

Outreach & Community Engagement Strategy Update for MRL Committee

March 6, 2026

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Agenda

Purpose

- Share results of analysis and community survey conducted to inform refinement of outreach & community engagement strategy
- Solicit feedback from MRL Committee to further refine strategy for 2026 & beyond

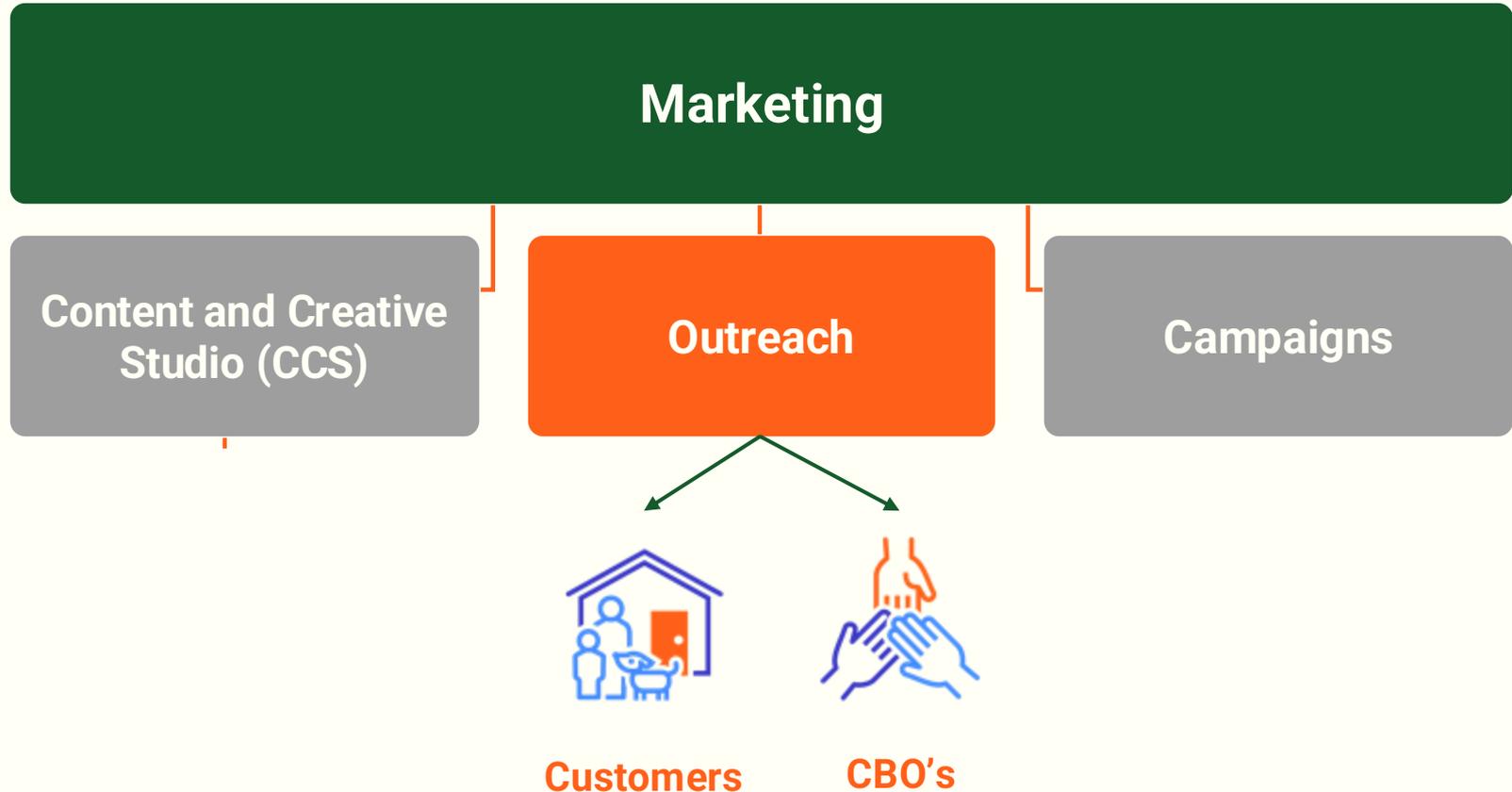
Agenda

- Background
- Analysis
- Strategy Update

Background



Context: Outreach & Community Engagement



Context: Outreach & Community Engagement

Legacy Strategy

- Goals are to *raise awareness, build trust, and educate customers*
- Meet people where they're at
- Say yes to almost everything

