

Meeting Notes

Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH)

Job Training Organization (JTO) Task Force

June 16, 2023, 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Virtually Held Meeting.

Meeting Attendees

SOMAH Program Administrators

Ingrid Murillo | Senior SOMAH Workforce Manager, GRID Alternatives

Walther Perez | SOMAH Workforce Development Program Manager, GRID Alternatives

Mina Defee | SOMAH Workforce Development Program Manager, GRID Alternatives

SOMAH JTO Task Force Members

Senait Forthal | OC Goes Solar (Los Angeles)

Mitchell Smith | Young Community Developers (Bay Area)

Jeff Trirogoff | Elements of Earth and Energy (Humboldt County / Northern CA)

Wes Olson | Center for Employment Training - Oxnard (Central Coast)

Genevieve "Gina" Jones | Owens Valley Community Development Center (Central Valley / Eastern Sierras)

Wanda Rogers | Founder of SoCal Pre Apprenticeship Program

Not in attendance:

Jon Caffery | Saddleback College/College of The Desert (Orange County)

Danny Gonzales | Center for Employment Training - Colton (Inland Empire)

Janie Hodge | Paving the Way Foundation (Antelope Valley / Los Angeles)

Noah Arzola | William M. Maguy School of Education, Proteus Inc. (Central Valley)

Meeting Agenda

Fill in ahead from Facilitation Plan + Slide Deck

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Policy & Regulatory Updates
3. Apprenticeship Working Group Updates
4. Review program updates and wins

Meeting Notes

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA

JTO Task Force members provided updates on their training programs.

- The Young Community Developers are training a significant amount of re-entry folks, overall the program is healthy.

Wanda Rogers and Dr. Smith shared some words in observance and celebration of Juneteenth and the importance of recognizing this holiday.

Marisa and Mina also shared some words in regard to celebrating Pride Month.

2. Policy & Regulatory Updates

Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA

Marisa Villareal, Program Director, SOMAH

PEM Process

- Higher incentives were approved
- Recommend removing the design factor
 - Lowers incentives for projects located in rural areas and around tree coverage
- Expand SOMAH eligibility
- Addressing financial barriers (i.e., upfront financing pilot and financial adders)
- Modifying the bidding tool

CPUC Ruling and PA response:

- SOMAH + storage
 - Expand scope to include storage
 - Considering a higher solar incentive for SOMAH + storage projects
- Modify Tenant education requirements
 - Require online tenant education training
 - Update required materials and delivery timing
- Liberty and Pacific Corp territories
 - Remove expected performance-based buyout
 - Expand eligibility
 - Offer exemptions for three bid requirement for property owners
 - Allow flexibility in meeting the job training requirements
 - Incentive adders
 - Stop contributing funds to the program earlier than planned
- Next steps:

- Parties have submitted formal responses
- PA is now submitting reply responses to party responses

Third Party Evaluation Findings:

- Background:
 - SOMAH is required to undergo a 3rd party evaluation every 3 years
 - Provides an update on SOMAH's progress towards meeting its goals
 - Provides an assessment of the program's impacts, cost effectiveness, and progress made on recommendations from last evaluation
- Findings & Recommendations:
 - Program Participation and Eligibility:
 - Assess the Track A multiple bid requirement
 - Allow projects to transition from Track A to Track B
 - Expand program eligibility
 - Program Awareness and Motivations to Participate
 - Reevaluate the role of CBOs in promoting job training opportunities, and "partnering" with contractors and property owners on tenant education
 - Tailor marketing materials to highlight the financial benefits for property owners
 - Contractor Experience:
 - Increase outreach to contractors
 - Provide additional trainings and info to help contractors secure leads
 - Promote the progress payment pathway and make it the default milestone
 - Project Cancellations and Future Participation:
 - Prioritize outreach to potentially recoverable canceled applications
 - Direct outreach to non-participating property owners
 - Build stronger relationships with participating owners
 - Application Processing:
 - Final inspection should include a check for interconnection errors
 - Work with IOUs to shorten the timeline from interconnection to bill credits
 - Update the SOMAH Program handbook with guidance on pairing PV with battery storage
 - Tenant Education:
 - Provide educational materials in common areas to promote the hotline
 - Consider a (paid) tenant partnership role
 - Update the tenant survey for more detailed information
 - Workforce Development
 - Increase outreach to contractors about available job training resources
 - Improve the job trainee survey to gather more comprehensive data
- Environmental & Economic Impacts:
 - Emission reductions: 229 metric tons of CO2 in 2021 and 2,351 metric tons of CO2 in 2022
 - Common area bill impacts: 58% savings on average monthly bill in 2022
 - Tenant bill impacts: \$39 per month, or 59% savings on average monthly bill in 2022

