

# **SRP'S 2023 INTEGRATED SYSTEM PLAN Executive Summary**

Salt River Project (SRP) is a community-based, not-for-profit organization with a mission to provide reliable, affordable and sustainable water and energy to more than 2 million people in central Arizona. To ensure we can continue to carry out this mission as we have for over a century, we regularly perform long-term power and water planning to anticipate and meet future needs. Recently, we completed an Integrated System Plan (ISP), an industry-leading, multidisciplinary effort to identify strategies to help guide our power system planning through 2035.<sup>1</sup>

The world is changing in dramatic ways that will directly and indirectly impact the power system. Key forces of change that are reshaping our industry include:

- Growing electricity demand driven by migration to the region, increasing levels of large customers such as manufacturers and data centers, and the rapid adoption of electric vehicles (EVs), which is also exacerbated by the increasing and prolonged severity of extreme heat due to climate change and urban heat effects;
- Rising costs and extended development timelines for new infrastructure projects as a result of the lingering effects of inflation and supply chain disruptions that began during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- The anticipation that the Inflation Reduction Act will encourage deployment of clean energy resources and accelerate research and development of innovative technologies;

<sup>1</sup>The ISP focuses exclusively on power system planning. SRP plans the water system through separate processes.



- Increasing momentum behind decarbonization efforts, including customer demand for sustainable energy, retirement of coal plants and expansion of renewable and storage resources throughout the West, and electrification of transportation and buildings; and
- Growing tightness in regional electricity markets as significant quantities of aging baseload generators receive additional regulatory scrutiny and approach the end of their operating lifetimes.

The past several years provide a powerful reminder of how suddenly — and unexpectedly — change can occur. In such a dynamic environment, we must plan for a range of potential outcomes in order to develop effective strategies that can stand up to the pressure of unanticipated changes while allowing for flexibility and adaptation.

Simply put, SRP's customers expect the same quality of service from us despite the changing and increasingly complex landscape. Meeting customers' needs over the next decade will require a complete transformation of our power system, including:

- How, when and where we generate and store electricity
- How we deliver electricity over our transmission and distribution systems
- How we engage with our customers through rate design and customer programs

Successfully transforming our power system and achieving our 2035 Sustainability Goals depends on our ability to plan in an integrated fashion, allowing for close coordination and collaboration among groups to identify the best systemwide solutions for customers. By planning together, we can best meet customers' needs and ultimately ensure a more reliable, affordable and sustainable future despite the challenges and uncertainties ahead.

The primary outcome of our first ISP is a set of seven interdependent **System Strategies**. These strategies will guide the actions of our planning teams and help establish a common vision for how we plan the system of the future. They will also help our teams ensure that their specific near-term actions — including siting, engineering, permitting, procurement, development, construction, operations, workforce development, etc. — are consistent with the common strategic vision.

Based on the System Strategies, SRP has already identified some of these near-term actions — the **ISP Actions** — which are summarized later in this section. While the System Strategies provide direction for planning the system, they are also developed with flexibility in mind. Because the future is difficult to predict, SRP cannot lock in all decisions through 2035 today. However, we can adapt and respond to these changing conditions while using the System Strategies to guide us.

Significant changes to SRP's power system are already underway. By the mid 2020s, we will add more than 2,000 megawatts (MW) of solar projects and more than 1,000 MW of battery storage. By 2032, we will retire more than 1,300 MW of capacity at four coal plants, replacing this capacity with new lower-carbon-emitting resources. We are also actively exploring regional market initiatives and have already committed to joining the Western Resource Adequacy Program (WRAP), a regional program designed to ensure there is enough resource capacity to maintain system reliability.



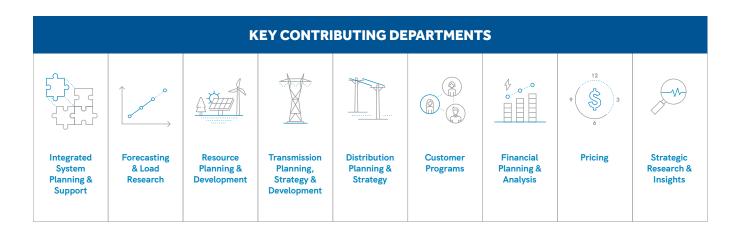
# **Need for Integrated System Planning**

Historically, many of the planning functions that have existed within power utilities have operated independently from one another. While planning processes for generation, transmission, distribution and customer programs have relied on some common data sets and exchanged some information, planning cycles are often asynchronous, focus on different objectives and planning horizons, and lack direct visibility into how quickly other parts of the system are changing. The most prominent of these planning processes, the utility Integrated Resource Plan, has traditionally focused on future generation choices with limited insight into how those choices might impact all parts of the system.

