



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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Riverside Public Utilities Wind Energy Purchase Puts Local Utility on Pace to Reach 2030 Clean Energy Goals With More Than Three Years to Spare

RPU remains a statewide leader in meeting and exceeding Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS)

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) has reached an agreement to obtain 125 megawatts of wind-generated energy from a new facility being built in New Mexico, which will allow RPU to reach the 2030 statewide clean energy mandate with more than three years to spare.

The power purchase and sale agreement approved by the City Council on Tuesday (11/7) will boost RPU’s renewable energy resources from the current 45.4 percent of the utility’s overall energy load to almost 70 percent when the project comes online in March 2026. That percentage will exceed the 60 percent by 2030 required by state law.

“This power purchase agreement not only reinforces the City’s dedication to clean energy, but also positions us as a leader in renewable energy,” RPU Deputy General Manager Daniel E. Garcia said. “It is a critical step towards a greener and more sustainable future for our community and the entire region.”

The 15-year agreement that has been over a year in the making is with Pattern Energy for the SunZia Wind Project in New Mexico. Once built, the project will provide as much as 3,515 MW to multiple customers across the Southwest, making it the largest renewable wind energy generation facility in the United States.

The agreement will help RPU continue to meet and exceed statewide mandates for clean energy included in SB 100, which became law in 2018. That law updated the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) for utilities to source specific percentages of their overall energy usage from renewable sources.

The 2018 law maintained the existing target of 33% RPS by 2020 (which RPU met), but also established new targets of 44% by 2024 (which RPU already has met), 52% by 2027, and 60% by 2030. SB 100 also codified in state law the policy that all of California’s retail electricity supply must be a mix of RPS-eligible and zero-carbon resources by December 31, 2045.

During the past decade, the Board of Public Utilities and City Council have approved more than 230 MW of renewable resource contracts and/or extensions. RPU now has 116 MW of geothermal energy, 46 MW of wind energy, and over 100 MW of solar photovoltaic energy under contract.

“The statewide RPS means that utilities all across California must be diligent in finding viable clean energy resources, then locking up those resources for future use,” said RPU Board Chair Gil Ocegüera. “RPU has excelled at this, and our ratepayers can rest assured that their utility is ensuring a clean and green future for them and their families.”

The wind energy contract will help the City move towards its dual Strategic Plan goals of reaching a zero-carbon electric grid and contribute to the citywide goal of carbon neutrality by 2040.

The project will reduce Riverside’s carbon footprint by approximately 158,000 to 167,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide (MT CO₂) per year – the equivalent of taking 36,304 vehicles off the road each year.