Tactics

- **Event Outreach** - Passive presence at events across our service area to build awareness and engage with customers where they are at
- **Sponsorships** - Broad exposure for the Ava logo and a platform for outreach
- **CBO Engagement** - Proactive delivery of a message or collaboration with a partner to reach stakeholders with a more focused message

Analysis



Analysis Approach

Learning From Experience

- Detailed look at the three core types of outreach activity (event tabling, sponsorships, CBO engagement)

Customer Perspective

- Aggregate customer feedback data collected over the last ~3 years, along with insights from experienced Outreach Coordinators

Stakeholder Survey

- Solicit structured feedback from Board of Directors, Community Advisory Committee, and MuniPals

Initial Observations

Strengths

- Locally rooted outreach staff with strong reputation with those who know us
- Sponsorships are a great gateway to trust-building relationships
- Customer Programs attract lots of attention and answer “what’s in it for me?”

Challenges

- Stagnant levels of overall awareness of Ava
- Low threshold for what qualifies as engagement
- Lack of clear metrics for success
- Limited Outreach team capacity

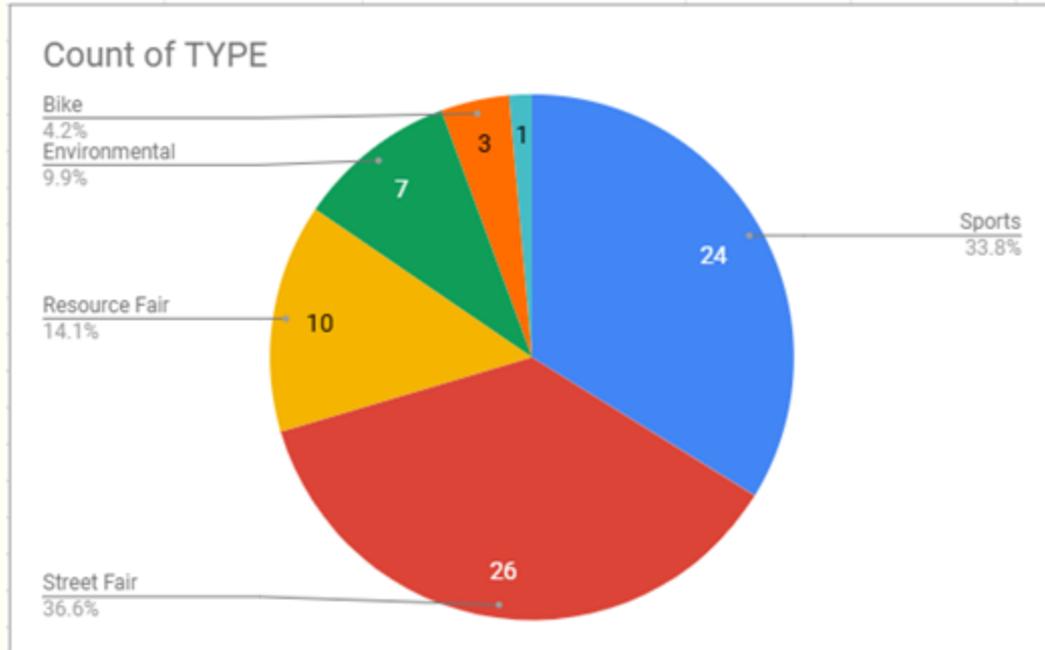


Learning From Experience



Events Analysis

In 2025, we tabled at 71 events:



