

Mayor and Council Communication

DATE: 01/14/20

M&C FILE NUMBER: M&C 20-0028

LOG NAME: 23REG SOLID WASTE IMLEM 2020-21 AND RECYCLE PARTNERSH 2019-20

SUBJECT

Authorize Application for and Acceptance of, if Awarded, Multiple Grants in the Aggregate Amount of \$600,825 from the North Central Texas Council of Governments Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Regional Solid Waste Implementation Grant Program, and the Recycling Partnership 2019-2020 Leadership Grant (ALL COUNCIL DISTRICTS)

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Authorize Application for and Acceptance of, if Awarded, Multiple Grants in the Aggregate Amount of \$600,825 from the North Central Texas Council of Governments Fiscal Year 2020 and 2021 Regional Solid Waste Implementation Grant Program ("a" through "c" below), and The Recycling Partnership 2019-2020 Leadership Grant ("d" below):
 - a. Environmental Investigation Unit PTZ (point, tilt, zoom) Camera Acquisition grant in the amount of \$93,925
 - b. Yard Trimmings Contamination Reduction Program in the amount of \$67,000
 - c. Special Events Collection Program Expansion in the amount of \$39,900
 - d. Expansion of Residential Recycling Contamination Reduction and Resident Education Program in the amount of \$400,000
2. Authorize the Execution of Grant Contracts, if Awarded;
3. Authorize the acceptance of additional funds not to exceed \$35,000 if excess funds become available at the end of the grant period; and
4. Adopt the attached appropriation ordinance increasing estimated receipts and appropriations in the Grants Fund in an amount up to \$600,825, contingent upon receipt of any or all four grants.

DISCUSSION:

The grant money originates from 2 sources:

- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and is allocated to the NCTCOG as a pass-through entity
- The Recycling Partnership.

The Solid Waste Division of Code Compliance is applying for the following grants that advance specific action items of the City's 2017-2037 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (for specific section and page reference, please see the respective entries below).

TCEQ GRANTS:

Environmental Investigation Unit PTZ (point, tilt, zoom) Camera Acquisition: \$93,925

This grant, if awarded, will be used to buy additional cameras to enhance the City's Environmental Investigation Unit (EIU) efforts. These cameras will enable the Illegal dump team to have more autonomy and better coverage of the City of Fort Worth and catch and prosecute more illegal dumpers. As a reference, with the use of cameras, the City of Fort Worth saw an 89% reduction in illegal dumping in the Ash Crescent enrichment neighborhood program.

The deployment of PTZ cameras has also increased the number of Felony cases pursued. Year to date, the EIU has turned in 30 felony cases for prosecution with 258 misdemeanor class C citations been issued by EIU.

No match is required.

Additional goals and benefits of adopting the program include:

- Code PTZ cameras will continue to help and will indeed enhance EIU's assistance to the Fort Worth Police Department with reducing prostitution and drug usage in our neighborhoods.
- Code PTZ cameras will also continue to assist the Fire Department with arson investigation. To-date, footage of two arsons has been captured by the EIU's PTZ cameras.

Yard Trimmings Contamination Reduction Program: \$67,000

In fiscal year 2019 there were 25,456 tons of residential yard waste collected at the curb and processed into mulch. Yard trimmings are defined as: grass clippings, leaves, twigs, weeds, flowers and bush trimmings. Yard trimmings that are collected at the curb as part of the city's weekly

collection program are taken to Living Earth to process. The Living Earth facility is located at the Southeast Landfill

The city estimates that between 35% - 50% of yard trimmings are not collected correctly at the curb and are disposed of in the landfill. Correctly collecting and processing this material represents a significant opportunity to increase the city's diversion rate and to extend the life of the landfill. Approximately 20% of all yard waste collected is contaminated and sent to the landfill working face for disposal. During peak seasons (Spring and Fall) more than half of all yard bags contain some contamination. The three main focus areas of this proposed program are education, enforcement, and resident behavioral change. To assess the effectiveness of the program, grant money will be used to create and staff a yard trimmings audit team of outside contractors (similar in function to the existing Blue Crew recycling cart auditors) that will inspect yard trimmings set at the curb. At the end of the grant period the Solid Waste Division will assess the effectiveness of the outside contractors and determine whether to commit city funds for permanent positions in future years.

No match is required.

Additional goals and benefits of adopting the program include:

- Turn 100% of residential yard trimmings into mulch
- Educate residents & yard companies:
 - What can and cannot go into yard bags
 - Why it is important to the city, to residents and to the environment to reuse this material
 - Why this helps prolong the life of the Southeast Landfill
 - The resident is responsible for what the commercial yard crew puts in these bags
- Reduce the amount of contamination coming into the Living Earth facility
- Improve the quality of the mulch products the City offers to residents
- Supports fulfillment of five action items of the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (Evaluate banning yard waste from disposal in the SELF [The city's Southeast Landfill] – Section 8, p. 8-5; Develop targeted education and outreach – Section 8, p. 8-6; Enforce no large brush or yard waste in bulk collection – Section 8, p. 8-7; Don't Bag It [Don't use plastic bags for yard waste] – Section 8, p. 8-21; and Continuously monitor the SELF's capacity – Section 8, p. 8-23)

Special Events Collection Program Expansion: \$39,900

The City helps collect yearly approximately 90,000 lbs. of recyclable materials from about 20 events. The Concerts in the Garden alone generates approximately 12,000 lbs. of recyclable materials. The city (mainly through its Parks and Recreation Department, and the Solid Waste Services Division of Code Compliance), Waste Management, Republic Services, and event volunteers all play a role in the diversion of that poundage.

