



● **Board of Directors**
One Water and Stewardship Committee

11/14/2023 Board Meeting

7-7

Subject

Authorize a \$200,000/year increase to the existing agreement with WaterWise Consulting Inc., currently set at \$200,000/year, for the Large Landscape and Residential Survey Program, for a total agreement not to exceed \$400,000/year; the General Manager has determined that the proposed actions are exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Executive Summary

The large-landscape survey program has provided in-person outdoor efficiency audits to commercial and residential landscapes over one acre since 2013. In 2022, Metropolitan added an indoor/outdoor residential survey option, providing leak detection and efficiency recommendations to all residents throughout the service area. Since adding the residential surveys, program activity increased, necessitating an increase in the yearly annual expenditures for this agreement. This change will not increase the overall Conservation Program budget.

Details

Background

In 2013, Metropolitan launched a large-landscape survey program for commercial and residential properties with over an acre of irrigated landscape. These in-person surveys include an irrigation audit and recommendations for water use efficiency improvements. Metropolitan provides these surveys free of charge to property owners to improve irrigation efficiency on large landscapes with high water usage. The report provided to the customer includes an overview of any leaks or needed repairs of the irrigation system as well as recommendations for changes to improve efficiency. These recommendations include turf replacement, irrigation changes, controller upgrades, and landscaping best management practices. The report also includes a cost-benefit analysis, rebate availability, and a payback timeline for the recommendations.

In 2021, WaterWise Consulting Inc. was competitively selected as the survey program contractor through a Request for Proposal process. In 2022, Metropolitan added a residential survey option to the program, which can be performed virtually or in person. The residential survey does not have a minimum size and includes indoor and outdoor home audits. Survey consultants provide a leak detection review inside and outside the home and prepare a report of recommendations to improve water use efficiency. These recommendations include turf replacement, irrigation repair and upgrades, appliance upgrades, and conservation tips for indoor water use. The report also provides rebate and other program information available to the customer.

The costs associated with this work are listed in the following table. The average size of a large-landscape survey is 16 acres.

Description	Cost
Pre-inspection	\$475.00
All work necessary for Indoor/Outdoor Virtual Survey	\$225.00
All work necessary for Commercial Large Landscape Survey (> 1 acre)	\$2,000.00
Customer Follow-up Services	\$225.00

Proposed Action

The current program is in year two of a three-year agreement and limits expenditures to \$200,000/year. Since adding the residential survey option, activity in this program has increased by 30 percent. Residential survey activity alone has increased by 210 percent between 2022 and 2023. In addition, the large-landscape survey activity has also increased by 40 percent over the last three years. Though the recent severe drought undoubtedly increased interest in these surveys, accelerated activity may continue at these levels, and additional funds may be required. Based on current activity, staff estimates that an additional \$200,000/agreement year will be needed to fund this program through February 28, 2025.

Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11104: Delegation of Responsibilities

By Minute Item 48772, dated August 16, 2011, the Board adopted the Long-Term Conservation Plan and revisions to the water conservation policy principles.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action is not defined as a project under CEQA because it will not result in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). In addition, the proposed action is not subject to CEQA because it involves other government fiscal activities, which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment (Section 15378(b)(4) of the State CEQA Guidelines).

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Board Options

Option #1

Authorize an increase of \$200,000/year to a new amount not to exceed \$400,000/year for an existing agreement with WaterWise Consulting Inc. for the Large Landscape and Residential Survey Program.

Fiscal Impact: The proposed \$400,000 program increase will be funded from the Conservation Program budget. This request will not increase the Conservation Program budget.

Business Analysis: The proposed changes will allow the program to continue uninterrupted through 2025.

Option #2

Do not authorize an increase in the maximum amount payable under this agreement with WaterWise Consulting Inc. If not authorized, the program will be suspended until the next agreement year.

Fiscal Impact: None

Business Analysis: Large landscape and residential surveys would be interrupted if the authorized contract limit is met.

Staff Recommendation

Option #1



Brad Coffey
Manager, Water Resource Management

11/1/2023
Date



Adel Hagekhalil
General Manager

11/3/2023
Date

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