

STAFF REPORT



DATE: July 8, 2014

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Toby Ross, Interim City Manager

Item No:

8

RE: Resolution consenting to the inclusion of properties within the City's jurisdiction to participate in the California HERO Program and approving an amendment to a related joint powers agreement.

BACKGROUND

Assembly Bill (AB) 811 was signed into law on July 21, 2008, and AB 474, effective January 1, 2010, amended Chapter 29 of Part 3 of Division 7 of the Streets & Highways Code of the State of California ("Chapter 29") and authorizes a legislative body to designate an area within which authorized public officials and free and willing property owners may enter into voluntary contractual assessments to finance the installation of distributed generation renewable energy sources, energy efficiency, and/or water conservation improvements that are permanently fixed to real property, as specified.

The Western Riverside Council of Governments ("WRCOG" or "Agent") is making the California HERO Program available to every city and county in California to encourage installation of distributed generation renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and water efficiency improvements and electric vehicle charging infrastructure for residential and commercial property owners. The Agent has partnered with Renovate America and SAMAS Capital to make HERO available throughout the State. The California HERO Program is an economic development program available at no cost to participating cities and counties. HERO finances improvements which decrease energy, create clean renewable energy, or decrease water consumption. In addition to these direct benefits, HERO helps create local jobs, save money, increase property values and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

The HERO Program has been very successful in Western Riverside County, since its launch in late 2011; the Program has approved over \$1 billion in applications and has funded over \$245 million in projects. Because of its success, the California HERO Program was developed as a turnkey program to save other California jurisdictions time and resources in developing a standalone program. Jurisdictions only need to adopt a resolution and approve an amendment to the joint exercise of powers agreement related to the California HERO Program attached to such resolution to begin the process.

DISCUSSION

The California HERO Program is being offered to allow property owners in the City of St. Helena the ability to finance renewable energy, energy efficiency, water efficiency improvements and electric vehicle charging infrastructure on their property. If a property owner chooses to participate, the improvements to be installed on the owner's property will be financed by the issuance of bonds by a joint power authority, Western Riverside Council of Governments ("WRCOG"), secured by a voluntary contractual assessment levied on such owner's property. Participation in the program is 100% voluntary. Property owners who wish to participate in the program agree to repay the money through the voluntary contractual assessment collected together with their property taxes.

The benefits to the property owner include:

- Financing. Alternatives for property owners to finance renewable energy, energy efficiency, and water efficiency improvements as well as electric vehicle charging infrastructure may not be available. As such many property owners do not have options available to them to lower their utility bills.
- Savings. Energy efficient, water efficient and renewable energy models lower utility bills.
- 100% voluntary. Property owners can choose to participate in the program at their discretion.
- Payment obligation stays with the property. Under Chapter 29, a voluntary contractual assessment stays with the property upon transfer of ownership. Even if there were private enterprise alternatives, most private loans are due on sale of the benefited property, which makes it difficult for property owners to match the life of the repayment obligation with the useful life of the financed improvements. Certain mortgage providers will, however, require the assessment be paid off at the time the property is refinanced or sold.
- Prepayment option. The property owner can choose to pay off the assessments at any time, subject to applicable prepayment penalties.
- Customer oriented program. Part of the success of the program is the prompt customer service.

Potential benefits to the City may include:

- An increase in local jobs.
- The City is not obligated to repay the bonds or to pay the assessments levied on the participating properties.

- All California HERO Program and assessment administration, bond issuance and bond administration functions are handled by California HERO. Little City staff time is needed to participate in the California HERO Program.
- The City can provide access for its residents to the California HERO Program without the higher staff costs that an independent program established by the City would require.

The proposed resolution enables the California HERO Program to be available to owners of property within the City to finance renewable energy, energy efficiency, and water efficiency improvements as well as electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The resolution approves an Amendment to the WRCOG Joint Powers Agreement to add the City as an Associate Member in order that the California HERO Program may be offered to the owners of property located within the City who wish to participate in the California HERO Program.

