

Business Environmental Resource Center 5-Year Strategic Plan



July 2015 – June 2020

BERC's Five Year Strategic Plan

Introductory Statement

This plan is developed to provide a method to implement the Business Environmental Resource Center's (BERC's) mission, vision, and values over the next five years; July 2015 through June 2020. BERC provides free and confidential multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional permit and environmental compliance assistance to ease/outline regulatory processes for businesses. BERC is a unique office; the first of its kind in California.

Executive Summary

Since the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors had the bold vision to create BERC in 1993, staff has helped more than 20,000 business clients comply with environmental permitting and compliance requirements in Sacramento County (including all incorporated cities). BERC has established itself as a voice for business and regulatory agencies, by promoting its core mission of environmental/regulatory business compliance assistance and business retention.

Currently, BERC is at a crossroads in how it will fulfill its mission, establish funding stability, and meet the needs of increasing business expansion and growth in the region.

Introduction

In framing BERC's five year strategic plan, it is important to identify the key factors to meet objectives over the next five years. In this plan you will find the following:

- A. Mission, Vision, and Values
- B. Background and History
- C. BERC Governance - Role of the Steering Committee
- D. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis
- E. Major Goals
- F. Awareness Plan
- G. Financial Projections
- H. Action Plan
- I. Evaluation

A. Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission: BERC's mission is to help businesses succeed and enhance environmental quality by providing trusted non-regulatory compliance assistance with extraordinary customer service.

Vision: BERC is the best organization providing multi-agency comprehensive compliance/permitting assistance that is valued and recommended by the business community.

Values: Exceptionally: helpful, trustworthy, knowledgeable, and inventive through communication and team work.

B. Background/ History

The County of Sacramento Board of Supervisors created BERC in 1993 when a Red Tape Taskforce Study revealed businesses needed free and confidential help with (local, state, and federal) regulatory permit processes (to aid business attraction and retention). BERC helps businesses understand and comply with multi-agency permit, inspection, and regulatory processes by providing consultation for potential/new start-up and existing businesses in the following areas:

- Air Quality
- Restaurant/food safety
- Hazardous materials management
- Hazardous waste management
- Sewer use
- Recycling
- Stormwater compliance
- Building/Zoning code
- Annual Sustainable Business Awards Ceremony
- Sustainable Business Program certification
 - *Transportation/Air Quality*
 - *Solid Waste Reduction*
 - *Pollution Prevention*
 - *Green Building*
 - *Water Conservation*
 - *Energy Conservation*

BERC offers Free and Confidential compliance assistance and provides clients:

- A non-regulatory environment to ease regulatory concerns
- Facilitation to ease and outline regulatory permit processes
- Both pre and post-regulatory inspection compliance assistance
- One-on-one onsite consultations
- Multi-agency and business association coordination
- Ombudsman services to help reach equitable solutions
- Comprehensive regulatory and technical assistance
- Best management practices
- Business advocacy and resources for business development
- A Sustainable Business Program to recognize/certify sustainable businesses and annual awards ceremony to highlight best practices of sustainable businesses.

C. Management, Staff, and Steering Committee

BERC outreach, services, and activities are guided by a Steering Committee that meets bimonthly to discuss programs, projects, regulatory issues, and business trends. In addition, BERC staff meets quarterly with Steering Committee division managers to discuss areas of client regulatory concerns and outreach. See attachment A for Steering Committee agencies.

D. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

In order to evaluate BERC, it is necessary to analyze the organization to determine its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOTs) to improve programs and services. See SWOT analysis in attachment B.

E. Major Goals

- Increase business environmental regulatory and permit compliance assistance/outreach
- Adopt BERC awareness campaign
- Stabilize BERC and Sustainable Business funding
- Adopt three to five year funding commitments from Steering Committee

- Recruit new funding partners
- Survey clients and businesses to determine highest priority needs
- Connect/reconnect with agencies providing small business assistance

F. **Awareness Campaign**

BERC will adopt the following plan to increase awareness about BERC programs and services.

Adopt two elevator pitches of 10 and 30 seconds to uniformly describe BERC. See attachment C for elevator pitches.

Marketing/Outreach to include:

- Distribute newly developed BERC and Sustainable Business brochures to public locations throughout the region.
- Conduct intra-agency informational presentations regarding BERC's services annually.
- Provide the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors with a BERC annual update.
- Develop a BERC postcard to place at strategic locations.
- Connect with County's 311 Program to highlight BERC client services.
- Conduct targeted education and outreach seminars/presentations for business as determine in consultation with BERC Steering Committee.
- Continue and expand social media to actively promote BERC news/services.
- Continue and expand regional business education and outreach events, seminars, conferences, summits, trade shows and business walks.
- Work with local media to enhance BERC awareness with local businesses.
- Continue to provide/distribute Sustainable Business Newsletter and BERC Welcome Packets to new businesses.
- Purchase BERC marketing items to distribute to businesses.

To measure the success of this plan, an annual evaluation will be conducted to determine the plan's effectiveness, successes, and areas for improvement.

G. **Financial Projections**

Since BERC's inception in 1993, funding by the Steering Committee has evolved approximately every five years. Initially, Steering Committee members contributed what they could afford and that amount was loosely based on area served. In 2001, various Steering Committee members started to question what they as an agency received from BERC in addition to business clients served. In the interest of providing additional value to Steering Committee members, BERC devoted staff resources to Steering Committee projects deemed "Special Projects" which typically focused on development of specialized programs or outreach for individual Steering Committee members. After several years of this approach, it became evident that this approach was not sustainable. The Steering Committee then started to discuss development of an equitable funding model that would be based on tangible criteria.

In 2009, the Steering Committee requested that BERC staff develop an interim funding formula until a more comprehensive database could be developed and implemented. The interim formula was based on population served, number and complexity of permits and regulations. The interim funding model was utilized until fiscal year 2012/2013 when the BERC Database had sufficient information to generate funding levels. The Time Tracking Database calculates staff activities and time allocated to individual Steering Committee members based on the activity. See Attachment D for time allocation

and consultations for fiscal year 2013/2014. Under the current funding formula, “Special Projects” are á la cart and funding is additional to core BERC services.

Projected budget/funding

Two percent inflation adjustment increase each year beginning fiscal year 2016/2017

See attachment E for historical BERC budget/funding.

H. **Five Year Action Plan**

The Action Plan describes in greater detail how BERC will accomplish major goals of the plan year one through five. See attachment F for the BERC Action Plan.