

DATE ISSUED: January 9, 2002

REPORT NO. 02-007

ATTENTION: Natural Resources and Culture Committee
Agenda of January 16, 2002

SUBJECT: Water Conservation Demonstration Garden

SUMMARY

Issues -

- 1) Should the City Council authorize the City Manager to execute an agreement to join the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) of the Water Conservation Demonstration Garden at Cuyamaca College?
- 2) Should the City Council authorize the City Manager to make the current year membership contribution of \$32,000 for the Water Conservation Demonstration Garden at Cuyamaca College?
- 3) Should the City Council authorize the Auditor & Comptroller to expend \$32,000 from the Water Resources Program, Water Conservation Fund for the membership contribution?

Manager=s Recommendations -

- 1) Authorize the City Manager to execute an agreement to the join the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) of the Water Conservation Demonstration Garden at Cuyamaca College.
- 2) Authorize the City Manager to make the current year membership contribution of \$32,000 for the Water Conservation Demonstration Garden at Cuyamaca College.
- 3) Authorize the Auditor & Comptroller to expend \$32,000 from the Water Resources Program, Water Conservation Fund for the membership contribution.

Other Recommendations - None.

Fiscal Impact - The membership share for the remainder of the fiscal year has been capped at \$32,000. It is anticipated that there will be participation from five partners in

2002 and 2003, which would estimate an annual operating share of approximately \$53,000 from each partner. If other agencies do not join, the City would still be responsible for an equal share of the Garden's budget, which is expected to be approximately \$265,000. The operating budget for FY2001/02 is \$262,489. Membership contributions in future years will be requested as part of the City's annual budget process.

BACKGROUND

The Water Conservation Demonstration Garden was established by the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) of the Otay Water District, Helix Water District and the Grossmont-Cuyamaca College District. The JPA operates as a non-profit organization with a board comprised of representatives from the three sponsoring agencies. Its goal is to create awareness of long-term landscape and resource conservation by educating the community on the benefits of xeriscaping.

The Garden opened to the public in May 1999 and is located 20 minutes east of downtown San Diego on the Cuyamaca Community College Campus. It was developed with \$3 million in funding from grants, private donors and the two water agencies (Helix and Otay) and was primarily in response to four years of drought. Since San Diego has recently experienced two consecutive years of significantly dry winters, a continual trend can lead to depletion of state water resources and would therefore call for a heightened awareness for water conservation.

The City of San Diego, along with the County Water Authority, County of San Diego, Sweetwater Authority and Padre Municipal Water District, has been invited to join the Water Conservation Garden Authority in an effort to increase awareness and extend the water conservation message to all County water agencies and their consumers. The Garden can be one resource to create such an awareness to the citizens of San Diego because it is used for water conservation classes for residential customers and as a resource for customers with landscape water conservation questions. The Garden will be helpful to the City in achieving Best Management Practices (BMP) as outlined in the 1991 Memorandum of Understanding on Urban Water Conservation, providing the opportunity to promote a more regional approach to water conservation that is beneficial to our ratepayers and helping to educate citizens on lessening urban runoff in support of the Storm-water Prevention Program. Additionally, the Garden can serve as a resource to enhance the existing Water Conservation Program and support future programs such as the Irrigation Incentive Program, anticipated for implementation in Fiscal Year 2003. Finally, there are no buy-in costs, outstanding claims or litigation associated with the Water Conservation Garden. The Authority is debt free. As a new partner, the City would be required to remain a member for a minimum of one year. A two-month notice would be required to terminate membership thereafter.

ALTERNATIVES

1) Do not authorize the City Manager to execute an agreement to join the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) of the Water Conservation Demonstration Garden at Cuyamaca College.

2) Do not authorize the City Manager to make the current year membership contribution of \$32,000 for the Water Conservation Demonstration Garden at Cuyamaca College.

3) Do not authorize the Auditor & Comptroller to expend \$32,000 from the Water Resources Program, Water Conservation Fund for the membership contribution.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Gardner
Water Department Director

Approved: Richard Mendes
Utilities General Manager

GARDNER/KDV

Note: The attachments are not available in electronic format. A copy is available in the Office of the City Clerk.

Attachments: 1. Amendment to Joint Powers Agreement
2. Resolution No.112 of Board of Directors of Water Conservation Garden Authority