Events Analysis

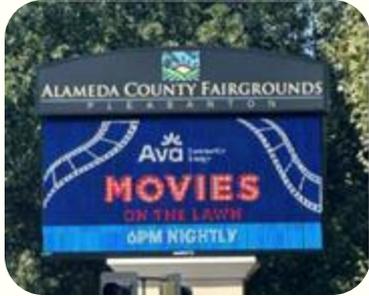
What Works

- Having a **clear call to action** and/or **something to offer** (programs, giveaways, etc.)
- Physical props to attract engagement and spark conversation (i.e. induction demo)
- Mission or brand alignment with event theme, such as Earth Day events which offer both high volume and quality engagement
- In general, any environment where the customer is **primed to pay attention to us**

What Doesn't Work

- Being an outlier booth that doesn't feel relevant to the theme of the event
- Poor booth placement: especially when we are placed among food and alcohol vendors
- Loud music or entertainment makes conversation and engagement very difficult
- Low event attendance or unfocused audience
- Poorly organized by event-planners
- Bad weather (especially heat)

Sponsorships Analysis



Event Sponsorships

- Logo visibility
- Local investment
- May or may not include tabling presence



Sports Sponsorships

- Logo visibility
- Gameday activations
- Hyperlocal brand alignment



Community Sponsorships

- \$2,500 awards for community projects
- Projects create good media opportunities
- ~60 orgs funded per year



“Large Nonprofit” Sponsorships

- Co-branding with well known, trusted entities
- Platform for education and demonstration projects



Sponsorships Analysis

What Works

Event & Sports Sponsorships

- Brand exposure: lots of eyes on our logo
- Affiliation with positive local brands
- Relationship building with event hosts & attendees

Non-Profit Sponsorships

- Co-branding with trusted entities
- Sponsorship money goes towards mission-aligned outcomes
- Storytelling opportunities from projects

What Doesn't Work

Event & Sports Sponsorships

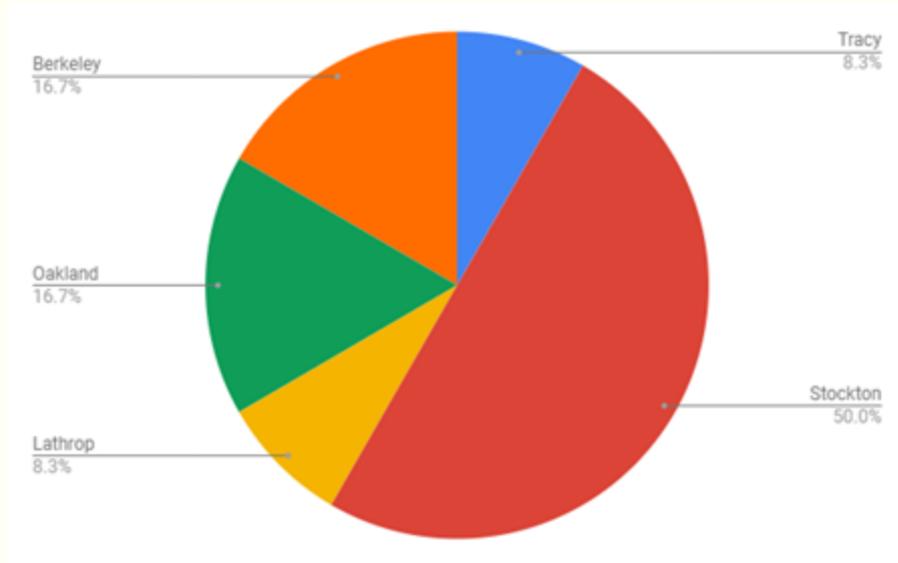
- Visibility not translating into enough awareness or education
- Logo gets washed out in the noise
- Low engagement & activation

Non-Profit Sponsorships

- Missing out on opportunities for deeper engagement due to time allocation

CBO Engagement Analysis

In 2025, we tracked **13 “engagements”** with CBOs
(separate from Community Sponsorships)



