

- **Board of Directors**
Communications and Legislation Committee

November 18, 2008 Board Meeting

8-6

Subject

Approve Community Partnering Program Sponsorships Awards for fiscal year 2008/09

Description

Metropolitan's Community Partnering Program (CPP) supports and provides funding for educational and community outreach projects and events that relate to Metropolitan's goals. Projects must meet minimum criteria and help promote Metropolitan's mission and key objectives including water reliability, efficiency and quality to receive program sponsorship. These projects also help support Metropolitan's goal to build and enhance partnerships with member agencies, local government, community and environmental organizations.

Each year, Metropolitan receives sponsorship requests for a wide variety of conferences, workshops and water-related community education projects and programs. Typically, applications come from all six counties in Metropolitan's service area and occasionally from outside the service area. The CPP was created in 1999 as a structured process to organize and respond to these requests. Metropolitan staff monitors and tracks sponsored projects through site visits and follow-up discussions.

To help ensure fairness and objectivity and ensure that sponsored activities are consistent with Metropolitan's mission, the CPP includes eligibility requirements and an evaluation and approval process. Eligible applicants include nonprofit community organizations, public agencies, professional associations and educational institutions. To receive funding, projects must demonstrate a link with Metropolitan's regional water quality, supply reliability and resource management objectives. Additionally, funds may be used for specified purposes only, such as building community outreach; obtaining project materials and supplies, printing and other services. Labor costs for any project must total no more than 35 percent of the project cost. The CPP prohibits use of any Metropolitan funds for transportation, equipment, consultants, political or lobbying activities.

Applicants with sponsorship requests exceeding \$3,000 are reviewed by a volunteer panel including representatives from corporate, community, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations. In evaluating applications, the panel considers nine general criteria with four additional criteria for educational projects. This year, projects with an emphasis on water use efficiency and conservation received a higher score. The general criteria are:

- A fresh, unique perspective on a water resource issue
- An immediate or ongoing impact on water resources/outreach issues
- An existing relationship with Metropolitan on other water resources/education/outreach issues
- An existing relationship with other water resource entities such as member agencies, regional, state, or national institutions
- Community involvement and volunteer opportunities
- Audience size and regional benefits
- Whether the application form and requirements have been completed in full

Proposals recommended by the volunteer panel are reviewed by senior management to ensure compatibility with district-wide goals and consistency with CPP guidelines. Following the external and internal review, recommended sponsorship amounts may be adjusted accordingly.

Reviewers confirm that the applicant possesses a positive track record regarding prior sponsorships. Recommended sponsorships are submitted for board consideration and approval. Funding through the CPP

program is awarded for no more than two consecutive (fiscal) years per organization, followed by a one-year hiatus. After the hiatus, an applicant may apply for funding of a new or different program.

Past sponsorships have helped Metropolitan build awareness about the benefits of and need for native and California Friendly® landscaping; focused on the necessity of preventing pollution to local water sources; increased awareness about indoor residential and commercial water use efficiency opportunities; educated residents about the safety of drinking water; and informed community leaders about Metropolitan's water policy priorities.

Ten applicants for sponsorships in the over \$3,000 category have been evaluated and recommended by the external and internal review teams, reviewed by senior management and are recommended for board approval for fiscal year 2008/09. The recommended projects focus on children and/or adult education about water efficient native plant landscaping, water resource stewardship, and water quality/watershed protection. These projects are listed and described in [Attachment 1](#).

Recommendations

In response to the ongoing financial crisis, and in an effort to minimize impacts on Metropolitan, staff recommends funding at 50 percent of the eligible level under the CPP guidelines.

Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11203: Participation in Projects or Programs Serving District Purposes

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Options #1 and #2:

The proposed funding action for the ten applicants is not defined as a project under CEQA because it involves government fiscal activities, which do not involve any commitment to any specific projects, which may result in potentially significant physical impacts on the environment (Section 15378(b)(4) of the State CEQA Guidelines). The proposed action also involves educational or training programs, which involve no physical alteration in the areas affected. As such, the educational activities qualify under a Class 22 Categorical Exemption (Section 15322 of the State CEQA Guidelines). In addition, the signage proposals by the California Native Plant Society, Ecology Center of San Juan Capistrano, and Padre Dam Municipal Water District are categorically exempt under the provisions of CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines. The overall action involves the funding and minor alterations of existing private or public facilities, along with minor modifications in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Such activities would result in negligible or no expansion of use and no possibility of significantly impacting the physical environment. Accordingly, the proposed action also qualifies under Class 1, and Class 4 Categorical Exemptions (Sections 15301 and 15304 of the State CEQA Guidelines).

The CEQA determination is: Determine that the fiscal aspect of the funding action is not subject to CEQA (Section 15378(b)(4) of the State CEQA Guidelines). In addition, the proposed action for the ten proposals qualifies under a Class 22 Categorical Exemption (Section 15322 of the State CEQA Guidelines). Furthermore, overall action for signage proposals by the California Native Plant Society, Ecology Center of San Juan Capistrano, and Padre Dam Municipal Water District also qualifies under Class 1 and Class 4 Categorical Exemptions (Sections 15301 and 15304 of the State CEQA Guidelines).

