

RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE PIPELINE

LOW-INCOME CONSUMER ADVISORY
TASK FORCE

May 28, 2015

TASK FORCE ORIGIN

- City Council Resolution No. 20140828-158
- Explore program options for low income and low-moderate income households such as income-sensitive sliding scale incentives, neighborhood-based energy efficiency programs, low-cost loans, combining community and city resources to effectively deliver programs, program cost-saving measures, and any other alternatives that will improve the effectiveness and cost efficiency of program delivery.

SCOPE OF MISSION

- Funding Levels for Weatherization
- Participation in Renewable Generation
- Encourage energy efficiency in apartments complexes, small rental units and duplexes
- Establish a demand reduction goal for low and low moderate income households

PROGRAM EQUITY

- Limited demographic data provided from Austin Energy surveys supports the conclusion that low and low-moderate income consumers are not getting a fair share of energy efficiency program benefits

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

- Carol Biedrzycki, Chair Texas ROSE (Ratepayers' Organization to Save Energy)
- Tim Arndt, Vice Chair, Energy Efficiency Consultant
- Dan Pruett, Meals on Wheels and More
- Cyrus Reed, Sierra Club
- Kelly Weiss, Habitat for Humanity
- Lanetta Cooper, Texas Legal Services Center
- Richard Halpin, First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin Green Sanctuary Ministry
- Chris Strand, Stan's Heating and Air Conditioning
- Karen Hadden, SEED Coalition

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

- First meeting November 5, 2014
- Formed 3 committees
- To date have held 14 meetings
- Next meeting is May 29th
- On June 1st meeting is scheduled to hear from citizens
- Coordinating with the Community Power Forum

TARGETED GROUPS

- Low-Income (under 200% FPG) 28%
family of four \$47,700
- Low-Moderate income (201 to 400% FPG) 38%
family of four \$47,701 to \$95,400
- Renters 54.9% of all households in 2013
- Owners 22.2% < \$25,000; 46.8% < \$50,000
- Renters 32.8% < \$25,000; 63.9% < \$50,000

POSSIBLE LOW-INCOME PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- To treat all funds budgeted for energy efficiency services weatherization the same as Customer Assistance Program (CAP) weatherization
- One Stop Weatherization (Coordination with housing repair programs)
- Include affordable housing income eligibility requirements in the the weatherization program

POSSIBLE LOW-INCOME PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Program for reduced price, high-efficiency, professionally installed, Window Air Conditioners
- Set standards for repair and replacement of central unit air conditioners in Weatherization Program
- Broaden cost effectiveness standard to include societal benefits (community values)

POSSIBLE LOW-MODERATE INCOME PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Low interest loan backed by loan loss reserve
- Include affordable housing income eligibility requirements in the weatherization program for customers receiving housing repairs or receiving housing benefits.

POSSIBLE AFFORDABLE RENTAL PROPERTY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Target a portion of program funds to properties serving low and low moderate income households
- Improve community outreach for ECAD (Energy Conservation Audit Disclosure)
- ECAD coordination with Code Compliance
- Create a loan loss reserve (Better Building Funds)
- Virtual billing for affordable housing development with solar.

POSSIBLE CROSS CUTTING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve collection of demographic survey data and provide an annual report by council district.
- Reduce demand by 900 Megawatts by 2025.

NEXT STEPS

- Special called meeting on May 29th.
- Meeting for public comment on June 1.
- Budget recommendations final by June 12.
- Final Report date TBD