CBO Engagement Analysis

What Works

- Educational presentations to CBOs and/or the communities they serve
- CBO Newsletter (over 60% open rate)
- Using Community Sponsorships as a starting point to building relationships
- Cross-collaboration with Local Development's community investment grants

What Doesn't Work

- Lacking holistic strategy
- Not spending enough time on high-impact engagements relative to other activities

What Customers Are Saying



Customer Perspectives



| Year | Events Attended | Impressions / Conversations | Feedback Documented |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 2023 | 51 | 4500 | 25 |
| 2024 | 99 | 6000 | 60 |
| 2025 | 71 | 8000 | 160 |
| Total | 221 | 18,500 | 245 |

Themes

- Who is Ava?
- Does this save me money?
- What are the benefits?

Common Customer Interactions

confused

“But I thought PG&E is my provider?”

unaware

“I’ve never heard of this before.”
“I’ve never seen any notice of this.”

solar adopter

“Can you explain how the true-ups work again? Who’s buying back my power?”

high bills

“My bill was more than \$500 last month, it is so expensive!”

skeptic

“But how do you get the energy? And is it really cleaner?”

enthusiast

“I already electrified my whole home! I love electric living!”

advocate

“This is awesome! I love how you all give back to the community.”

low-income

“Sometimes I have to choose between putting food on the table or paying my electricity bill.”

Survey (via Google Forms)



The Survey



Outreach & Engagement Strategy Survey (Ava Community Energy)

B I U ↻ ✕

This survey is intended for the key stakeholders to provide input on Ava's outreach and engagement strategy and plan for 2026. The information gathered here will help inform what types of outreach and engagement we prioritize next year, in alignment with the broader agency goals and marketing plan. We appreciate your time and any input you are able to provide.

Email *

Valid email

This form is collecting emails. [Change settings](#)

18 Responses

By Audience:

- Board of Directors (4)
- CAC (4)
- Municipals (10)

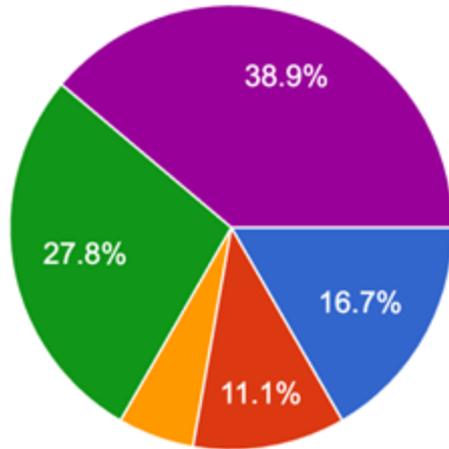
By Location:

- Berkeley (5)
- Hayward (4)
- Oakland (3)
- Union City (1)
- San Leandro (1)
- Dublin (1)
- Tracy (1)
- Fremont (1)
- Piedmont (1)

Purpose

Purpose: What would you say is the most important outcome of Ava Community Energy's outreach & engagement efforts?