Given the rapid pace of disruptive change in the power sector, planning decisions across the system must be coordinated from end to end to identify the best path forward for customers. For example:

- Adoption of EVs will increase electricity demand, requiring additional investments in new power generation and delivery infrastructure. But if SRP can provide pricing signals to customers that encourage them to charge their vehicles during periods that are more advantageous for the overall system, this can limit the amount of new infrastructure investment needed.
- Many of the new large-scale generation resources that SRP will consider particularly
  renewables will be located in areas where the existing transmission system may not be
  able to accommodate their delivery. Studying how the location of these new resources will
  impact the transmission system will provide a leading indicator of where new investment may
  be needed and may also allow for proactive siting of transmission and renewable resources.
- As the share of solar generation in SRP's portfolio increases over time, daytime energy will become increasingly abundant and lower the value of conservation during this period. This will have direct impacts on how we think about the value of future customer programs and the design of our future time-of-use price plans.

With this first ISP, we have transitioned to a holistic and collaborative framework that includes all of SRP's key planning areas. By planning for the entire power system within one process, we are positioning ourselves to answer the most difficult multidisciplinary and advanced engineering questions that will confront utilities in the coming decade. It will also help us ensure that the solutions we identify are robust given the many uncertainties for the future.





# **Our Planning Objectives**

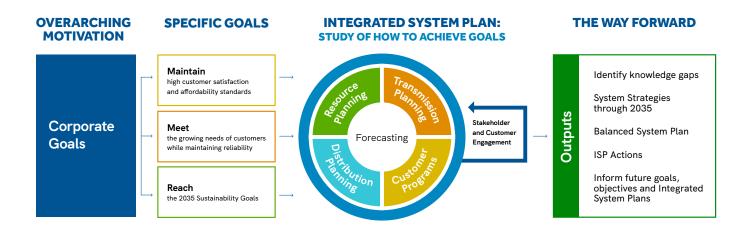
Reliability, affordability and sustainability are the cornerstones of SRP's 2035 goals, which in turn guide our planning efforts. Each of these is essential to upholding our mission and commitment to our customers.

**Reliability:** We are committed to maintaining electric reliability for our customers who depend on uninterrupted service, especially on the hottest days of the year.

**Affordability:** We recognize that electric bills represent a large cost to households and businesses. As many of our customers are facing mounting financial hardship and rising prices elsewhere in the economy, it is imperative that we strive to limit future increases to the cost of service.

**Sustainability:** We understand that our actions today will have far-reaching consequences for generations to come and recognize the importance of environmental stewardship to our community. These priorities are reflected in our comprehensive set of 2035 goals for minimizing our environmental footprint.

In the ISP, our teams performed rigorous systemwide modeling to identify viable pathways through 2035 to meet these goals. In addition to modeling, we engaged with customers and community stakeholders to inform and gather feedback on the ISP, while also building support for the ISP outcomes. The key deliverables of the ISP included the System Strategies approved by the Board, the Balanced System Plan and the ISP Actions. This first ISP also helped us identify opportunities to improve planning in future iterations.

