



# CITY COUNCIL AGENDA STATEMENT



January 22, 2019

File ID: 18-0589

## **TITLE**

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHULA VISTA ACCEPTING A GRANT OF \$5,000 FROM SWEETWATER AUTHORITY TO FUND THE NATURESCAPE PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS ACCORDINGLY (4/5 VOTE REQUIRED)

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Council adopt the resolution.

## **SUMMARY**

The City of Chula Vista has been approved for a \$5,000 Water Efficiency Education Program (WEEP) grant through Sweetwater Authority in FY 2019 to help support a the NatureScape program. Staff is asking Council to accept and appropriate the grant to the Office of Sustainability fund.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The proposed activity has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and it has been determined that the activity is not a "Project" as defined under Section 15378 of the state CEQA Guidelines because it will not result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment; therefore, pursuant to Section 15060(c)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it has also been determined that the activity qualifies for an Exemption pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines. Thus, no environmental review is required.

## **BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Not applicable.

## **DISCUSSION**

In 2006, the City of Chula Vista launched the NatureScape program with the goal of creating numerous "Certified Wildlife Habitats" in yards throughout Chula Vista using the certification process of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF). Workshops were conducted to educate citizens about key components to create a NatureScape environment. Another goal was to meet the criteria for the City to become a Certified Wildlife Habitat which the City was awarded in 2012. Since inception, NatureScape has certified 609 sites including residents (95 percent), schools and other landscapes. Currently, the City only provides basic information handouts via booths at community events and during Home Checkup Evaluations since funding has been an issue to continue the program at its previous level. Funding from Sweetwater

Authority allows City staff to relaunch the NatureScape program, which was reignited in spring 2018 by another grant from Sweetwater Authority. Benefits of NatureScapes include resident participation in: building of healthy soil through composting which results in water saving and lower yard maintenance; conservation of water resources by applying Water Smart techniques favored by water districts for our drought-laden region; and providing beneficial habitat to help preserve wildlife species impacted by climate change. Additionally, it expands engagement and education around water stewardship initiatives in Chula Vista. In addition, NatureScape helps satisfy two objectives in the City's 2017 Climate Action Plan directed at utilizing water education, technical assistance and hosting workshops so citizens can apply Water Smart practices to their yards.

### **DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT**

Staff has reviewed the decision contemplated by this action and has determined that it is not site-specific and consequently, the 500-foot rule found in California Code of Regulations Title 2, section 18702.2(a)(11), is not applicable to this decision for purposes of determining a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov't Code § 87100, et seq.).

Staff is not independently aware of and has not been informed by any City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision maker conflict of interest in this matter.

### **LINK TO STRATEGIC GOALS**

The City's Strategic Plan has five major goals: Operational Excellence, Economic Vitality, Healthy Community, Strong and Secure Neighborhoods and a Connected Community. The NatureScape program supports the Healthy Community and Connected Community goals as it encourages resident participation in activities that improve the City, creates a network of residents enhancing their yards, promotes conservation of water resources and provides beneficial habitat to help preserve wildlife species impacted by climate change. Creating NatureScapes provides a personalized back-to-nature outdoor experience and serves to enhance lifestyles in Chula Vista along with beneficial stress-relieving environments.

### **CURRENT-YEAR FISCAL IMPACT**

These funds are to help offset the costs of the NatureScape program through early June 2019. The proposed budget amendments have no net fiscal impact to the General Fund; these one-time expenditures will be offset by one-time revenues.

### **ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT**

The proposed budget amendments are a one-time activity, there are no ongoing fiscal impacts associated with these budget amendments.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Grant application

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