18 responses

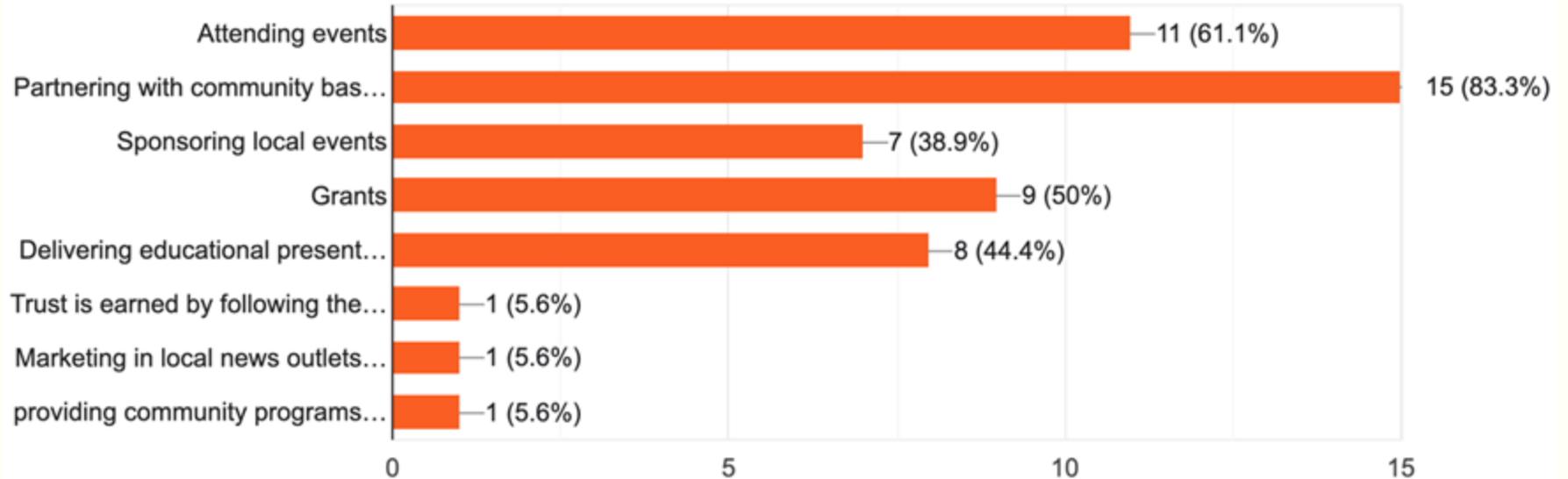


- Awareness: for customers & the community to know who Ava Commun...
- Education: to provide information that helps customers learn more about topi...
- Choice: to ensure energy consumers are aware of their rate choices with Av...
- Trust: to represent Ava positively in a way that builds trust in Ava as a public...
- Programs: to enroll people in Ava's programs such as Bike Electric, Smart...

Trust

Trust: what are the best ways for Ava to build trust in your community? Select all that apply.