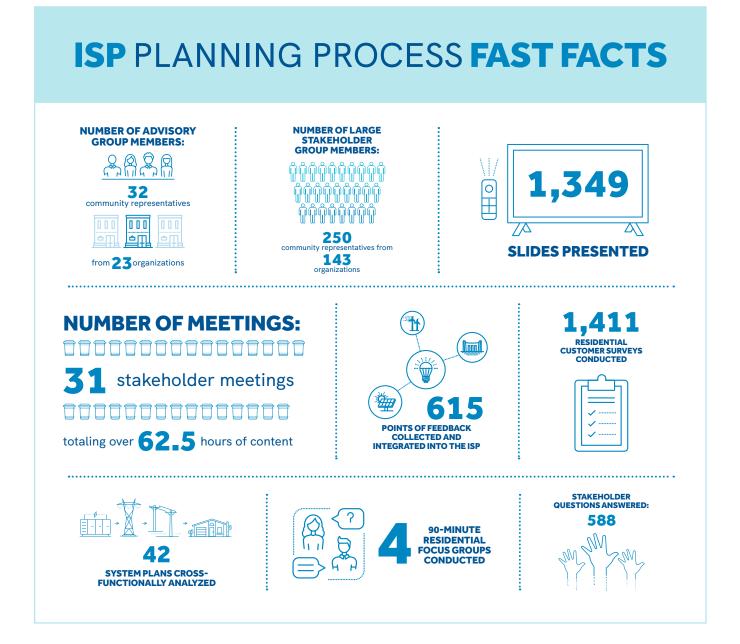


### Stakeholder & Customer Engagement

A core component of the ISP effort included engaging our customers and stakeholders throughout the entire process, including study design, review of key findings, and development of strategies and actions. Since SRP delivers power to diverse communities, individuals and organizations, we took great care to ensure that we heard varying perspectives on how to design a first-of-its-kind ISP and how we should chart a path forward in planning the power system.



To engage our customers and stakeholders, we created an Advisory Group, which included 32 representatives from 23 different community organizations. This group met 18 times over the course of two years and provided feedback on all aspects of the ISP. We co-developed the ISP study design with the Advisory Group based on their feedback on how the future could unfold, how SRP could consider planning choices, and what aspects of planning the future power system were most important to capture. We also convened a Large Stakeholder Group, including over 140 organizations, eight times to inform a wider group of stakeholders and to receive feedback at key junctures throughout the process. In addition to engaging stakeholders, SRP convened groups of industry experts through four Technical Working Sessions to gather diverse industry perspectives on several key topics that are emerging in the industry. Through these three engagement tracks, customers, stakeholders and industry experts provided incredibly valuable feedback and played a key role in shaping the ISP study process and the final outcomes of the ISP. SRP greatly appreciates their participation and contributions throughout the entire process.





In addition to convening stakeholders, SRP performed research in partnership with external research consultants to better understand the perspectives of residential customers. Residential customers have a diverse range of preferences, and it is challenging to capture these perspectives through a stakeholder meeting process given the time commitment required for those customers to meaningfully participate. To make sure that these diverse preferences were considered adequately within the ISP, we performed residential customer research. This customer research consisted of several focus groups and surveys of over 1,400 SRP customers, which SRP and its consultants ensured was a representative sample of residential customers based on demographics. Along with the stakeholder group meetings, this additional information provided us with a more complete picture of customers' desires and how the power system can help satisfy them.

Transparency was essential in the development of the ISP. To ensure visibility for interested SRP stakeholders and customers, we posted all ISP stakeholder engagement materials publicly, including pre-reads, agendas, presentations and meeting summary reports, throughout the process. These can be found on our ISP webpage at <u>srp.net/isp</u>.

### **An Integrated Modeling Ecosystem**

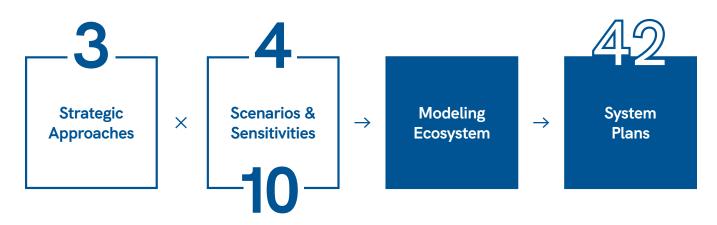
One of the principal challenges we encountered in implementing an ISP was designing an analytical framework with the appropriate level of detail to represent all parts of the system — from our biggest power plant to an individual customer's meter and every point in between. As the largest machine ever built by humans, the electric power system is incredibly complex. There is no single planning model with the capability to analyze the entirety of the electric power system as it undergoes transformative change over a long period of time. Instead, we sought to harmonize the models and tools currently used by each of our planning functions by utilizing common scenario definitions and consistent input assumptions. Additionally, we worked to improve the linkages between the models in such a way that information flowed fluidly between different analysis platforms. The result of these efforts is SRP's ISP modeling ecosystem that relies on common planning assumptions and connects tools used by each planning function with an unprecedented level of cohesion. This allows us to develop and analyze plans for the entire system.