FISCAL IMPACT

California HERO Program administrative costs are covered through an initial administrative fee included in the property owner's voluntary contractual assessment and an annual administrative fee which is also collected on the property owner's tax bill.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Authorize the HERO program (Recommended).
2. Decline to authorize the HERO program.
3. Continue the program for additional information. There is no immediate deadline for participation in the program.

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION

Adopt the attached resolution authorizing the City's participation in the California HERO Program, enabling property owners to finance permanently fixed renewable energy, energy efficiency, water efficiency, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure on their properties.

ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS

Resolution

EXHIBIT A

CITY OF ST. HELENA

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-__

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL CONSENTING TO THE INCLUSION OF PROPOERTIES WITHIN THE CITY’S JURISDICTION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CALIFORNIA HERO PROGRAM IN ORDER TO FINANCE RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES, ENERGY/WATER EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE AND APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO A JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT RELATED THERETO.

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the Western Riverside Council of Governments (“Authority”) is a joint exercise of powers authority established pursuant to Chapter 5 of Division 7, Title 1 of the Government Code of the State of California (Section 6500 and following) (the “Act”) and the Joint Power Agreement entered into on April 1, 1991, as amended from time to time (the “Authority JPA”); and

WHEREAS, Authority intends to establish the California HERO Program to provide for the financing of renewable energy distributed generation sources, energy and water efficiency improvements and electric vehicle charging infrastructure (the “Improvements”) pursuant to Chapter 29 of the Improvement Bond Act of 1911, being Division 7 of the California Streets and Highways Code (“Chapter 29”) within counties and cities throughout the State of California that elect to participate in such program; and

WHEREAS, The City of St. Helena (the “City”) is committed to development of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency improvements, reduction of greenhouse gases, protection of our environment, and reversal of climate change; and

WHEREAS, in Chapter 29, the Legislature has authorized cities and counties to assist property owners in financing the cost of installing improvements through a voluntary contractual assessment program; and

WHEREAS, installation of such Improvements by property owners within the jurisdictional boundaries of the counties and cities that are participating in the California HERO Program would promote the purposes cited above; and

WHEREAS, the City wishes to provide innovative solutions to its property owners to achieve energy and water efficiency and independence, and in doing so cooperate with Authority in order to efficiently and economically assist property owners the City in financing such Improvements; and

WHEREAS, Authority has authority to establish the California HERO Program, which will be such a voluntary contractual assessment program, as permitted by the Act, the Authority JPA, originally made and entered into April 1, 1991, as amended to date, and the Amendment to Joint Powers Agreement Adding the City of St. Helena as an Associate Member of the Western

Riverside Council of Governments to Permit the Provision of Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program Services within the City (the "JPA Amendment"), by and between Authority and the City, a copy of which is attached as Exhibit "A" hereto, to assist property owners within the incorporated area of the City in financing the cost of installing Improvements; and

WHEREAS, the City will not be responsible for the conduct of any assessment proceedings; the levy and collection of assessments or any required remedial action in the case of delinquencies in the payment of any assessments or the issuance, sale or administration of any bonds issued in connection with the California HERO Program.

RESOLUTION

NOW, THEREFORE, The City Council for the City of St. Helena resolves as follows:

1. The foregoing Recitals are true and correct and are incorporated in and expressly for a part of this Resolution.

2. This City Council finds and declares that properties in the City's incorporated area will be benefited by the availability of the California HERO Program to finance the installation of Improvements.

3. This City Council consents to inclusion in the California HERO Program of all of the properties in the incorporated area within the City and to the Improvements, upon the request by and voluntary agreement of owners of such properties, in compliance with the laws, rules and regulations applicable to such program; and to the assumption of jurisdiction thereover by Authority for the purposes thereof.