- Impact & Cost-Effectiveness Assessment Findings:
 - Increase the monitoring threshold for underperforming systems
 - Track and report SOMAH bill credits for data quality and system performance
 - Consider additional measures for system performance enforcement
 - Research alternative methods for estimating PV system performance and setting incentive levels

SB 355:

- Extend program from 2030 to 2032
- Expand eligibility to properties with income thresholds

AB 2143:

- An impact of this bill will be increased labor costs on SOMAH projects
 - Current wage floor 1.4x on local min wage
- May receive application flood before it goes into effect in January of 2024

TF Member: Who's gonna be tracking labor compliance? To make sure people are being paid fair wages.

SOMAH PA: We believe that the state government will be tracking this information. Contractors will be required to submit data.

TF Member: Wondering if SOMAH trainees will fall under the electrical category?

SOMAH PA: We are waiting to hear back on what category solar installers will be under. Currently there is no set prevailing wage for solar installers.

TF Member: What kind of documentation is required? Are there any licenses that are required?

SOMAH PA: We are also waiting for further guidance on this.

TF Member: These questions are going to continue to be prominent, suggest looking into hiring someone for the labor compliance component as that's going to be a big lift.

SOMAH PA: We will be holding a webinar/workshop towards the end of the year to answer some of these questions. We will also look into requirements and the need for additional staff.

3. Apprenticeship Working Group Updates

Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA

Work to Date:

- Timeline
 - Q2 - Planning
 - End of 2023 - Development of Apprenticeship Committee
- Letters of interest were sent out by Chair & VC
 - Responses:
 - 14 - contractors & subcontractors
 - 40 - JTOs
- Roles

- TF - gather info on competency and skills, recruit participants (trainees)
- SOMAH PA - look for an intermediary, consolidate information, recruit participants (contractors)

Partner Efforts (SEIA & IREC):

- Previous efforts did not work - no consensus on solar as an occupation
- Apprenticeship work ramping up because of the IRA
- Publicly available toolkit
 - Benefits to employers and workers
 - Apprenticeship requirements
 - Outline of steps to launch
- Developing case studies and templates
- Compiling list of additional resources

Sustineo Construction:

- Contractor lead mechanical installation of solar
 - Have a JTO partnership
 - Modified construction craft laborer occupation & calling it PV mechanical installation
 - Not approved yet - proposed & under consideration by CA Division of Apprenticeship Standards
- Comments open until next week
- Potential approval in early August

Next Steps:

- Review Sustineo Construction's application
- Survey will be sent to gauge stance(s) for a letter of support for Sustineo
- Information session with SEIA and IREC

4. Review program updates and wins

Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA

SOMAH program updates:

- Total applications: 453
- \$94.9 million in funding that's already been reserved
- \$450.1 million funding remaining
- 32.01% of SOMAH's active applications are located in Disadvantaged Communities
- Tenants are slated to receive ~85.9% of the electricity generated from SOMAH installations
- Serving 35,040 tenant units
- Average system size: 145.48 kW
- 13 participating contractors
- Pipeline supports 171 job training opportunities
- 95 completed projects, with 15.844 MW of electricity serving over 8,394 tenant units

Workforce development project updates:

- The Heatspring SOMAH Academy is live!
- Contractor needs assessment has been launched
- Actively recruiting Tribal Serving JTOs
- Updating the contractor-facing job site safety binder
- Planning a prevailing wage webinar/workshop in Q4
- JTO Task Force recruitment for the 2024-25 cohort will begin in July
- The job training portal will be receiving updates through the end of the year

5. Next Steps, Questions, Open Floor

Mina Defee, Workforce Development Program Manager, SOMAH PA

The next quarterly JTO Task Force meeting will take place virtually on September 29 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.