide guidance and framework for aligning plan check and inspection requirements across jurisdictions
  - Providing structure, support, and guidance on aligning application requirements



# Next Steps for Permit Streamlining Efforts

Collect feedback on best practice recommendations

- Share Best Practices Guide with stakeholder groups
- Collect feedback on most feasible recommendations to implement
- Work with local partners and member agencies to determine implementation activities

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**Thank you!**

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