### **Scenario-Based Analysis Framework**

To identify solutions that benefit our customers across a wide range of uncertainties, we employed a scenario-based planning framework in the ISP. The planning framework included three key elements: scenarios, sensitivities and strategic approaches. A **scenario** represents a plausible future state of the world around us, reflecting societal, technological, economic, environmental and political trends and conditions — generally, factors that are outside of SRP's control. A **sensitivity** modifies one assumption in a scenario to isolate the impact of that assumption. A **strategic approach** represents a decision or set of decisions that are within SRP's control as we develop the power system of the future.

Studying each strategic approach under a range of scenarios and sensitivities provided a framework for understanding how different decisions stand up against the uncertainty of the future. The ISP analyzed three strategic approaches across four scenarios and 10 sensitivities, producing a total of 42 unique system plans.





Each of the 42 system plans comprised specific plans for customer programs, distribution investments, transmission investments, and generation additions and retirements from 2025 to 2035. Additionally, for each system plan, SRP evaluated a variety of metrics that measured impacts to reliability, affordability, sustainability and customer value. Assessing strategic approaches across a variety of futures allowed us to identify strategies that work well across various scenarios and helps mitigate future risks. This also allows us to take advantage of potential opportunities, thereby creating a plan that is adaptive yet resilient to the forces of change.

# **Key Findings from Analysis**

SRP gained new insights from performing systemwide analyses of the 42 system plans. This ISP showed how customer needs, infrastructure buildout and operations could evolve under a wide range of future scenarios and uncertainties. We also learned how our actions can influence reliability, affordability and sustainability while also helping to manage future risks and uncertainties. SRP distilled these insights into a list of key findings below.

### **Customer Programs and Pricing Plans**

- SRP will need to evolve programs and price plans to encourage shifts in consumer behavior and further educate customers on when to consume and when to conserve energy.
- Electrification of end uses, including transportation and heating demand, creates new opportunities to shift energy usage to mid-day hours to help integrate more renewable energy and maximize carbon reduction impacts.
- Changes in how our customers use energy will require continued innovation and flexibility in planning.

### Infrastructure

- Customers' energy demand is expected to increase rapidly through 2035 in most scenarios, even with significant expansion of customer programs and customer-sited generation.
- Significant investments in new transmission infrastructure are needed over the next decade to connect new resources and customers, while also achieving reliability and sustainability goals. These investments will need to be strategically located and timed.
- Load growth will drive new distribution infrastructure needs while changes in how our customers use energy will require innovation and flexibility.



- SRP will likely need to double or triple resource capacity at an unprecedented pace in the next decade to serve customers while achieving reliability and sustainability goals.
- New renewables and firm capacity are part of a least-cost portfolio, even under a wide range of gas price and technology cost sensitivities.
- When paired with firm capacity, solar and wind contribute to a least-cost portfolio while helping SRP reduce carbon emissions and water usage. If the U.S. government enacted a mandate for 85% CO<sub>2</sub> reductions by 2035 (Strong Climate Policy), further acceleration of renewable and storage deployment would be required.
- Hundreds of miles of new or upgraded transmission lines and nearly double the number of 500/230-kilovolt (kV) transformers could be needed relative to today.
- Location of generation matters and plays a significant role in the buildout of the 500 kV and 230 kV transmission system.

### Operations

- Without new firm generation capacity, the system cannot satisfy reliability requirements under a high load growth scenario. In other load growth scenarios, the system can satisfy reliability requirements without new firm generation capacity but requires significant additions of renewable and energy storage resources.
- The reduction in coal generation and expansion of carbon-free resources over time allow SRP to meet, and in many cases exceed, SRP's 2035 goals for carbon emission reductions and water resiliency.
- A future system that relies more on variable renewable resources presents new challenges and will require new operating practices to ensure sufficient flexibility, reduce wear and tear on existing assets and maximize benefits to customers.

### Partnerships to Meet the Pace of Transformation

- With the amount of future infrastructure and resources needed, internal and external partnerships are going to be essential to build the future system and maintain high customer value.
- To meet infrastructure needs, supply chain and development solutions are essential to managing costs and to meeting the needed pace of transformation.

These key findings from the analysis underscore the tremendous transformation of SRP's power system over the next 10-plus years. Making this transformation a reality will be a significant undertaking requiring additional planning beyond the ISP to ensure there are detailed, sound engineering and operational plans in place for any additional infrastructure or changes to the system. It will also require making decisions on specific investments, procurements, workforce development, information technology systems, etc.

