

Spotlight Session Notes: the “Seven Habits of Highly-Effective Municipal Sustainability Professionals” 6/14/17

I. Speakers

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II. 7 Habits Overview:

1. Thrifty,
2. Be Opportunistic,
3. Leverage Internal Support,
4. Show Courage,
5. Do the Heavy Lifting,
6. Market, Market, Market,
7. Patience & Perseverance

III. Fremont in Action: Projects

A. City Profile:

- 4th largest city in the Bay Area
- 92 square miles
- Suburban
- Fiscally conservative
- City Council supportive of California greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets

B. Sustainability Vision

- “Strategically urban, sustainably modern city”
- 25% reduction below 2005 levels by 2020

C. Projects

- Regional Renewable Energy Project (R-REP)
Countywide, joint-procurement of solar PV. Fremont installed PV atop carports
- LED Street Light conversion and water efficiency upgrades
- Low-Carbon Microgrid Demonstration
California Energy Commission awarded “Gridscape Solutions” \$1.8 million to install microgrids at Fremont fire stations.
Microgrids help build resilience against grid outages
- “kW Smackdown” Competition
High school students and the green impact campaign program teamed up to conduct 481 energy and water audits.

C. 7 Habits

1. Thrifty

Goal: execute some projects without governmental financial support (general fund).

- Example 1, Solar PV Carports: Fremont leveraged Alameda County (AC) resources and achieved economies of scale to ensure maximum affordability.

- Example 2, LED Conversion: no-cost to city, funded through PG&E on-bill financing and an \$8.1 million loan at 2.1% interest.
- Example 3, Microgrid: implementing the microgrid as a demonstration project enabled the City to minimize costs and not use City funds.

2. Be Opportunistic

Goal: Partner with other agencies to execute projects

Benefits: may create a project that you can “show-off” to your City Council to rally support for future projects and programs

3. Leverage Internal Support

Goal: determine which department(s) may be your allies to launch a project.

Make your project the solution to someone else’s problem.

- Example 1, Solar PV Carports: Fremont’s Sustainability Manager helped win the support of the Police Department by siting the PV above their parking lot. The carports serve a dual-purpose of generating electricity and keeping police vehicles cool.

4. Show Courage: Don’t be afraid to take-on big projects

5. Do the Heavy Lifting: Sometimes you need to step-up. If no one else offers to spearhead a project, it may be your turn.

6. Market, Market, Market:

Use social media to promote your projects. Capitalize on positive feedback. The City Council will likely respond to the community’s input and, in turn, support your project(s).

7. Patience & Perseverance

Remember that some of your most successful projects may not come to fruition for a few years. You need to be patient and continue moving forward.

IV. Question & Answer

1. What tips and lessons-learned can you share about Energy Service Company (ESCO) projects?
PG&E Local Government Partnership programs offer assistance in developing Requests or Proposals (RFPs). Secure the support of your finance department. Look at what other cities have done.
2. If you have installed and own a solar PV system through an ESCO project, how do you manage the operations and maintenance (O&M)? Fremont suggested using a Power-Purchase Agreement (PPA) approach. With a PPA, O&M is not your responsibility.
3. Clarification regarding East Bay Community Energy (EBCE):

EBCE intends to procure decentralized, distributed renewable energy rather than centralized, remote energy. Moving forward, EBCE may focus on expanding local energy generation at a county-level. Reach out to fellow city staff to troubleshoot problems and share your successes.

4. For a PPA, did you use a contractor or consultant to determine the specifications of the Agreement? No, Fremont's finance department orchestrated the the Agreement for the LED project.
5. Miscellaneous Advice:
Splitting Savings: determine split based upon the kWh generated by solar PV.
Take advantage of Energy Watch partnership resources.