

Gridworks helped bring together diverse perspectives that could articulate cross-sector needs for equitable and sustainable ZEV industry growth. They facilitated robust conversations that uplifted worker and community needs and affirmed the need for high road standards and union jobs. These discussions and the resulting report support California's ambitions for an equitable transition to zero-emission transportation.

— SAM APPEL
California State Manager, BlueGreen Alliance

TAKING THE HIGH ROAD TO ZERO-EMISSION TRANSPORTATION

OVERVIEW

In 2021 Gridworks asked our partners “how can we ensure that the growth of the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) industry in California is sustainable, accessible, and equitable?” Policy-makers and representatives of labor, the environment, and social justice took up the challenge. Gridworks convened these leaders four times over 10 weeks to facilitate their discussion of labor and equity concerns related to the ZEV industry. The insights gained through their collaboration led to the development of a new framework for high road standards for zero-emission transportation.

THE CHALLENGE

California's policies, goals, and investments in the ZEV industry have set a clear pathway for industry growth in the coming years. However, without strategic intervention, growth of the ZEV industry is likely to widen the existing clean energy gap between low- and middle-income Californians and those with more wealth. Further, while ZEV industry growth is projected to create new jobs, the location, quality, and type of those jobs is unclear, and undirected job creation has the potential to perpetuate existing trends in wage stagnation and income inequality in California.



APPROACH

Over 10 weeks Gridworks convened our partners to discuss how California's ZEV industry could take the high road to advance sustainability, accessibility and equity. These industry leaders had some experience working with each other individually; however, the group as a whole was a new composition with some folks working together for the first time.

The following flow chart shows Gridworks' project approach.



OUTCOMES

This initiative led to the following outcomes:

- Published "Advancing High Road Standards in Zero-Emission Transportation," addressing standards for hiring and wages, compliance, training and apprenticeship, organizing, public spending, and domestic sourcing;
- Bridged gap between advocates and policy-leaders;
- Shared presentation and promotion of high road standards to state leaders through targeted communication channels.

The outcomes contribute to a new direction towards a high road economy for California.



ABOUT GRIDWORKS

Gridworks facilitates difficult discussions and collaboration between policymakers, decarbonization advocates, energy providers and utility operators. We work with these groups to determine the best approach to meet decarbonization goals. Our work has eased the shift toward clean energy in the Western U.S. We're expanding to further our mission and invite you to work with us to navigate your clean energy challenges.

Learn more at gridworks.org.