

BATTERY STORAGE FAQ



What is a BESS & Why Blue Lake?

A BESS is an energy storage system that captures energy from different sources and stores the energy in rechargeable batteries for later use. When the need arises, the energy is released back into the electrical grid to supply energy to homes, businesses, EV and industrial facilities. A BESS allows for the capture of renewable energy and reuse during times when renewables are not producing energy. Just like a home renewable system may have a TESLA battery wall to store energy produced from solar panels, a BESS performs in the same way.

The City has been working on the development of a BESS on the former power plant site for over four years. Because the site has an existing transformer and sub-station that can facilitate the transfer of large amounts of energy, the site is suited for transition to a cleaner and less intrusive energy development.

Will a BESS Prevent the City from Developing Recreation Projects on the Property?

No, the development of a BESS is compatible with future development plans for the property, including recreation development. The proposed BESS was designed into the conceptual masterplan for the property.

Will the BESS Project Produce Noise and other Environmental Impacts:

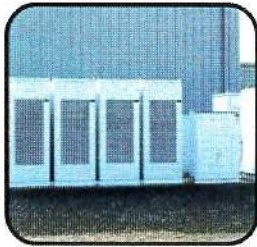
BESS projects are required to meet all zoning requirements established by the regulating authority. The City has noise standards in place to regulate noise pollution. New BESS projects produce less heat than older systems and require smaller and more efficient fan systems. Fans are the major cause of noise from a BESS and can be mitigated using sound buffering and new technology. Any project will be required to meet zoning standards established by the City and will be required to complete all applicable CEQA reviews and mitigation requirements.

What Type and Size of BESS is Being Proposed?

PowerTransitions is proposing a 2 phase project; the first phase is a 12.5MW project that will consist of up to 10 battery units. These units are 6'x24' and look similar to a shipping container. The second phase adds additional storage to meet a goal of 100MW. The battery type proposed is a Lithium Iron-Phosphate system; these are lower heat producing batteries, have a longer useful life and are not subject to thermal runaway like older lithium ion systems.

Are there any Local BESS Projects?

BESS Projects are located all over the world and Humboldt County has several projects, and more are being installed and planned for. The nearest BESS project is located at the Blue Lake Rancheria's microgrid development; this system is located behind the hotel and is visible from the highway. St. Joseph's Hospital, Mad River Hospital and the Airport Microgrid site also have BESS projects. Redwood Coast Energy Authority is working on additional BESS projects and these systems are routinely being developed as part of new residential developments.



Why is Battery Storage Important and How Does it Affect our Regional Energy Goals?

As renewable energy becomes more prevalent, the need to store excess energy becomes a key component of energy resiliency. Battery storage allows for greater use of solar and wind energy by facilitating the storage of excess energy during peak production periods. This allows for access to renewable energy during the times that the renewables aren't producing, thus reducing the dependence on fossil fuels and other polluting producers. Battery storage helps to stabilize the grid as it reduces peak power fluctuations and can stabilize costs for the customer.

Redwood Coast Energy Authority is working to attain the goal of 100% renewable and carbon free electricity procurement. By investing and partnering on BESS projects, RCEA is working to stabilize our local power systems and is investing resources back into our communities. RCEA has been a partner to the City of Blue Lake and has been assisting the City with the evaluation of potential projects. RCEA and the City have signed a Memorandum of Understanding, which allows RCEA to act in an advisory role to the City in this arena. City staff rely on RCEA to provide advice and assistance, along with working to ensure that the City of Blue Lake positions itself to take advantage of energy projects that provide sustainability and resiliency for the future.

Will the BESS Project Clean-up the Power Plant Site?

PowerTransitions proposes to purchase six acres of land from the City. In exchange, the company will demo, remove and remediate the existing power plant equipment. They will work with the City on removal and clean-up of the wood chip pile and will pay the City the residual value of the land based upon the appraised value and the cost of demolition and clean-up.

How Much Land will the City Have Left to Develop?

The City will retain over 16 acres of developable land; this acreage will facilitate the development as proposed in the conceptual master planning documents.