

# Policy Research: Discussion and Direction

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GEZ Board Meeting - 7/11/25

UC Berkeley Labor Center (UCB LC)

# Goals for Today's Meeting

1. Offer high level review of potential policy approaches to advance the goals of the GEZ.
2. Receive input and direction from the GEZ Board on priorities for policy research.

# Key strategies for UCB LC Green Economy project

## Strategy A: Research

1. Identify priority Clean Energy Manufacturing (CEM) technologies
2. Examine growth opportunities and barriers to growth
3. Workforce and environmental assessments to inform high-road strategies

## Strategy B: Technical Assistance

1. Track public funding opportunities relevant for GEZ
2. Assist employers and local government in developing high-road partnerships for CEM funding opportunities

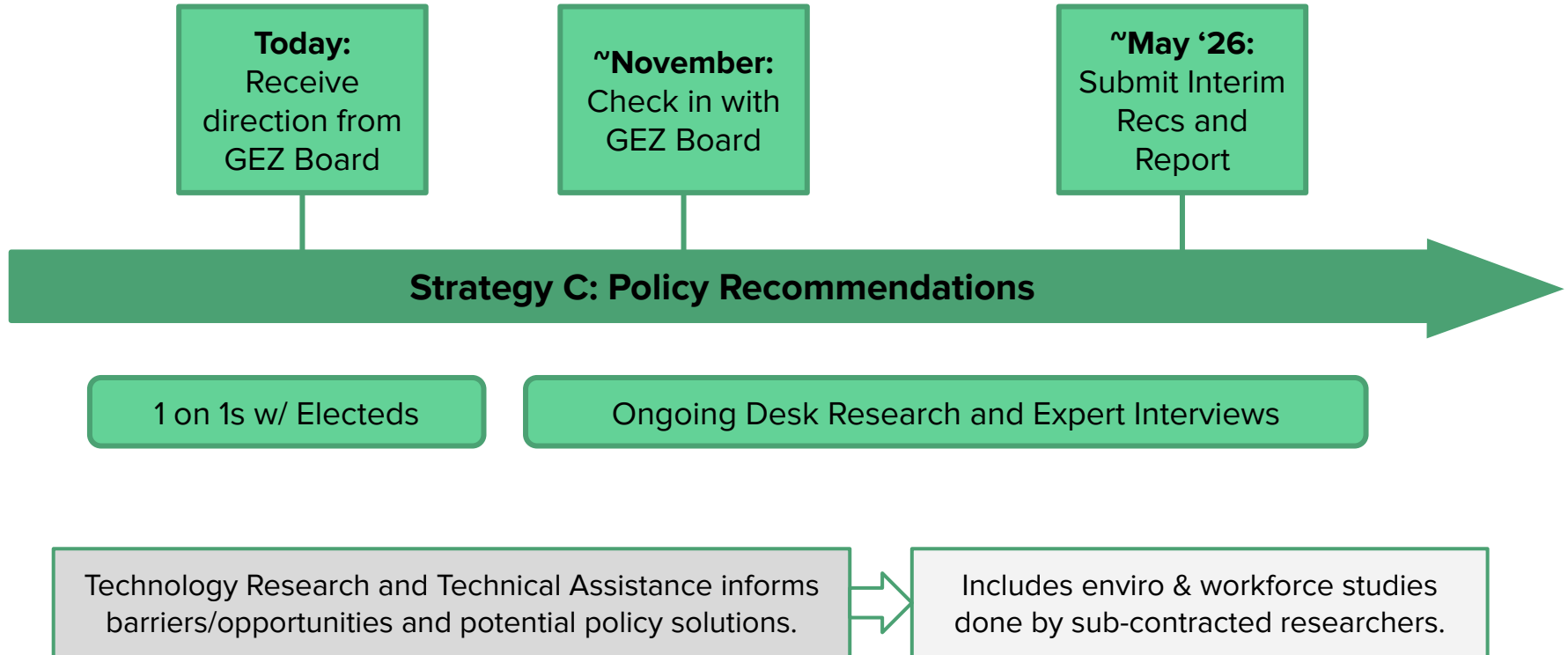
## Strategy C: Policy Recs

Combine research and technical assistance learnings to develop policy recommendations needed for high-road CEM growth.

# Purpose of Policy Recommendations

Achieve the goals of the GEZ and land high road CEM projects by addressing GEZ-specific barriers and opportunities.

# Process for Policy Recommendations



# Audience (and implementers) of policy recommendations

## **City and County Gov't**

Local governments on the GEZ board may be the ones to take action.

The GEZ can be a place to coordinate and share best practices in order to take cohesive and collective action across the region.

