

**Quality and Productivity Commission**  
**28<sup>th</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
**"Los Angeles County: Ahead of the Curve"**

**2014 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT: Service Area Redistricting Application (SARA)**

**DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION:** MAY 1, 2012  
 (Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before June 30, 2013)

**PROJECT STATUS:**  X  Ongoing       One-time only

**HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT?**       Yes  X  No

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. Summarize the problem, solution, and benefits of the project in a clear and direct manner.

The Service Area Redistricting Application (SARA) is a web application that allows departmental management to model welfare program office boundaries. Previous program boundary definitions were produced by hand. If boundaries already existed for the program being evaluated, maps for each office would be obtained, typically from map books.

Discrepancies between offices would have to be evaluated and merged into a single map. Each proposed change would require extensive review of caseload reports and creation of ad-hoc reports to evaluate the impact of proposed changes. Little consideration was given to available transportation, natural boundaries, or demographics. SARA was specifically commissioned to model and evaluate changes to our existing offices, boundaries and methods of serving the public.

SARA uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to allow visual management of boundaries along with immediate reports of impact to caseload, visual impact, and interaction with other boundaries.

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

<b>SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> Department of Public Social Services 12860 Crossroads Parkway South City of Industry, CA 91746	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b>  (562) 908-8600
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<b>PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME</b>  Del Benavides	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (562) 345-9945  <b>EMAIL</b> DelBenavides@dpss.lacounty.gov
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<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME)</small>  Nadia Mirzayans	<b>DATE</b>  7-14-14	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (562) 908-6330  <b>EMAIL</b> NadiaMirzayans@dpss.lacounty.gov
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<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>  Sheryl L. Spiller	<b>DATE</b>  7/14/14	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b>  (562)-908-8600
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1<sup>st</sup> FACT SHEET – LIMITED TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **Challenge, Solution, and Benefits** of the project.

**Challenge**

Previous program boundary definitions were produced by hand. Numerous statistical reports would be produced for the caseloads of various special services programs. If boundaries already existed for the program being evaluated, maps for each office would be obtained, typically from Thomas Brothers map books. Discrepancies between offices would have to be evaluated and merged into a single map. For new boundaries, maps would have to be created by hand with various proposals to be evaluated. Existing program boundaries could be used as the initial basis.

Each proposed change would require extensive review of caseload reports and creation of new Ad-Hoc reports to evaluate the impact of proposed changes. Little consideration was given to available transportation, natural boundaries such as flood control channels, or demographics. The process to update boundaries due to office closures and shifts in caseload distribution was cumbersome and slow, often taking months or years to complete. Previously defined boundaries were over a decade old.

**Solution**

SARA was specifically commissioned to help model and evaluate changes to our existing 55 offices, boundaries and methods of serving the public. SARA is a web application that uses state of the art GIS technology to allow visual management of boundaries, along with immediate reports of impact to caseload, visual impact, and interaction with other boundaries.

SARA has fundamentally changed the way the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) defines boundaries, with regards to boundary mapping and caseload allocation. Existing boundaries for social services programs were pre-loaded into the system. The statistical data is aggregated against standard blocks of land. DPSS used split census blocks as the basis for a very granular level of allocating area to an office. Once boundaries are created, they can be extracted, processed for quality assurance and implemented in the county's central GIS repository for use by all systems.

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Users can create folders to store related sets of boundaries. The users may also create new boundaries in the folders from scratch, or use existing boundaries already stored in the system. Users can share boundaries with other users and collaborate on their creation. Users can add additional layers of information to the maps as needed to help evaluate boundary placement, including other program boundaries, zip codes, cities, school districts, bus lines, and demographics by age, ethnicity and poverty level, and other useful information from the GIS repository, including services provided by other county departments and State political boundaries. These types of resources would not have been evaluated using the manual paper process.

Links to maps from the application can be shared with staff that do not have login accounts, thus making collaboration easy. PDF reports on caseload and other demographics can be generated and distributed for clearance of proposed boundaries.

**Benefits**

While SARA is for internal use by management assigned to evaluate program boundaries, its impact to DPSS, other county departments, various departmental business partners, and the public is significant. The impact to staff hours needed to update existing program boundaries has been astounding, saving months of work associated with the former labor-intensive, paper-based process. DPSS is better able to manage staffing resources to provide services to the public.

One such example of this shift was during evaluation of the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, where a new district office was to be carved out of existing office boundaries. This task was needed within a very short time frame (two months). Program staff needed to know the map area that would support the target number of cases by IHSS staff. Several scenarios needed to be modeled to determine the caseload of the proposed new office, and existing surrounding offices that would be impacted by the boundary change. Program staff further determined that the newly created area needed to be based on existing city boundaries and zip codes. Further consideration was given to driving times to remote corners of the proposed boundaries, and freeway access for IHSS staff who have to make frequent home visits.

SARA helped staff accomplish all these analyses in a month, a task that would have been impossible just a few years ago. Management benefits from a tool that updates boundaries and is able to see the impact of those updates, as well as determine how resources may be allocated effectively.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN (DETAIL IS REQUIRED FOR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS):

**GOAL 1: OPERATIONAL EFFECETIVENESS: MAXIMIZE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROCESSES, STRUCTURED, AND OPERATIONS TO SUPPORT TIMELY DELIVERY OF CUSTOMER-ORIENTED AND EFFICIENT PUBLIC SERVICES.**

The boundaries produced and exported out of the application to the central GIS repository serve as a single source for systems, applications, and staff to know what addresses are served by a particular DPSS office. Staff no longer need to use Thomas Brother's maps that may have discrepancies between offices, in order to direct the public to the correct office that serve their area. Other anticipated uses include implementation at the district office case transfer desks.

The public also benefits from online web applications slated to take advantage of the newly updated boundaries. They will know what offices serve their home address for each program offered by DPSS. Updated boundaries have been implemented in internal GIS systems and made accessible for public download. Interfaces to major systems, including the Your Benefits Now! (YBN) system, have been applied to automatically assign new cases to the appropriate district office.

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**COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFIT):** If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation.

**Cost Avoidance:** Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes.

**Cost Savings:** A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes.

**Revenue:** Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

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