As currently structured, the city's Special Events Collection program loans bins and provides plastic bags for collecting events' recyclable materials. The collected recyclable materials are processed through the city's contracted material recycling facility (MRF). The recyclable materials collected from special events are not weighed; estimated totals are based on the number of bags and the type of material collected.

Fulfilling the city's 2017-2037 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan's directives to increase the diversion of materials from the city's Landfill, and to seek proactively the prevention of litter (see Executive Summary, p. 1-6; and Section 8 – CSWMP Implementation, pp. 8-11, and 8-17), as well as responding to the event industry identified need for assistance in collecting and diverting recyclable materials, the city is seeking to expand its Special Events Collection program. The program expansion sought by the grant application, will provide for the acquisition of two back-tipping collection trailers (one 25yd and one 8yd) and enough equipment to replenish current program inventory. The trailers together with loaner bins and plastic bags will be stored at the City Service Center. Recycling bins and plastic bags will be delivered to and driven from event location by city staff making use of the trailers. Once the program expansion is in place, the city will test the viability and effectiveness of having city staff drive the collected recyclable material to, weigh and dump them at the Republic MRF. It is the intention of this grant application to increase the city's Special Events Collection recycling infrastructure in such a way as to allow the possible coverage of two events simultaneously, and to add more flexibility to the program.

No match is required.

The direct benefits of the Special Events Collection program expansion are:

- Increased diversion of materials away from the city's Landfill;
- Proactive prevention of litter;
- Assist the event industry diversion efforts without burdening businesses unduly;
- Expansion of the city's recycling infrastructure;
- Potentially assist small event promoters with the typically expensive hauling of the recyclable materials to a recycling facility; and
- Potentially generate hard data for the program with exact weights for each event

The proposed Special Events Collection program expansion has the potential of doubling the annual special collections results – be it the number of events covered and/or be it the total poundage of recyclable materials collected.

Additional goals and benefits of adopting the program include:

- Assist the Environmental Management Division of Code Compliance with their objective of preventing litter

THE RECYCLING PARTNERSHIP GRANT:

Expansion of Residential Recycling Contamination Reduction and Resident Education Program: \$400,000

The City of Fort Worth currently has on-going operational and educational programs in place to increase the amount of material that is recycled and to reduce contamination in the residential curbside recycling program. The Solid Waste Division uses a six person staff called the Blue Crew to audit residential recycling carts to identify and decrease contamination and to educate residents. This program will expand and enhance the existing program by adding staff of additional outside contractors and volunteers, creating additional educational materials, and auditing a greater number of households on a weekly basis. At the end of the grant period the existing Blue Crew recycling cart auditors would resume their current auditing duties and the incremental-audit duties performed by the outside contractors will end.

This grant is also focused on increasing the capture of under recovered material in Fort Worth, specifically PET bottles and aluminum cans (having higher commodity values), by the end of 2020. According to the most recent Waste Characterization study for the city, over 28% of materials in the Garbage carts are recyclable materials.

The total grant amount is \$400,000 of which up to \$170,000 will be paid by The Recycling Partnership to their selected vendors in support of this grant. The remaining funds (minimum of \$230,000) will be paid to the City of Fort Worth on a reimbursement basis.

In lieu of required matching funds, The Recycling Partnership has agreed to recognize existing funding approved in the Solid Waste Division's FY 2020 operational budget towards the Blue Crew Recycling Cart Audit Program as "committed in-kind funding" to support the initiative. At least \$50,000 will be spent on labor for the car audits and up to \$50,000 will be spent on educational and outreach materials.

Additional benefits of adopting the program include:

- Recycling more materials instead of disposing of them helps prolong the life of the Southeast Landfill
- Focusing on the recovery of aluminum and plastic bottles increases revenue to the city because both are higher value commodities
- Decreasing contamination lowers the cost of Recycling Processing
- Decreasing contamination increases the amount of usable recyclable materials captured at the material recovery facility
- Decreasing contamination improves the condition and value of materials captured at the material recovery facility

Indirect costs are not applicable to any of these grants

All these programs serve ALL COUNCIL DISTRICTS.

FISCAL INFORMATION / CERTIFICATION:

The Director of Finance certifies that upon approval of the above recommendations, execution of the agreement and adoption of the attached appropriation ordinance, funds will be available in the current operating budget, as appropriated, of the Grants Operating State and Grant Operating Other Funds. This is a reimbursement grant. The Code Compliance Department is responsible for requesting all reimbursements and verifying availability of funds before authorizing expenditures.

The Director of Finance certifies that the Code Compliance Department is responsible for the collection and deposit of funds due to the City. Upon receipt, these funds will be deposited into the appropriate Fund.

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