4. The consent of this City Council constitutes assent to the assumption of jurisdiction by Authority for all purposes of the California HERO Program and authorizes Authority, upon satisfaction of the conditions imposed in this resolution, to take each and every step required for or suitable for financing the Improvements, including the levying, collecting and enforcement of the contractual assessments to finance the Improvements and the issuance and enforcement of bonds to represent and be secured by such contractual assessments.

5. This City Council hereby approves the JPA Amendment and authorizes the execution thereof by appropriate City officials.

6. City staff is authorized and directed to coordinate with Authority staff to facilitate operation of the California HERO Program within the City, and report back periodically to this City Council on the success of such program.

7. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption. The City Clerk is directed to send a certified copy of this resolution to the Secretary of the Authority Executive Committee.

PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of St. Helena held on the 8th of July, 2014 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Ann Nevero
Mayor

Cindy Black
Interim City Clerk

**AMENDMENT TO THE JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT
ADDING THE CITY OF ST. HELENA AS
AS AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF THE
WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
TO PERMIT THE PROVISION OF PROPERTY ASSESSED
CLEAN ENERGY (PACE) PROGRAM SERVICES WITH
SUCH CITY**

This Amendment to the Joint Powers Agreement (“JPA Amendment”) is made and entered into on the 8th day of July, 2014, by the City of St. Helena (“City”) and the Western Riverside Council of Governments (“Authority”) (collectively the “Parties”).

RECITALS

WHEREAS, Authority is a joint exercise of powers authority established pursuant to Chapter 5 of Division 7, Title 1 of the Government Code of the State of California (Section 6500 and following) (the “Joint Exercise of Powers Act”) and the Joint Power Agreement entered into on April 1, 1991, as amended from time to time (the “Authority JPA”); and

WHEREAS, as of October 1, 2012, Authority had 18 member entities (the “Regular Members”).

WHEREAS, Chapter 29 of the Improvement Act of 1911, being Division 7 of the California Streets and Highways Code (“Chapter 29”) authorizes cities, counties, and cities and counties to establish voluntary contractual assessment programs, commonly referred to as a Property Assessed Clean Energy (“PACE”) program, to fund certain renewable energy sources, energy and water efficiency improvements, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure (the “Improvements”) that are permanently fixed to residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural or other real property; and

WHEREAS, Authority intends to establish a PACE program to be known as the “California HERO Program” pursuant to Chapter 29 as now enacted or as such legislation may be amended hereafter, which will authorize the implementation of a PACE financing program for cities and county throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, City desires to allow owners of property within its jurisdiction to participate in the California HERO Program and to allow Authority to conduct proceedings under Chapter 29 to finance Improvements to be installed on such properties; and

WHEREAS, this JPA Amendment will permit City to become an Associate Member of Authority and to participate in California HERO Program for the purpose of facilitating the implementation of such program within the jurisdiction of City; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Joint Exercise of Powers Act, the Parties are approving this JPA Agreement to allow for the provision of PACE services, including the operation of a PACE financing program, within the incorporated territory of City; and

WHEREAS, the JPA Amendment sets forth the rights, obligations and duties of City and Authority with respect to the implementation of the California HERO Program within the incorporated territory of City.

MUTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the mutual covenants and conditions hereinafter stated, the Parties hereto agree as follows:

A. JPA Amendment.

1. The Authority JPA. City agrees to the terms and conditions of the Authority JPA, attached.

2. Associate Membership. By adoption of this JPA Amendment, City shall become an Associate Member of Authority on the terms and conditions set forth herein and the Authority JPA and consistent with the requirements of the Joint Exercise of Powers Act. The rights and obligations of City as an Associate Member are limited solely to those terms and conditions expressly set forth in this JPA Amendment for the purposes of implementing the California HERO Program within the incorporated territory of City. Except as expressly provided for by the this JPA Amendment, City shall not have any rights otherwise granted to Authority's Regular Members by the Authority JPA, including but not limited to the right to vote on matters before the Executive Committee or the General Assembly, the right to amend or vote on amendments to the Authority JPA, and the right to sit on committees or boards established under the Authority JPA or by action of the Executive Committee or the General Assembly, including, without limitation, the General Assembly and the Executive Committee. City shall not be considered a member for purposes of Section 9.1 of the Authority JPA.

