

The Clean Coalition and the World Business Academy

Montecito Community to Implement Microgrid Initiative

By Cynthia Anderson / VOICE

A NEW INITIATIVE IS BEING LAUNCHED IN MONTECITO to combat power outages that have been plaguing the community for years. Brought to the attention of community members by the recent natural disasters, two organizations have come forward with a solution that will offer Montecito a modicum of relief and a promise of a stable power supply. The World Business Academy and the Clean Coalition are launching the Montecito Community Microgrid Initiative, which will bring renewables-driven energy resilience to critical facilities in Montecito, beginning with the Fire Protection District and the Water District in the Upper Village of Montecito.

“Building a Community Microgrid is a strategic intervention; it will be a seed crystal that contains the DNA of the future of the energy system,” explained Executive Director of the Clean Coalition Craig Lewis in an email interview. “The future system will be environmentally sustainable, independent, and will provide indefinite energy resilience for our first responders during any future crisis. The Montecito community has an opportunity to lead the world toward this future, starting right now. In doing so, this Initiative will help secure the community and reassure insurance companies and residents alike that Montecito will rebuild and continue to thrive.”

The Montecito Community Microgrid Initiative aims to build multiple Community Microgrids in the area, including along San Ysidro Road in the Upper Village and along Coast Village Road in the Lower Village. These Community Microgrids will ensure the continuous operation of critical and priority facilities in the event of future disasters — as well as providing ongoing energy resilience to a region served by just one high-voltage transmission line. Clean local energy production from the Community Microgrids will also advance the Santa Barbara community’s climate goals.

“The Clean Coalition is honored to apply its expertise to help the Montecito community build back right with a modern energy system,” said Lewis. “As the Academy has been warning for many years, the area’s current electricity grid is extremely vulnerable to disruptions. Montecito Community Microgrids will bring energy security, resilience, and peace of mind to Montecito — along with tremendous environmental and economic benefits.”

The Montecito Community Microgrid Initiative is an extension of the World Business Academy’s Santa Barbara Renewable, Reliable, Resilient (SBR3) Initiative and is also an extension of the Clean Coalition’s Community

Microgrid Initiative. Together, the two organizations are primed to combine deep community relationships with leading technical, policy, and project development expertise.

“Teaming with the Clean Coalition, with whom we’ve enjoyed a multi-year relationship, to focus on execution of the Montecito Community Microgrid Initiative, will free the Academy to continue working on microgrid installations throughout the Santa Barbara County area,” commented Rinaldo Brutoco, President of the World Business Academy. “The Clean Coalition has done a great job leading Community Microgrid efforts throughout the state and around the country and is uniquely suited to team with the Academy in Montecito. It is a great partnership that will benefit Montecito initially and other areas in Santa Barbara County in the future.”

Philanthropist and long-standing Academy supporter Sara Miller McCune has been convening meetings for Montecito residents and leaders to learn about the Montecito

Community Microgrid Initiative and get involved. The Kind World Foundation, a leading supporter of the Santa Barbara first responder community, has made a \$150,000 pledge to the Clean Coalition to match the next \$150,000 in donations to the Clean Coalition for direct support of the Montecito Community Microgrid Initiative.

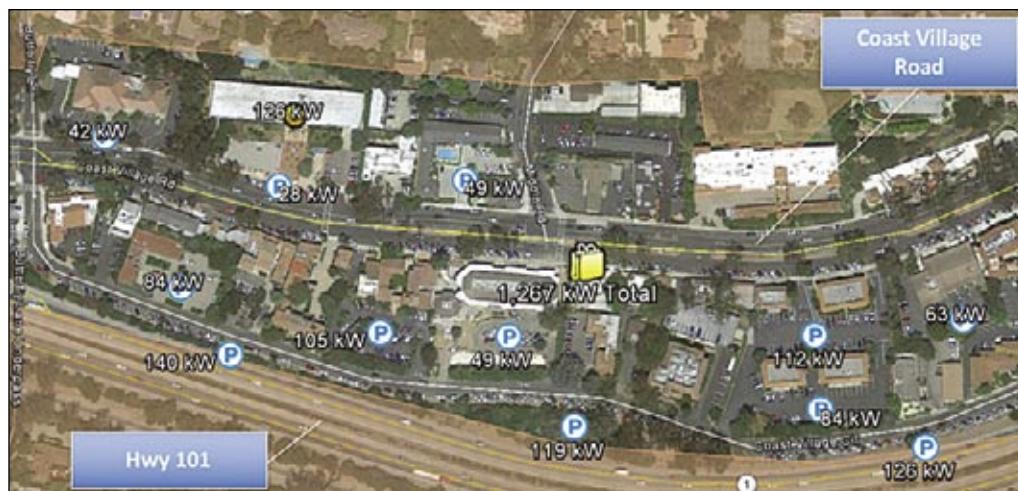
The Recovery Project, an action group started after the Thomas Fire and Montecito Debris Flow, is a key collaborator.

