Quality and Productivity Commission

28th 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: PROPERTY TAX EMAIL NOTIFICATION SERVICE

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: MARCH 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 Los Angeles County Treasurer and Tax Collector (TTC) mails over 2.3 million Annual Property Tax Bills. Taxpayers with questions regarding billing and payment activity can contact the TTC through various mediums of communication, including TTC email. The TTC e-mail inbox receives a monthly average of 2,000 emails, and the average peaks nearing the two annual delinquency dates and with the three additional billing notices generated at different periods throughout the year. The Board of Supervisors are notified of each mailing generated by the TTC, and are often contacted by their respective constituents with inquiries related to the notices. With a recommendation from the Fifth District to facilitate communications to the public regarding critical deadlines, the TTC implemented an email notification service in March 2012. A press release notified the public of the opportunity to subscribe to receive emails from the TTC with special notices and information about upcoming events. To date, more than 10,000 taxpayers have subscribed to receive emails. This notification has proven to be an excellent customer service enhancement.

(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
$	$	$	$	☒

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Los Angeles County Treasurer and Tax Collector 500 West Temple Street, Room 437 Los Angeles, California 90012	**TELEPHONE NUMBER** (213) 974-2101
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME Kathy Gloster, Assistant Treasurer and Tax Collector 7-15-14	**TELEPHONE NUMBER** (213) 974-2077 **EMAIL** kgloster@ttc.lacounty.gov
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME) Sandra Pina-Barbee, Administrative Deputy **DATE** 7-15-14	**TELEPHONE NUMBER** (213) 974-2108 **EMAIL** spbarbee@ttc.lacounty.gov
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE Mark J. Saladino, Treasurer and Tax Collector **DATE** 7-15-14	**TELEPHONE NUMBER** (213) 974-2101

We Support Plain Language

2014 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):
NAME OF PROJECT: **PROPERTY TAX EMAIL NOTIFICATION SERVICE**

1st **FACT SHEET – LIMITED TO 3 PAGES ONLY:** Describe the **Challenge, Solution, and Benefits** of the project.

CHALLENGE

The TTC mails four billing notices at specific times throughout the year. The first mailing in September alerts taxpayers that have taxes due for a prior tax year by providing a Statement of Prior Year Taxes. The second mailing is the Annual Property Tax Bills to over 2.3 million property owners in the month of October, which includes stubs for two installments due on November 1 and February 1, respectively. The third mailing is a Payment Activity Notice in February, which alerts taxpayers that there was either no payment or a partial payment received on the first installment of their Annual Property Tax Bill. The fourth and final mailing is the Notice of Delinquency, which alerts taxpayers that there was either no payment or a partial payment received on their Annual Property Tax Bill.

Other than these mailings and the press releases sent to media outlets, there were no other reminders sent to taxpayers. Therefore, if a taxpayer moves, forgets, or misplaces the bill, they would not receive a reminder from the TTC. In addition, caregivers or family members were oftentimes unaware of tax deadlines for those they were caring for.

SOLUTION

Subscribing to the email notification service via the TTC website affords taxpayers the opportunity to be provided electronic reminders of when taxes become due and payable to Los Angeles County. Taxpayers have noted to the TTC that it is difficult to remember to pay twice annually when there is only one bill mailed out annually. The email serves as a reminder that payments are becoming due and that action is needed on the part of the taxpayer to ensure that their account is paid in full before the installment delinquency date. The emails also notify taxpayers after installment delinquency dates in the event that there are unpaid property taxes from the past installment.

The emails also contain information useful to taxpayers including how to make payments online in lieu of mailing in a check and a bill stub, how to make payment over the telephone, how to remit payment in person at our office in Los Angeles, and how mailed payments are processed. The information regarding how mailed payments are processed and evaluated is exceptionally useful to taxpayers because it provides them with a reference regarding the multiple forms of postage available and what is honored as a valid postmark per the California Revenue and Taxation Code.

2014 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):
NAME OF PROJECT: **PROPERTY TAX EMAIL NOTIFICATION SERVICE**

BENEFITS

The goal of the email notification service is to offer taxpayers timely reminders of when property tax payments are due in Los Angeles County. This measure fills the gap in service between the four annual mailings of property tax bills and notices and the dates in which property taxes become due and delinquent.

From the inception of the program, marked growth in subscriptions to the email notification service is direct representation of customer satisfaction with the reminders being provided by the TTC. In March 2012, there were 461 subscribers to the email service. Currently, there are over 10,315 taxpayers who subscribe to receive the information from the email service. This is almost 10,000 additional taxpayers in growth from inception to current date.

The convenience of receiving electronic communications from this email service allows taxpayers to access this information from computers and mobile devices, whereas previously mailed bills were not readily accessible to taxpayers at a moment's notice. Of the 10,315 taxpayers who receive this initial notification, the potential outreach is much larger due to the fact that taxpayers can transmit this information amongst each other, continuing our outreach efforts to immeasurable numbers.

Customer service is also achieved through the email notification service by reducing the number of taxpayer complaints which stem from penalties incurred because of missed delinquency dates. The email service also provides information for the taxpayer that is also accessible during non-standard working hours via our online portal which is referenced in the email notifications.

Email notifications also serve as effective and efficient notification to taxpayers who reside outside of the continental United States, who would otherwise be limited by the capabilities of the international postal service to deliver their property tax information. Sometimes this international mail may be delivered weeks after the initial mailing by the TTC in Los Angeles.

The email notification service also serves our senior citizen population of taxpayers with the ability to designate an alternate point of contact to receive the email notifications. This enables seniors to maintain their independence, while providing an alternate person with information regarding their property taxes to remind them when payments are becoming due or have passed the delinquency date.

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):
NAME OF PROJECT: PROPERTY TAX EMAIL NOTIFICATION SERVICE

BENEFITS – CONTINUED

As alternate payment options are included in e-mails, we anticipate a reduction in the number of taxpayers who will physically visit the office in-person to remit payments for their property taxes.

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

The Email Notification Program supports the Los Angeles County Strategic Plan Goal of Operational Effectiveness by delivering customer-oriented and efficient public service. This program offers the convenience of receiving electronic communications from computers and mobile devices, and provides access to information beyond regular working hours to taxpayers who reside in and out of the continental United States via our online portal. This service is especially helpful to our senior and special needs constituents because it empowers them to sustain a level of independence. This program embraces the County Values of "Responsiveness" and "Customer Orientation" because we provide efficient and responsive customer service in a timely manner.

2014 APPLICATION

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

NAME OF PROJECT: **PROPERTY TAX EMAIL NOTIFICATION SERVICE**

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.

(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
$	$	$	$	☒

ANNUAL= 12 MONTHS ONLY