While the analysis provides insights into how to plan the future power system and tradeoffs for different approaches, SRP ultimately needs a plan that is specific enough for our planning groups, communities and stakeholders to plan the power system. The plan also needs to be flexible, given uncertainties about the future and the potential for innovation. The plan should include strategies



that are no-regrets across all futures, while also making tradeoffs between different objectives and identifying strategies that achieve an appropriate balance between reliability, affordability and sustainability. The next sections describe SRP's vision for how to plan the future power system, including System Strategies, an illustrative Balanced System Plan and ISP Actions.

# **System Strategies**

SRP developed seven interdependent **System Strategies**, representing long-term strategies for planning and operating all parts of the power system, including customer programs, distribution, transmission, generating resources, pricing and system operations. The strategies were approved by SRP's Board on Oct. 2, 2023, and will guide planning through 2035 and beyond. Each strategy is anchored to key findings from the ISP and relies on the other strategies also being in place to ensure success and achievability. To develop these strategies, we synthesized a range of metrics and outputs across scenarios, sensitivities and strategic approaches. We also incorporated feedback from the ISP Advisory Group before finalizing and receiving Board approval.

Each strategy will require that we take action today. Some will take longer than others to implement, but the execution of all strategies together will enable us to meet evolving customer needs, achieve our 2035 goals and beyond, manage costs for customers, achieve an adequate and reliable power system, and adapt toward a more sustainable future regardless of what that may be in 2035. The System Strategies are summarized below.

#### **Energy Investments**

Invest in renewable resources and storage to manage fuel consumption and drive carbon and water reductions.

#### **Capacity Investments**

Invest in firm generation, including natural gas, to support reliability and manage affordability, while also supporting advancement of emerging firm technologies.

#### **Proactive Transmission**

Proactively plan to expand transmission infrastructure to enable generator interconnections and load growth.

#### **Distribution Innovation**

Ensure distribution grid readiness to maintain reliability and enable customer innovations to drive carbon reductions.

#### **Partnerships & Suppliers**

Explore partnerships and supply chain and development solutions that manage cost and availability to meet the pace of transformation.

#### **Evolution of Customer Programs & Pricing**

Evolve pricing and customer programs to improve economy-wide carbon reductions and pace infrastructure development, while recognizing customers' diverse needs.

# Strategic Investment & Reinforcement of Existing Assets

Reinforce and maximize value of existing infrastructure with strategic investments to manage affordability and ensure future performance, grid security and resilience.





### **Balanced System Plan**

The System Strategies set the direction for SRP's planning efforts through 2035. To provide an illustration of how the system could look in 2035, following implementation of the System Strategies, SRP developed a **Balanced System Plan**. The Balanced System Plan provides an illustration of power generation, transmission, distribution and customer program plans, as well as reliability, affordability, sustainability and customer focus metrics, through 2035. To develop this plan, we drew upon the key findings from the analysis and residential customer research and built out a system plan consistent with the System Strategies.

The Balanced System Plan adds a significant quantity of resources, more than doubling SRP's total installed capacity by 2035 relative to today. This includes adding:<sup>2</sup>

- 7,000 MW of new renewables
- 1,000 MW of new long-duration pumped hydro energy storage
- 1,500 MW of new battery storage
- 2,000 MW of new firm natural gas

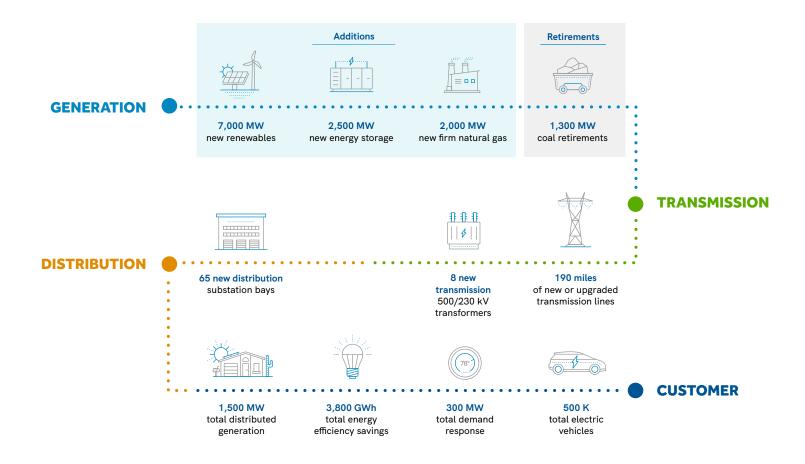
This additional capacity, along with resources that are already contracted and planned to come online in the next few years, makes up for the loss of 1,300 MW of retired coal capacity and a retiring agreement with a natural gas plant. It also helps SRP keep pace with a greater than 40% growth in energy demand by 2035 and marks a significant increase of clean energy resources in the future power supply.

