



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Community Services
Department
Department No.: 057
For Agenda Of: September 15, 2015
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Tme: 30 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department George Chapjian, Community Services Director
Director(s) (805) 568-2467

Contact Info: Angie Hacker, Division Chief, Energy and Sustainability Initiatives
(805) 568-3515

SUBJECT: emPower Central Coast Annual Report (Fiscal Year 2014-2015)

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence: Risk

Recommended Actions: That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Receive and file the emPower Central Coast Annual Report (Fiscal Year 2014-2015) detailing program accomplishments and performance indicators and next steps for the emPower Central Coast Program (Attachment A);
- B. Determine that the recommended actions do not constitute a project subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), as the actions are organizational or administrative activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment, and direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption (NOE) (Attachment B).

Summary Text:

emPower Central Coast (emPower) is the County's voluntary clean energy and building efficiency program. emPower is designed to stimulate the local economy and reduce energy consumption by helping private property owners complete energy improvements. Launched in November 2011, the program currently provides 12 services to assist homeowners and building professionals in completing home energy improvements. Additional external funding allowed expansion of program services in collaboration with San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties in July 2014. The recommended action is to

receive and file and the emPower Central Coast Annual Report (Fiscal Year 2014-2015) (Attachment A). The report provides the Board with the opportunity to review ongoing program progress and accomplishments since inception, with a particular focus on Fiscal Year 2014-2015, which demonstrates significant increases in program participation in emPower's first year of experience as a Tri-County program.

Background:

Through the leadership of the Board of Supervisors, the emPower program was launched by Santa Barbara County in November 2011. Recognizing that buildings account for approximately 40% of national energy use and emissions, the emPower program was designed to help property owners complete voluntary energy-saving improvements by overcoming obstacles such as affordability and confusion, while also spurring economic activity and jobs in the local building trades.

Since inception over three years ago, emPower has been awarded full external funding support from Federal, State and utility agencies and has not required County General Fund contributions. On June 25, 2013, the Board approved the acceptance of additional funding awards to allow emPower to expand its existing service model to the Tri-County region (population 1.4 million) in collaboration with Ventura County and San Luis Obispo County. By leveraging public and private resources, along with collaborative relationships with many community agencies, emPower currently provides 12 services to support homeowner and building professionals completing energy upgrades.

The annual report provided in Attachment A provides the Board with an update on emPower Central Coast's progress since its inception, as well as outcomes achieved in Fiscal Year 2014-2015 since the Tri-County expansion officially launched (in July 2014). Key outcomes and accomplishments are detailed in the document and organized by the six main objectives of the program. Significant program achievements are highlighted by objective below:

Objective 1: Increase Demand for Energy Upgrades

- Widespread consumer awareness across the Tri-County region, including an estimated 1 million residents reached with energy-saving messaging to date
 - 133 outreach events conducted in FY 2014-2015 (since Tri-County expansion), a 175% increase over FY 2013-2014.
- Direct customer engagement and education with over 10,000 local residents to date
 - Over 5,000 in FY 2014-2015 alone
- 675 residents have initiated a home energy retrofit
- Completion of 600 Energy Coach Visits to date
 - Over 350 in FY 2014-2015 alone

Objective 2: Demonstrate Actual Energy Savings from Home Energy Upgrades

- 152 completed projects with average energy savings of 29% (1,483 kWh and 257 therms) annually
 - Completed projects in FY 2014-2015 increased by 36% over FY 2013-2014
- Provided 250 LED lightbulbs to customers in FY 2014-2015, saving 6,000 kWh annually

Objective 3: Transform Efficiency Market for Sustained Benefit to Local Contractors and Economy

- Hosted over 700 attendees at trainings for building professionals
- Enrolled 17 additional local contractors in FY 2014-2015
- Participating contractors reported \$3 million in emPower project income, leading to new and retained jobs, and roughly \$6 million in economic impact

Objective 4: Increase Understanding of Residential Efficiency Behavior and Needs

- Information gathered during 600 Energy Coach visits and subsequent surveys provides insights into local housing stock and homeowner needs.

Objective 5: Encourage Lenders to Enter Energy Efficiency Financing Market

- Program credit enhancements enabled two local credit unions to create a new, low cost loan product for the region, making tens of millions in private capital accessible for energy improvements
- \$2 million in loan applications have been submitted to date
- No borrower defaults experienced to date, demonstrating low risk for lenders considering entering market

Objective 6: Build Upon Program Model to Deliver Effective Energy Services

- Originally focused on financing, the program has now delivered 12 distinct services to the region
- Tri-County expansion allowed the program to leverage external resources for greater impact throughout a larger (quadrupled) service region
- Developed a broader service delivery model and IT systems to expand services to additional sectors

Like many residential energy improvement programs, emPower continually works to find better ways to motivate homeowner and building professionals to voluntarily complete energy improvements. emPower has generated early and important outcomes for the community, including stimulating the local home performance market and reducing local energy usage. With strong direction and aggressive goals from the Counties and the State, emPower is poised to make further progress in support of the program goals and objectives.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

There are no fiscal impacts related to these actions.

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>FY 14-15 Adjusted</u>	<u>FY 15-16 Adjusted</u>
SoCalGas	\$ 1,244,501.00	\$ 1,936,897.00
CEC	\$ 308,605.00	\$ 242,987.00
Total	\$ 1,553,106.00	\$ 2,179,884.00

Narrative:

The chart above outlines our current funding sources.

Staffing Impacts:

N/A

Special Instructions: N/A

Attachments:

- Attachment A: emPower Central Coast Annual Report (Fiscal Year 2014-2015)
- Attachment B: CEQA Notice of Exemption (NOE)

Authored by:

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