18 responses

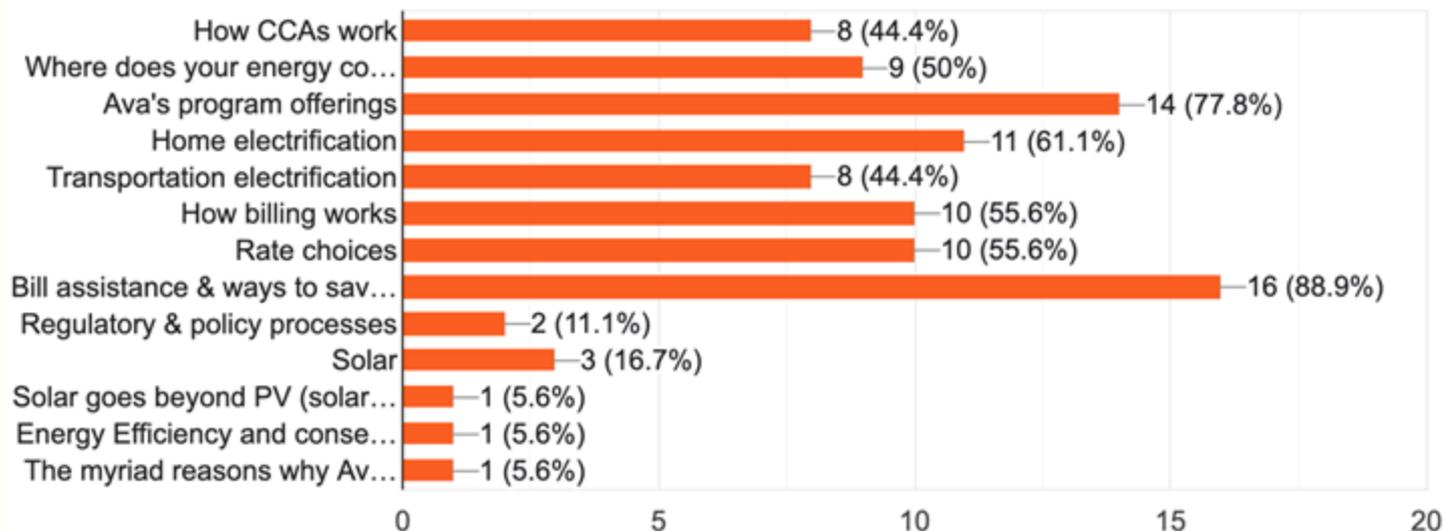


Education

Education: what topics are important for Ava to educate our customers and communities about?

Select all that apply.

18 responses



Strategy Summary:

Outreach and Community Engagement



Ensure Outreach Work is Mission-Aligned



Mission

Ava Community Energy's mission is to drive increasing access to clean energy, serving the needs of our customers and the well-being of our community.



Goals: Outreach & Community Engagement

1. Raise **awareness** of Ava's existence, purpose, and value
2. Build **trust** in Ava as a nonprofit public agency and source of information
3. Connect our customers & communities to the **benefits** of clean energy and electrification

Strategy: Outreach & Community Engagement



Lead with Affordability

Attract attention and drive awareness by opening conversations with benefits Ava can deliver to address affordability (e.g. programs, bill savings assistance programs, sponsorships, etc.)



Hyperlocal Presence

Maintain ongoing brand awareness activities to ensure logo visibility, physical presence, and in-person relationships across service territory



Community Partnerships

Leverage sponsorships and grants to deepen relationships and engagement with community partners who can amplify our message and deepen trust in the communities we serve



Practical Education

Deploy creative activations and demonstration projects as a means to educate our customers about clean energy and electrification, while generating meaningful storytelling opportunities

Strategy → Tactics → Metrics

| <u>Strategy</u> | <u>Key Tactics</u> | <u>Metrics</u> |
|---|--|--|
|  Lead with Affordability | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Ava's programs Energy savings education Encourage enrollment in bill savings assistance | # Program Enrollment # Electrification Guide Page Hits |
|  Hyperlocal Presence | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sports & events sponsorships Table & present at community events Install signage in community spaces | % Awareness (survey) # Events Attended # Physical Installations |
|  Community Partnerships | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Community sponsorships Strategic sponsorships Co-host events with partners | \$ Invested in Community # CBOs Actively Engaged # Events Hosted |
|  Practical Education | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstration projects Storytelling Digital engagement | # Electrification Projects # Media Features # Newsletter Subscribers |

What's Changing?