“The Recovery Project was created to step in after the first responders, addressing necessary ongoing community needs to support the rebuilding of our village,” remarked Recovery Project founder Berna Jean Kieler. “We see the Montecito Community Microgrid Initiative as an essential element in creating a new Montecito, which is responsive to environmental reform and disaster preparedness.”

“The Montecito Community Microgrid Initiative is an ongoing effort to bring Community Microgrids to Montecito,” Lewis elaborated. “The Upper Village Community Microgrid is the first project under this Initiative and will take 12 to 18 months to stage, plan, and prepare for deployment.”

The Initiative will also provide a learning opportunity for local students and educators, who will have opportunities to be involved from the beginning in helping to create a living example of the energy system of the future.

“We anticipate interest from the local schools to learn about this concept and to leverage this Initiative as a way to model the energy grid of the future to inspire the next generation of engineers, builders, and architects,” commented Lewis. “Our outreach efforts will include bringing teachers and students into the early planning process and empowering them to spread the key ideas to their friends and families. The development of specific curriculum will be up to the educators but is an effort we are looking forward to participating in fully.”



Montecito Coast Village facilities with solar potential

“This will be a new Community Microgrid system, which is different from a traditional microgrid because it will be designed to incorporate multiple customer meters, where traditional microgrids are generally based on a single customer,” Lewis revealed. “The design will be sized and designed to use renewable energy exclusively, in order to provide indefinite energy resilience for critical facilities. As we have seen, fossil fuel generators often fail and are dependent on supply lines that are easily disrupted in an emergency. Solar and storage Community Microgrids can operate independently from the grid and without the reliance on fuel other than the sun.”

A Community Microgrid is a new approach for designing and operating the electric grid, based on local renewables and other distributed energy resources such as energy storage and demand response. Although linked to the main electric grid, during a power outage a Community Microgrid can isolate from the broader grid and provide indefinite renewables-driven backup power to critical facilities. This scalable and replicable approach saves money, provides local economic stimulation, and provisions secure and stable clean local energy, even during disasters of any duration. According to proponents, Community Microgrids deliver an unparalleled trifecta of economic, environmental, and resilience benefits across communities.

The Clean Coalition is seeking a local Program Manager to work closely with Lewis, who is now based in Santa Barbara, to lead the technical and project management elements of the Montecito Community Microgrid Initiative; interested parties should respond to the job description on the Clean Coalition website.

The Clean Coalition is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to accelerate the transition to renewable energy and a modern grid through technical, policy, and project development expertise. The Clean Coalition drives policy innovation to remove barriers to procurement and interconnection of distributed energy resources (DER) — such as local renewables, energy storage, advanced inverters, and demand response — and we establish market mechanisms that realize the full potential of integrating these solutions. In addition to being active in numerous proceedings before state and federal agencies throughout the United States, the Clean Coalition collaborates with utilities, community choice aggregation agencies, municipalities, and other jurisdictions to create near-term deployment opportunities that prove the technical and economic viability of local renewables and other DER.

www.cleancoalition.org

Since 1987, the **World Business Academy** has been a 501(c)(3) nonprofit think tank focused on the role business can and should play in solving humanity’s largest challenges. Over the past 5 years, the Academy has transitioned into an action incubator for environmental causes that directly impact our community. The Academy advocates for sustainable energy use by working to elevate the consciousness of people in the business community and encouraging them to use their influence to take responsibility for the environment. Our 30-year advocacy and litigation track record includes the closure of San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, the rejection of the Ellwood and Puente natural gas peaker plants, and the ongoing litigation to close Diablo Canyon and ensure the protection of the CEQA.

www.worldbusinessacademy.org



Montecito Upper Village critical facilities with solar potential