To deliver generation from these new resources and to accommodate the increase in energy demand, the plan includes more than 190 miles of new or upgraded high-voltage transmission lines, as well as eight 500/230 kV transformers. This infrastructure can take several years to site, engineer, permit, construct and energize, so it is crucial that SRP takes a proactive approach to ensure transmission is in place to enable future growth. The plan also includes more than 65 new distribution substation bays across existing and new distribution substations which is necessary to accommodate increasing energy demand.

Customers play a significant role in the transformation of the system in the Balanced System Plan. Customers' total energy demand is expected to increase significantly due to new large industrial customers, migration to the Valley and the growing popularity of EVs. However, this growth is mitigated to an extent due to customer adoption of distributed generation, like solar and batteries, and customer participation in SRP's energy efficiency and demand response programs. Moreover, as the power system evolves, we believe that customers can play a central role in achieving that transition through participation in future time-of-use price plans, electric vehicle managed charging programs and other offerings that have yet to be rolled out. The graphic on the next page shows the key elements of the Balanced System Plan, including power generation, transmission, distribution and customer program components.

<sup>2</sup>MW additions reflect the mix of resources determined to best balance reliability, affordability and sustainability needs. However, actual additions may change over time as external conditions change, such as load growth and technology costs.





As mentioned earlier, the Balanced System Plan allows SRP to achieve important goals related to reliability, affordability and sustainability.

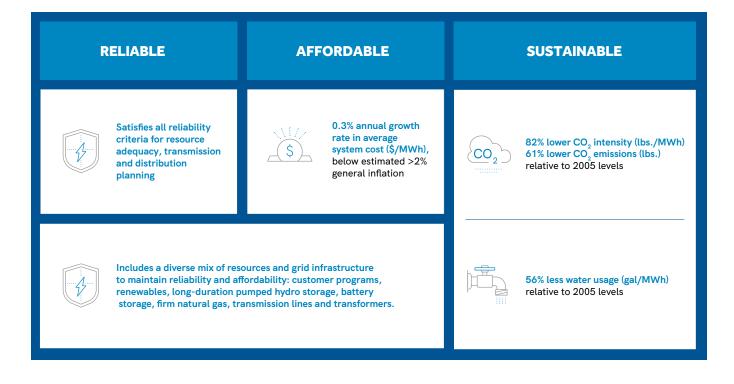
**Reliability:** By investing across the system — including new firm generation, long-duration and short-duration storage, renewables, transmission, distribution and customer programs — SRP will ensure strong reliability performance across the system.

**Affordability:** Due to the diverse mix of investments and programs, average system costs for this plan are projected to increase by less than 0.3% per year, well below projected general inflation. Ultimately, the driving force behind our plan is to meet customers' future energy needs at the best overall value. We believe this plan delivers on that goal.

**Sustainability:** As SRP retires coal capacity and adds significant amounts of clean energy resources,  $CO_2$  emissions intensity is projected to decline by 82% (relative to 2005) and water usage intensity is projected to decline by 56% (relative to 2005), in both cases surpassing SRP's 2035 Sustainability Goals.

We are excited by the performance of this plan. However, as mentioned earlier, this illustration supports a common vision of what the future may look like based on what is known today. As expectations change — such as economic development forecasts, technology cost projections, or the implementation of new laws and regulations — the system plan will need to adapt and evolve accordingly.





### **ISP Actions**

Our planning processes do not stop with the ISP. In many ways, the conclusion of the ISP represents new beginnings as our teams start to execute the System Strategies. As a first step, SRP has defined 10 **ISP Actions**, which we have already started to implement. The ISP Actions will also help enhance our planning capabilities, establish a roadmap to implement the System Strategies and further our progress toward meeting our 2035 goals. The ISP Actions are summarized below.

**ISP Action #1: Residential Time-of-Use Pilot:** Execute a residential time-of-use price plan pilot and perform customer research to evaluate customer response to new time-of-use peak periods and a super off-peak period in the middle of the day, which will inform SRP's load forecast for long-term system planning and SRP's price process.

