

CENTRAL BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT **JULY 12, 2006 - Communications**
Apodaca, Vasquez
JULY 24, 2006 - Board Meeting
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INFORMATION CALENDAR

BELL GARDENS' CALIFORNIA FRIENDLY PROJECT GRANT SUBMISSION

SUMMARY:

The City of Bell Gardens has partnered with Central Basin to develop a citywide conservation plan, which was submitted to Metropolitan Water District's (MWD) Enhanced Conservation Grant Program.

The project, titled "Bell Gardens: The First California Friendly City; A Model for Inner City Transformation," outlines the citywide integration of key conservation measures that are currently endorsed under MWD's California Friendly Program. Through this collaborative effort, the City of Bell Gardens would be the first city in the region to embrace a comprehensive conservation program, becoming a model for other cities—particularly lower income, inner cities with limited resources—that are looking to integrate the California Friendly Program within their communities.

In developing this visionary project, staff collaborated with Mayor Pedro Aceituno of the City of Bell Gardens, who provided a letter of support, and the City's Director of Recreation and Community Services to commit in-kind contributions to the project.

The Enhanced Conservation Program is a new grant program at MWD that provides funding for cost-effective water conservation projects that pilot new programs or improve existing ones. Under this broad scope, selected projects are expected to lead the way in "new, progressive approaches to water conservation in Southern California." The selection process is competitive and based largely on project feasibility, regional applicability and anticipated water savings. MWD has budgeted \$4 million for this program, to be dispersed among the selected projects over two years. The deadline for applications was June 30, 2006 and projects will be selected for funding in July 2006.

Under the proposal, the Bell Gardens project will be divided into two phases: 1) Implementation of four water-saving measures at city facilities, selected for their water savings value, city needs and tie-in to the California Friendly program and 2) Community outreach to encourage residents and businesses to save water.

The conservation measures adopted by the City include the installation of synthetic turf at one of the City's premier soccer fields; 50,000 square feet of California native landscaping that will feature informative signage; a wireless valve controller system to irrigate various sites throughout the City's 122 acre parkland; and the installation of waterless urinals and high-efficiency toilets throughout City facilities.

If awarded the \$102,250 requested, grant funding will be used to cover the cost of California Friendly plants and a portion of the cost for synthetic turf. The City of Bell Gardens is committed to providing in-kind contributions for labor and marketing. Along with the District's state grant funding for the cost of waterless urinals and wireless valve controllers, Central Basin will allocate to this project money budgeted under conservation for commercial marketing and incentives offered through MWDs Save-a-Buck Program.

The second phase of the project will be to promote water conservation as a California Friendly "Lifestyle Choice" to residents and businesses through targeted marketing. The outreach efforts will also serve as a model for promoting California Friendly to a non-English speaking community that often make up the majority of an inner city's population.

This project presents a unique opportunity for the District to partner with the City of Bell Gardens and MWD to demonstrate its continued commitment to its community while furthering the California Friendly Program.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

None.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE:

None.

COMMITTEE STATUS:

This item was reviewed by the Communications Committee on July 6, 2006 and was agendaized to the July 24, 2006 Board meeting as information for discussion.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

This item is for information only.

EXHIBITS:

None.