



# CITY COUNCIL AGENDA STATEMENT



February 18, 2020

File ID: 20-0046

## **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 THEREFOR (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 2020 to help support the NatureScape program. Staff is asking Council to accept and appropriate the funds.

## **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 address to create NatureScape environment. Another goal was to meet the criteria for the City to become a Certified Wildlife Habitat and a one-year designation was awarded in 2012. Since inception, NatureScape has certified over 600 sites including residents (95 percent), schools and other landscapes. However, funding became a challenge several years ago.

Currently, the City provides informational handouts via booths at community events and during Home Checkup Evaluations, thanks to funding support from Sweetwater Authority over the last two years. This continued funding from Sweetwater Authority allows city staff to highlight the NatureScape program with a spring workshop and creation of a new testimonial (printed and online) during the first half of 2020. Staff plans to apply for additional funding opportunities to support the program as opportunities become available.

Benefits of NatureScapes include resident participation in: building of healthy soil through composting resulting in water saving and lower yard maintenance; conservation of water resources (save water and money) by applying Water Smart techniques favored by water districts for our drought-laden region; and providing beneficial habitat to help preserve wildlife species (insects, birds, etc.) impacted by climate change. Additionally, it would expand engagement and education opportunities around water stewardship initiatives in Chula Vista. Creating NatureScapes provides a personalized back-to-nature outdoor experience and serves to enhance lifestyles in Chula Vista along with beneficial stress-relieving environments.

### **DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT**

Staff has reviewed the decision contemplated by this action and has determined that it is not site-specific and consequently, the real property holdings of the City Council members do not create 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, 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**

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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