Key Pivots: Outreach & Engagement Strategy

→ CBO Strategy

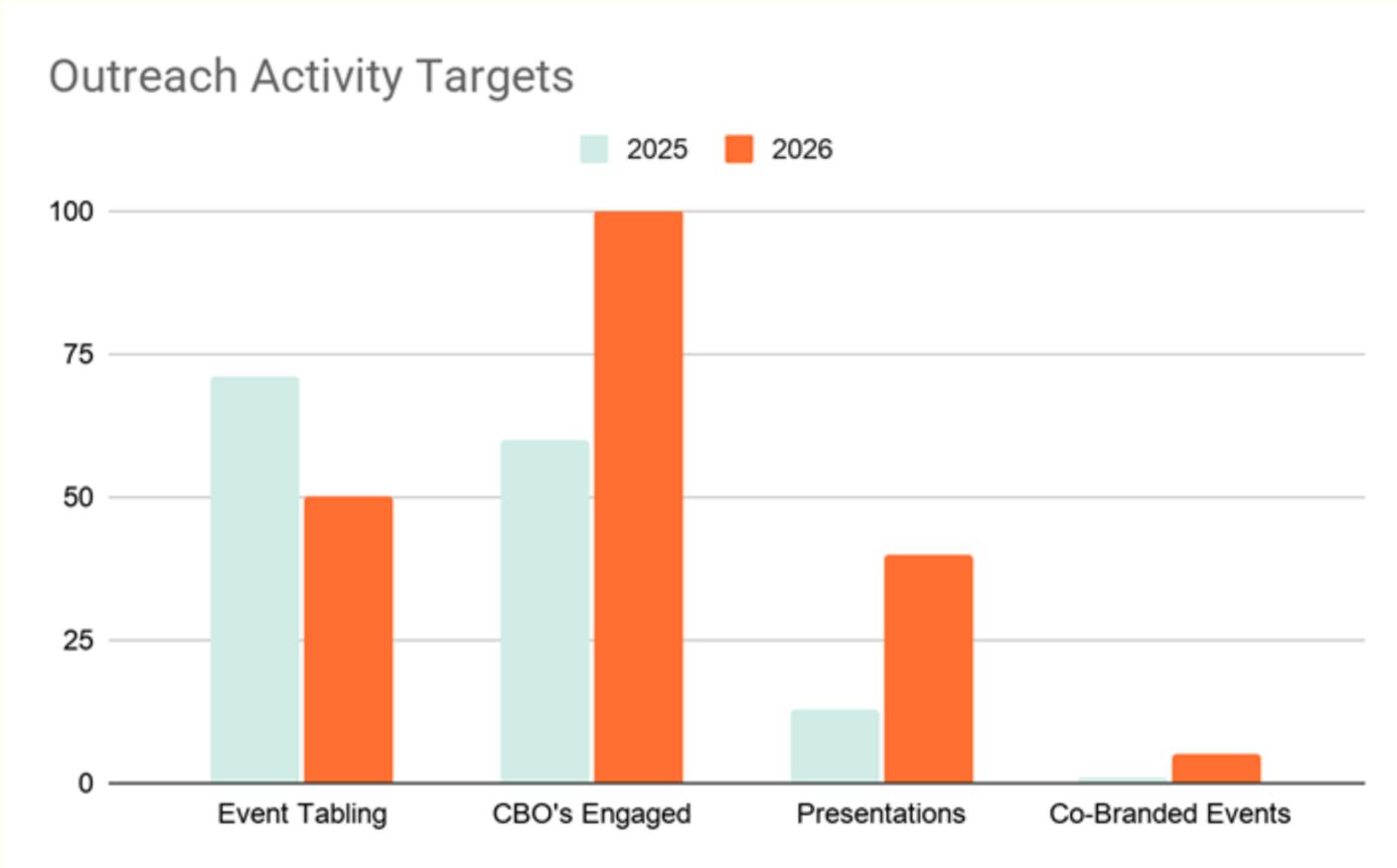
- ◆ Connect Community Sponsorships more intentionally to broader CBO engagement strategy
- ◆ Double down on 'Strategic Sponsorships' (f.k.a. 'Large Nonprofit Sponsorships')
- ◆ Leverage sponsorship dollars to deliver tangible examples of clean energy & electrification with direct benefits, while also generating a platform for educational storytelling
- ◆ Focus on customers and communities with highest energy burden who stand to benefit the most from increased access to renewable energy and electrification

Key Pivots: Outreach & Engagement Strategy

→ Events Strategy

- ◆ Move away from measuring *impressions* & move towards measuring *engagement*
- ◆ Do more co-branded events (i.e. [E-Bike Test & Ride in partnership with Bike East Bay](#))
- ◆ Reduce overall share of sports game-day attendance
- ◆ Decouple events sponsorship from event tabling in certain cases
- ◆ Decline tabling invites that don't meet success criteria for high quality engagement
 - Are the event logistics conducive to meaningful engagement?
 - Is the event mission-aligned or on-theme?
 - Is the audience in any way primed to pay attention to us?
 - Is there a clear call to action for the audience?
 - Is there equity, relationship-building, or other strategic value to attending?
 - Is there a good learning opportunity for us? (i.e. customer / community feedback)

Capacity Planning (CY)



Thank You





Community Energy