**ISP Action #2: Time-of-Use Evolution:** Engage commercial, small business, large industrial and residential customers and stakeholders to inform them of how the evolving grid will impact time-of-use periods. Develop a roadmap for implementing new time-of-use periods, including the following elements: undertake a pricing process informed by the ISP as to how time-of-use plans need to evolve and develop a communication plan for all customer types and segments to educate them about any new time-of-use price plans.

**ISP Action #3: Customer Programs:** Continuously refresh program plans and drive participation in customer programs at levels consistent with those planned for in the ISP, representing a meaningful increase from SRP's initial 2035 Sustainability Goal for energy efficiency.



**ISP Action #4: EV Management:** Develop a roadmap by evaluating customer needs and system impacts and assessing viable pathways for managing EV charging through price plans, customer programs and educational efforts to align with time periods that are lower-cost and minimize additional infrastructure needs.

**ISP Action #5: Electrification:** Analyze the benefits and costs of non-EV electrification within SRP's service area, including effects on SRP operations and economywide emissions. Assess options for expanding E-Tech program offerings related to residential and commercial electrification.

**ISP Action #6: Distribution Enablement Roadmap:** Continue implementing SRP's Distribution Enablement (DE) Roadmap, including the following elements: deploy the Advanced Distribution Management System (ADMS) and Distributed Energy Resources Management System (DERMS) in 2024; continue implementing advanced locational planning tools; advance the interconnection process; execute the Distribution Enablement Research & Development plan; and share the Distribution Enablement Strategy with external stakeholders.

**ISP Action #7: Resource Selection:** Issue all-source requests for proposals (RFPs) or requests for information (RFIs) at least once every two years to compare with self-build options and ensure that SRP can agnostically select resource technologies that minimize total system costs while meeting SRP's reliability and 2035 Sustainability Goals.

**ISP Action #8: Coal Transition Action Plan:** Develop a coal repurposing action plan, including the following elements: coordinate with co-owners to develop a path forward for the Springerville Generating Station; prepare a plan or plans for repurposing the Coronado Generating Station site; develop solutions that preserve transmission following the retirement of coal plants; and test strategies for minimizing emissions from coal power plants.

**ISP Action #9: Proactive Siting:** Develop and initiate collaborative community engagement, land, resources and transmission siting research to proactively identify, prepare and preserve options for feasible future system infrastructure sites.

**ISP Action #10: Regional Transmission:** Pursue transmission projects that would enable SRP to access diverse renewable resource options beyond solar, such as wind and geothermal, and engage with project developers as appropriate.

The completion of the ISP Actions will significantly advance SRP's planning and development of the future power system. The ISP Actions related to time-of-use price plans, customer programs, EV management, electrification and the Distribution Enablement Roadmap will ensure that SRP continues to provide customers with the best options for managing their energy costs, adopting clean energy technologies and helping SRP achieve the future transformation of the power system. The ISP Actions related to resource selection, the coal transition action plan, proactive siting and regional transmission will ensure that SRP takes a proactive approach to managing the transition of existing coal assets, maintaining a reliable power grid, accessing the best available resource options and driving improved sustainability. Like the System Strategies, these ISP Actions work together to help SRP achieve its reliability, affordability and sustainability goals. To keep SRP's Board, customers and stakeholders informed on progress made toward the ISP Actions, SRP will provide annual updates.



# **Beyond the First ISP**

SRP is excited to have completed this first ISP. It was a first-of-its-kind effort that required creative thinking in how to plan the entire system in a coordinated manner and led to a comprehensive set of System Strategies and ISP Actions that will allow us to take concrete steps to transform our power system. Given that this effort was trailblazing in many regards, there were challenges in doing end-to-end modeling of the entire system across so many different futures. However, upon reflecting on this effort, we are more confident than ever that an integrated system planning framework is the best way to plan the future power system. By planning for the entire power system within one process, we can identify solutions across the entire system and how those solutions must work together to allow us to achieve reliability, affordability and sustainability goals at the best value to our customers.

The first ISP is just a starting point. SRP has learned a lot about how to perform systemwide planning through this effort and plans to continue to improve upon it in future iterations of the ISP. This will provide us with opportunities to update scenarios as new information becomes available and consider any adjustments to strategies, a balanced plan and actions based on updated systemwide analysis. In the meantime, we will use findings from the ISP to support other ongoing efforts at SRP, including annual planning activities, procurement of new resources through all-source requests for proposals (RFPs), and our 2035 Sustainability Goals update process.