CEQA determination for Option #3:

None required

Board Options

Option #1

Adopt the CEQA determination and approve the recommended Community Partnering Program Sponsorships for fiscal year 2008/09 at 50 percent of the eligible level under the CPP guidelines, for discretionary community activities as listed in **Attachment 1**.

Fiscal Impact: \$89,084 (from budgeted Community Partnering Program funds), if all ten recommended sponsorships are approved

Business Analysis: These sponsorships for water resources education programs and conferences support Metropolitan’s core public education and conservation mission. These community programs and projects are a cost-effective way to increase consumer and student knowledge of new and existing water conservation and watershed protection efforts. By supporting existing environmental education programs, the Community Partnering Program takes advantage of existing economies of scale and established educational outreach efforts.

Option #2

Adopt the CEQA determination and approve the recommended Community Partnering Program Sponsorships for fiscal year 2008/09 at the full eligible level under the CPP guidelines, for discretionary community activities as listed in **Attachment 1**.

Fiscal Impact: \$185,543 (from budgeted Community Partnering Program funds) if all ten recommended sponsorships are approved

Business Analysis: Full support of ten sponsorships at the eligible level under the Community Partnering Program guidelines, for community programs as described above

Option #3


Reject all of the Community Partnering Program Sponsorships for fiscal year 2008/09.

Fiscal Impact: None

Business Analysis: Failure to sponsor any of these projects submitted within the guidelines of the Community Partnering Program could impact Metropolitan’s community outreach efforts.

Staff Recommendation

Option #1



Linda Waade
Deputy General Manager, External Affairs

11/12/2008

Date



Jeffrey Lightlinger
General Manager

11/12/2008

Date

Attachment 1 – Community Partnering Program Sponsorships for fiscal year 2008/09

**Community Partnering Program Sponsorships
for fiscal year 2008/09
Over \$3,000 Sponsorships**

Applicant	Member Agency	Proposal Description	Program Value	Funding Request	Eligible for Funding	Recommended Partial Funding (Fifty Percent)
Amigos del los Rios	Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD Letter of Support	Water conservation and native plant education program for students of El Monte City School and Mountain View School districts	Supports water conservation education in Los Angeles County	\$ 22,200.00	\$ 22,200.00	\$ 11,100.00
California Native Plant Society	San Diego County Water Authority Letter of Support	Phase II: California Friendly® native plant garden storyboards and signage in Pt. Loma Native Plant Garden; installation by local Boy Scout Eagle Scout projects	Supports water conservation education and the California Friendly® program	6,500.00	6,500.00	3,250.00
City of El Segundo	West Basin Municipal Water District Letter of Support	Support citywide water conservation program through light pole and street banner marketing program	Supports MWD's amd member agency water conservation programs	53,087.00	53,087.00	10,000.00*
Community Partners	Los Angeles Department of Water & Power	Experiential watershed education learning activities and presentation at 160 elementary and middle-school classes impacting 4,800 students	Supports watershed education	20,000.00	20,000.00	10,000.00

***Plus in-kind design and illustration**

**Community Partnering Program FY 2008/09
Over \$3,000 Sponsorships**

Applicant	Member Agency	Proposal Description	Program Value	Funding Request	Eligible for Funding	Recommended Partial Funding (Fifty Percent)
Ecology Center of San Juan Capistrano	Municipal Water District of Orange County Letter of Support	12 native plant garden signage storyboards on water conservation and California Friendly® native plants	Supports the California Friendly® campaign	20,000.00	20,000.00	10,000.00
Heal the Bay	City of Santa Monica and West Basin MWD Letters of Support	Print the Aqua Explorer Guide in English and Spanish; 24-page guide covers: watershed stewardship, water cycle, urban runoff and storm drain system through illustrations, puzzles and activities	Supports member agency efforts toward water resources education and conservation	36,000.00	36,000.00	18,000.00
Padre Dam Municipal Water District	San Diego County Water Authority Letter of Support	13 trail storyboards in the Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve address water recycling and water conservation issues; 6,380 K-8 students visited last year	Supports a regional watershed education program in San Diego County	7,443.00	7,443.00	3,721.50
Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Garden	Three Valleys MWD Letter of Support	Bring California Home--Conserving Water with Native Plants series of residential workshops	Supports member agency water conservation efforts	48,325.00	25,711.00**	12,855.50

**** CPP criteria excludes funds for native plants and excessive labor cost**

**Community Partnering Program Sponsorships
for fiscal year 2008/09
Over \$3,000 Sponsorships**

Applicant	Member Agency	Proposal Description	Program Value	Funding Request	Eligible for Funding	Recommended Partial Funding (Fifty Percent)
Surfrider Foundation Newport Beach Chapter	Municipal Water District of Orange County Letter of Support	Teach & Test Water Quality Testing program at seven Orange County high schools for marine biology, biology and chemistry classes water quality testing supplies	Supports member agency efforts toward water resources education and conservation	9,513.00	9,513.00	4,756.50
Surfrider Foundation Santa Monica Chapter	Los Angeles Department of Water & Power Letter of Support	Teach & Test Water Quality Testing program at Santa Monica High School for marine biology classes water quality testing supplies	Supports member agency efforts toward water resources education and conservation	10,800.00	10,800.00	5,400.00
			TOTALS	\$ 233,868.00	\$ 185,543.00	\$89,083.50