3. Rights of Authority. This JPA Amendment shall not be interpreted as limiting or restricting the rights of Authority under the Authority JPA. Nothing in this JPA Amendment is intended to alter or modify Authority Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) Program, the PACE Program administered by Authority within the jurisdictions of its Regular Members, or any other programs administered now or in the future by Authority, all as currently structured or subsequently amended.

B. Implementation of California HERO Program within City Jurisdiction.

1. Boundaries of the California HERO Program within City Jurisdiction. City shall determine and notify Authority of the boundaries of the incorporated territory within City's jurisdiction within which contractual assessments may be entered into under the California HERO Program (the "Program Boundaries"), which boundaries may include the entire incorporated territory of City or a lesser portion thereof.

2. Determination of Eligible Improvements. Authority shall determine the types of distributed generation renewable energy sources, energy efficiency or water conservation improvements, electric vehicle charging infrastructure or such other improvements as may be authorized pursuant to Chapter 29 (the "Eligible Improvements") that will be eligible to be financed under the California HERO Program.

3. Establishment of California HERO Program. Authority will undertake such proceedings pursuant to Chapter 29 as shall be legally necessary to enable Authority to make contractual financing of Eligible Improvements available to eligible property owners within the Program Boundaries.

4. Financing the Installation of Eligible Improvements. Authority shall develop and implement a plan for the financing of the purchase and installation of the Eligible Improvements under the California HERO Program.

5. Ongoing Administration. Authority shall be responsible for the ongoing administration of the California HERO Program, including but not limited to producing education plans to raise public awareness of the California HERO Program, soliciting, reviewing and approving applications from residential and commercial property owners participating in the California HERO Program, establishing contracts for residential, commercial and other property owners participating in such program, establishing and collecting assessments due under the

California HERO Program, adopting and implementing any rules or regulations for the California HERO Program, and providing reports as required by Chapter 29.

City will not be responsible for the conduct of any proceedings required to be taken under Chapter 29; the levy or collection of assessments or any required remedial action in the case of delinquencies in such assessment payments; or the issuance, sale or administration of any bonds issued in connection with the California HERO Program.

6. Phased Implementation. The Parties recognize and agree that implementation of the California HERO Program as a whole can and may be phased as additional other cities and counties execute similar agreements. City entering into this JPA Amendment will obtain the benefits of and incur the obligations imposed by this JPA Amendment in its jurisdictional area, irrespective of whether cities or counties enter into similar agreements.

C. Miscellaneous Provisions.

1. Withdrawal. City or Authority may withdraw from this JPA Amendment upon six (6) months written notice to the other party; provided, however, there is no outstanding indebtedness of Authority within City. The provisions of Section 6.2 of the Authority JPA shall not apply to City under this JPA Amendment. City may withdraw approval for conduct of the HERO Program within the jurisdictional limits of City upon thirty (30) written notice to WRCOG without liability to the Authority or any affiliated entity. City withdrawal shall not affect the validity of any voluntary assessment contracts (a) entered prior to the date of such withdrawal or (b) entered into after the date of such withdrawal so long as the applications for such voluntary assessment contracts were submitted to and approved by WRCOG prior to the date of City's notice of withdrawal.

