



Western Riverside Council of Governments Executive Committee

Staff Report

Subject: Participation in the Beacon Champion Award Program

Contact: Barbara Spoonhour, Director of Energy and Environmental Programs
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Date: October 1, 2012

Requested Action:

1. Direct the WRCOG Executive Director to move forward in requesting designation as a Beacon Award Program Champion and agree to undertake activities to support and encourage member agencies to participate in the Beacon Award program.

Background: The Beacon Award: Local Leadership toward Solving Climate Change (www.ca-ilg.org/BeaconAward) recognizes cities and counties that save energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adopt policies and programs that promote sustainability. The Beacon Award program is a program of the Institute for Local Government (ILG) and the Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative¹.

The Beacon Award Champion concept recognizes groups or agencies that wish to support and encourage the activities of cities and counties participating in the Beacon Award program or considering participation. Since participation in the Beacon Award program is limited to cities and counties, the concept of the Beacon Award Champion provides opportunities to recognize the efforts of other groups, such as councils of government, special districts or foundations that provide sustained assistance to current and future Beacon Award program participants.

Benefits to WRCOG: As a Beacon Award Program Champion, WRCOG will receive recognition for its participation and activities through such means as use of Beacon Award Program Champion logo on its website and appropriate materials, inclusion of its Champion status on its member agency Beacon participant profile pages on ILG's website, press releases and other outreach efforts to recognize their status, and recognition at meetings or other appropriate Beacon Award related events.

WRCOG has been a leader in promoting and supporting energy efficiency and sustainability activities among its member agencies, through its HERO Program, Western Riverside Energy Leader Partnership, and Sustainability Subcommittees. WRCOG staff sees the Beacon Award program as a way to support and recognize the leadership of its member agencies. Because of limited staff resources of its member agencies, and the opportunities to highlight the creativity and leadership of its member agencies, WRCOG will take on the role of Beacon Award Program Champion to help its member agencies participate in the Beacon Award program. One WRCOG member is currently a Beacon Award program participant: City of Riverside (<http://www.ca-ilg.org/beacon-award-participant-profile/city-riverside>).

¹The Institute for Local Government is the non-profit research affiliate of the League of California Cities and the California Association of Counties (www.ca-ilg.org). The Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative is a partnership between three statewide non-profit organizations, including the Institute, and California's four investor owned utilities (www.californiaasec.org).

Proposed activities: Many of the proposed activities (outlined below) will leverage existing programs and activities of WRCOG.

Beacon Award Participation Outreach and Support

- Encourage member agencies to participate in the Beacon Award program:
 - Provide general communication to member agencies (elected officials and city managers) to encourage them to participate in the Beacon Award program.
 - Provide direct member agency contact to explain the program.
 - Support agency staff in completing application.
 - Adapt ILG's sample Beacon Program staff report and resolution for use by WRCOG member agencies wishing to participate.
 - Organize periodic group meetings or conference calls at which ILG staff can help member agencies understand the Beacon Award program, how to participate and how to advance to award winner.

Beacon Award Participant Support

- Support member agencies participating in the Beacon Award program:
 - Periodically (quarterly) provide ILG with information about status of participants' Energy Leader activities so that ILG can recognize participants' energy efficiency achievements in agency buildings, as appropriate.
 - Encourage member agencies to complete Beacon Award best practices surveys as a way spotlight their interim accomplishments.
- Leverage existing WRCOG activities (i.e., HERO Program, the development of the WRCOG Regional Climate Action Plan, and the development of the WRELP Energy Action Plans) related to greenhouse gas inventories and climate action plans to help participants move ahead towards Beacon Award levels or spotlight interim accomplishments.
- Provide recognition of participants on WRCOG's website and in agency and WRELP newsletters.
- Utilize the WRELP members as a Steering Committee on the activities related to the Beacon Award.
- Offer periodic (quarterly) opportunities at WRCOG and WRELP meetings to highlight Beacon Award program participants and their accomplishments.

Promote and Support Collection and Distribution Best Practices Activities

- Work with ILG to share best practice stories and case studies, through written materials and online social media channels. This could include, for example, coordinating ILG's and WRCOG's Facebook pages to cross-promote participants activities.
- Include ILG in development of regional workshops that address sustainability.

Collaboration with ILG

- Work with ILG staff to coordinate ILG and WRCOG outreach and support activities, including sharing best practice activities of WRCOG participants regionally and statewide.
- Collaborate with ILG to organize events, such as peer-learning opportunities or media events to support and recognize Beacon participants.

Recognition of WRCOG as A Beacon Award Program Champion

WRCOG will be recognized as a Beacon Award Program Champion in a number of ways, such as:

- Use of Beacon Award Program Champion logo on WRCOG website and relevant publications.
- Press release announcing WRCOG as an official Beacon Award Program Champion, as well as use of appropriate social media vehicles to announce the designation.
- Acknowledgement of WRCOG's Beacon Award Program Champion designation status on materials prepared either jointly by ILG and WRCOG or by ILG about WRCOG member agencies that are Beacon participants.
- Where feasible, special recognition of WRCOG's Beacon Award Program Champion status at various events, such as the annual SEEC Energy Best Practices Forum, League or CSAC events, or other meetings.
- Recognition of WRCOG's Beacon Award Program Champion status on WRCOG members' Beacon Participant profile pages on ILG's website (with link back to WRCOG's website).

- Coordination with other SEEC partners for recognition of WRCOG as a Beacon Award Program Champion, where feasible.

Prior WRCOG Action:

September 20, 2012: The WRCOG Technical Advisory Committee recommend to the WRCOG Executive Committee that WRCOG move forward with requesting designation as a Beacon Award Program Champion and agree to undertake activities to support and encourage member agencies to participate in the Beacon Award program.

WRCOG Fiscal Impact:

None.

Attachment:

None.