



MEMORANDUM

Date: February 26, 2013

To: The Honorable Chairman and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CHH", is written over the printed name "C.H. Huckelberry".

Re: **Retiring of County Residential Green Building Program**

Pima County is retiring its Residential Green Building Program effective March 1, 2013 due to a lack of builder participation and to save the County overhead costs for program maintenance. The no-fee program was launched in February 2008 following a two-year process involving industry participation in the creation of a green building standard based on the National Association of Home Builders standard tailored to local area conditions.

While there was much support for creating the standard from the Southern Arizona Home Builders Association (SAHBA), the level of participation did not materialize. Though dozens of applications were submitted to the County in the past, only five homes achieved actual certification. The main problem regarding the certification process appears to be the lack of marketability for a regionally specific designation. In contrast, Pima County's revenue-generating national LEED for Homes Program has certified over 500 residential units during approximately the same period.

As SAHBA is the principal program sponsor, the value of the program was discussed with SAHBA leadership, who deferred the matter for review to their Technical Committee. The item was scheduled for discussion at the SAHBA Technical Committee's February 19, 2013 meeting, where not a single Committee member moved in favor of program retention.

County green building efforts will continue through the LEED for Homes Program, as well as through working with SAHBA, to promote changes in local lending industry practices to incorporate consideration of projected building energy utility bills in mortgage qualifications. Research indicates that doing so will encourage the homebuilding industry to align construction efficiency with standards such as Pima County's net-zero energy, since more individuals would qualify for more expensive, energy-efficient homes than currently for less expensive, energy-code minimum construction.

CHH/dph

c: John Bernal, Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Nanette Slusser, Assistant County Administrator for Public Works Policy
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Director, Development Services