2. Mutual Indemnification and Liability. Authority and City shall mutually defend, indemnify and hold the other party and its directors, officials, officers, employees and agents free and harmless from any and all claims, demands, causes of action, costs, expenses, liabilities, losses, damages or injuries of any kind, in law or equity, to property or persons, including wrongful death, to the extent arising out of the willful misconduct or negligent acts, errors or omissions of the indemnifying party or its directors, officials, officers, employees and agents in connection with the California HERO Program administered under this JPA Amendment, including without limitation the payment of expert witness fees and attorneys fees and other related costs and expenses, but excluding payment of consequential damages. Without limiting the foregoing, Section 5.2 of the Authority JPA shall not apply to this JPA Amendment. In no event shall any of Authority's Regular Members or their officials, officers or employees be held directly liable for any damages or liability resulting out of this JPA Amendment.

3. Environmental Review. Authority shall be the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act for any environmental review that may required in implementing or administering the California HERO Program under this JPA Amendment.

4. Cooperative Effort. City shall cooperate with Authority by providing information and other assistance in order for Authority to meet its obligations hereunder. City recognizes that one of its responsibilities related to the California HERO Program will include any permitting or inspection requirements as established by City.

5. Notice. Any and all communications and/or notices in connection with this JPA Amendment shall be either hand-delivered or sent by United States first class mail, postage prepaid, and addressed as follows:

Authority:

Western Riverside Council of Governments
4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor. MS1032
Riverside, CA 92501-3609
Att: Executive Director

City:

City of St. Helena
1480 Main Street
St. Helena, CA 94574

6. Entire Agreement. This JPA Amendment, together with the Authority JPA, constitutes the entire agreement among the Parties pertaining to the subject matter hereof. This JPA Amendment supersedes any and all other agreements, either oral or in writing, among the Parties with respect to the subject matter hereof and contains all of the covenants and agreements among them with respect to said matters, and each Party acknowledges that no representation, inducement, promise of agreement, oral or otherwise, has been made by the other Party or anyone acting on behalf of the other Party that is not embodied herein.

7. Successors and Assigns. This JPA Amendment and each of its covenants and conditions shall be binding on and shall inure to the benefit of the Parties and their respective successors and assigns. A Party may only assign or transfer its rights and obligations under this JPA Amendment with prior written approval of the other Party, which approval shall not be unreasonably withheld.

8. Attorney's Fees. If any action at law or equity, including any action for declaratory relief is brought to enforce or interpret the provisions of this Agreement, each Party to the litigation shall bear its own attorney's fees and costs.

9. Governing Law. This JPA Amendment shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of California, as applicable.

10. No Third Party Beneficiaries. This JPA Amendment shall not create any right or interest in the public, or any member thereof, as a third party beneficiary hereof, nor shall it authorize anyone not a Party to this JPA Amendment to maintain a suit for personal injuries or property damages under the provisions of this JPA Amendment. The duties, obligations, and responsibilities of the Parties to this JPA Amendment with respect to third party beneficiaries shall remain as imposed under existing state and federal law.

11. Severability. In the event one or more of the provisions contained in this JPA Amendment is held invalid, illegal or unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed severed from this JPA Amendment and the remaining parts of this JPA Amendment shall remain in full force and effect as though such invalid, illegal, or unenforceable portion had never been a part of this JPA Amendment.

12. Headings. The paragraph headings used in this JPA Amendment are for the convenience of the Parties and are not intended to be used as an aid to interpretation.

13. Amendment. This JPA Amendment may be modified or amended by the Parties at any time. Such modifications or amendments must be mutually agreed upon and executed in writing by both Parties. Verbal modifications or amendments to this JPA Amendment shall be of no effect.

14. Effective Date. This JPA Amendment shall become effective upon the execution thereof by the Parties hereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have caused this JPA Amendment to be executed and attested by their officers thereunto duly authorized as of the date first above written.

[SIGNATURES ON FOLLOWING PAGES]

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

By: _____
Executive Committee Chair
Western Riverside Council of Governments

Date: _____

CITY OF ST. HELENA, CA

By: _____
Toby Ross, Interim City Manager
City of St. Helena

Date: _____