## **Regional, State, and Federal Gov't**

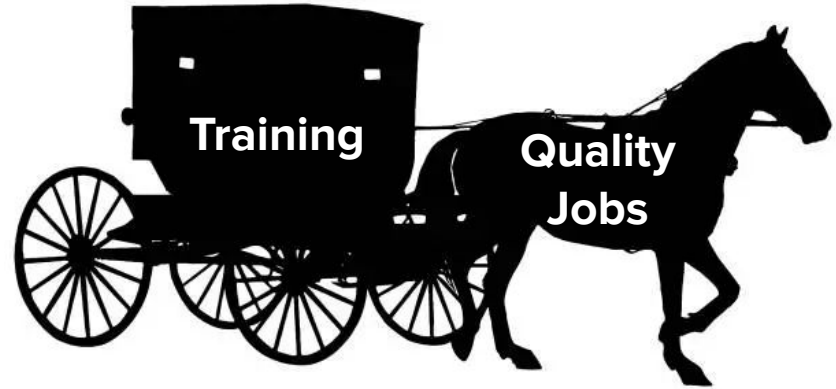
Other government entities, many of whom are represented here, may have the jurisdiction or resources to implement recommendations.

The GEZ can be a place to make the case and advocate to those entities, including the CA Legislature.

# High road economic development

“A high-road economy is based on **quality jobs, equity for disadvantaged communities, and environmental sustainability**. In a HR economy, firms compete by capturing the value of innovation, quality, and worker skill, rather than pursuing a ‘low-road’ race to the bottom based on low wages and cutting corners.”

— California ZEV Strategy (2021)



# Opportunities and barriers: preliminary list

## Barriers

- High power costs, long waits for upgrades.
- Lack of turnkey manufacturing facilities compared to nearby areas.
- Complex & uncertain regulatory environment.
- Length of time to develop projects.
- Lack of high-quality employment options for workers transitioning from fossil fuel industries and those without college degrees.
- Ongoing concerns about industrial pollution.
- High cost of living for workers.
- ...

## Opportunities

- Highly trained workforce and workforce training infrastructure.
- Access to critical transportation infrastructure including ports.
- Proximity to innovation and research hubs including National Labs.
- High quality of life for workers.
- Clustering of companies in traditional and clean manufacturing industries
- ...

### Discussion Questions:

- Which of these barriers and opportunities do you think are most important?
- What are other relevant barriers or opportunities?



# Overview of relevant policy areas

## Employer Attraction

**Industrial Lands and  
Facilities**

**Infrastructure**

**Funding and Capital  
Access**

**Training and Workforce  
Development**

## Governance

**Permitting**

**Coordination/Strategy**

**Zoning**

## Standards

**Job Quality and Access**

**Environmental**

**Community Benefits**

# Employer attraction overview\*

Policy Bucket	Opportunities/Barriers	Potential Examples
Industrial Lands and Facilities	<i>Barriers:</i> Lack of turnkey facilities <i>Opp.:</i> Industrial waterfront areas	Clean manufacturing campuses; land remediation; shared innovation spaces; comprehensive database of industrial sites
Infrastructure	<i>Barriers:</i> Power costs <i>Opp.:</i> Transportation infrastructure including ports	Clean manufacturing campuses with high voltage power infrastructure; grid upgrades; Port and transportation investments
Funding and Capital Access	<i>Barriers:</i> Public cuts to clean energy investments and incentives <i>Opp.:</i> Active venture capital network	Tax credits and incentives (manufacturing); loans, grants, public funding; tax increment financing districts; free trade zone
Workforce and Training Systems	<i>Barriers:</i> Lack of quality jobs aligned with training pathways <i>Opp.:</i> Existing training and workforce development infrastructure	Registered apprenticeships; community college pathways; workforce development partnerships targeting low income and disadvantaged workers

# Governance overview\*

Policy Bucket	Opportunities/Barriers	Examples
Permitting	<i>Barriers:</i> Slow development timelines <i>Opp.:</i> Can address local pollution and other community priorities	Supporting efficient local permitting processes; permit prioritization framework; opt-in permitting
Coordination/Strategy	<i>Barriers:</i> Difficult to strategize across many entities and areas <i>Opp.:</i> Collaborate and share resources to maximize impact	Joint powers authority; Community Benefit Districts; next generation of GEZ
Zoning	<i>Barriers:</i> Complex regulatory enviro. <i>Opp.:</i> Preserve and expand industrial land; address pollution concerns	Coordinated zoning across GEZ cities; local efforts ongoing

# Standards overview\*

Policy Bucket	Opportunities/Barriers	Examples
Job Quality and Access	<i>Barriers:</i> Lack of quality, blue collar jobs, job/housing mismatch. <i>Opp.:</i> Strong workforce/training systems.	Negotiated agreements (CBAs, PLAs, CWAs etc.); procurement rules; wage and job quality standards; local and targeted hiring policies
Environmental	<i>Barriers:</i> Legacy of ej/enviro issues, industry near sensitive receptors. <i>Opp.:</i> Prop 4 Climate investments.	Negotiated agreements (CBAs, etc.); local/regional/state environmental standards; remediation/restoration investments
Community Benefits	<i>Barriers:</i> Lack of projects, potential lack of consensus on benefits. <i>Opp.:</i> Growing interest in this approach in California.	Negotiated agreements (CBAs, etc.); community engagement processes; procurement standards

## Discussion Questions

1. Are there any critical policy issues missing here?
2. Which policy issues or approaches do you think we should prioritize in our research?
3. Are there case studies or examples from other communities that you'd like us to explore?
4. Other questions or thoughts?