



Agenda Item Number: 2009-3-14A

BERNALILLO COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Date: March 17, 2009

Department: Commissioner De La Cruz **Staff Contact:** Dolores Herrera, Commission Asst., District 2
County Manager
Renetta Torres, Human Resources Director
Dan Mayfield, Deputy County Manager,
Finance Division

TITLE: Temporary Employment Stimulus Program

ACTION: Discussion to provide a \$500,000 appropriation for an economic stimulus program valued at \$2.5 million to the local economy by creating temporary employment opportunities for unemployed and low-income county residents.

SUMMARY:

Commissioner Art De La Cruz requested staff to look at establishing a Bernalillo County Economic Stimulus Program to help create jobs for the growing number of unemployed County residents. The January 2009 unemployment rate for the Albuquerque MSA was 5.5%, a rate that has nearly doubled from the January 2008 rate of 3.7%. The Albuquerque MSA has lost 3,400 jobs since last January and posted negative over-the-year job growth for four consecutive months, with the rate of decline accelerating each month. President Obama and Federal Reserve Board Chair Bernanke have predicted the current recession will continue at least through the rest of 2009, making local stimulus efforts increasingly important.

Facing rising unemployment and its negative social and economic impacts, Bernalillo County has identified a number of one-time projects needing completion and is stepping forward with a short-term program to offer temporary full and part-time employment to approximately 80 individuals over a three-month period during the spring of 2009. Potential one-time project sites include parks, community centers, fire stations as well as major county employment centers with a goal that all five Commission districts see direct benefits from this project in some fashion. In addition to the County's usual recruitment and hiring resources, the program will utilize the County's on-call temporary employment service, ATA Services, and the DWS to recruit and hire the temporary employees.

County department directors, recognizing the need and importance of this effort, have taken positive steps to identify existing funds within their department budgets with which to make this effort possible and are to be commended for their desire to positively impact the community in this manner.

The County will target its efforts at workers age 18 and over and has partnered with Youth Development, Inc., and the Mid-Region Council of Governments, each of whom bring additional funding to the project and their funding will provide employment opportunities to a targeted unemployed section of individuals belonging to the 16-24 age group. County representatives

met with the DWS and were informed that direct jobs provide an economic stimulus equal to five times the salary. It is therefore estimated that Bernalillo County's \$500,000 appropriation will be multiplied by a factor of five to create an economic stimulus of \$2.5 million dollars.

The Bernalillo County Human Resources Department issued a survey to Elected Officials and Department Directors in order to identify the specific types of positions that could potentially be utilized for temporary assignments. It is anticipated that the majority of the positions identified by departments will be at the entry level across the full spectrum of County operations. The survey opened March 2, 2009 and closed on March 6, 2009.

FISCAL IMPACT

According to the state Department of Workforce Solutions Bernalillo County's \$500,000 stimulus package has an annualized benefit to the community of \$2.5 million dollars. If approved, this package will allow for numerous one-time projects to be completed in a timely manner in County facilities across all Commission districts.

STAFF ANALYSIS SUMMARY

COUNTY MANAGER

This Stimulus Program will not only benefit the community, but will help Bernalillo County by addressing numerous projects that have been uncompleted due to staff shortages or lack of funding. This item is for discussion purposes only. TL 3/5/09

DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER, FINANCE DIVISION

See Summary DJM, 3/4/09

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

See Summary RMT 3/4/09