

TO: City Council

FROM: Community Funding Review Committee

DATE: December 15, 2015

**SUBJECT: FY 2015-16 Community Enhancement Grant Award
Recommendations**

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approve Community Enhancement Grants totaling \$33,600, and authorize the City Manager to execute agreements with grantees.
2. Authorize expenditure of available funds of \$33,600 from A/C #631-8420-682-5920 (NC0104, Enhancement Fund/Solid Waste Enhancement Grants).

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

No Additional Funding Requested. \$33,600 is available in the adopted FY 2015-16 Solid Waste Fund Budget.

BACKGROUND:

The Community Enhancement Grant program was established in June 1998 to help fund community projects such as freeway ramp litter removal, neighborhood clean-up, and community enhancement projects, and has awarded approximately \$675,000 since its inception. The grants are funded by interest earnings from the Community Enhancement Fund.

The Program is available to local nonprofit community and school groups and is promoted in September and October through the City's "GoGreen" website, social media, blog and e-newsletter. The Program provides a minimum grant award of \$2,000 and a maximum award of \$5,000 per organization, per year. City Council appointed a Community Funding Review Committee to evaluate grant proposals and make award recommendations. Grant award guidelines and evaluation criteria include:

1. Prior funding: groups that did not receive funding in the past are given a higher score in this category;
2. Innovation: Project's potential for serving as a model for future projects;
3. Environmental Benefit: the more significant and lasting benefit, the higher the score in this category;
4. Water Conservation: Priority was given to groups that developed and implemented a conservation project or program.

Last year, City Council awarded 11 Community Enhancement Grants totaling \$45,000. Projects included:

1. Creation of a student sustainable farm at Ladera Elementary School, including ecological restoration of the land, waste reduction, composting, recycling and community beautification.
2. Non-native, invasive plant species removal and trail work by the Conejo Open Space Foundation.
3. Creation of garden beds at Temple Etz Chaim, with crops distributed to the homeless.
4. Newbury Park High School student newspaper staff created reusable tote bags out of repurposed t-shirts and distributed to the community for free.
5. Creation of an outdoor classroom and compost area for home schooled teens at the Teen Center.
6. Environmental drought tolerant landscaping in front of Art Trek, Inc.

See Attachment #1 for a listing of previous grant awardees for the past five years.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

This year, the City received seven grant submittals requesting a total of \$33,600. The Community Funding Review Committee met in November to review, score, and rank the grant applications.

The Committee recommends awarding grants to all seven applicants as shown in Attachment #2. Grant funding available is \$45,000. The committee reviewed the seven grant proposals on a pass/fail system, based on established criteria. Since adequate funding was available, all seven projects were approved and thus recommended to receive their full funding request.

2015-2016 Community Enhancement Grant Award Recommendations

#	Organization	Amount Requested	Recommended Award	Project Summary
1	Conejo Valley Botanic Garden	\$5,000	\$5,000	Drought Resistant Landscaping
2	California Lutheran University – SEEd Project	\$5,000	\$5,000	Food Preparation waste diversion to worm composting system
3	Conejo Open Space Foundation	\$3,600	\$3,600	Trail Work Events/Habitat Restoration
4	City Corps of the Central Coast	\$5,000	\$5,000	Rehabilitate butterfly garden, upgrade edible garden area
5	Temple Etz Chaim	\$5,000	\$5,000	Garden bed and modify slope

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6	Thousand Oaks Girls Softball Association	\$5,000	\$5,000	Trash and recycle bins near dugout fields
7	Conejo Elementary School	\$5,000	\$5,000	Grass removal and tree/plant installation
	TOTAL:	\$33,600	\$33,600	

If approved by City Council, grantees will enter into agreements with the City and will have until October 15, 2016 to complete their project. Grantees receive half of the grant award after execution of the contract, and the balance upon receipt of a final project report, unless the City approves other payment arrangements.

COUNCIL GOAL COMPLIANCE:**Meets City Council Goals B and E:**

- B. Operate City government in a fiscally and managerially responsible and prudent manner to ensure that the City of Thousand Oaks remains one of California's most desirable places to live, work, visit, recreate, and raise a family.
- E. Provide and enhance essential infrastructure to ensure that the goals and policies of the Thousand Oaks General Plan are carried out and the City retains its role and reputation as a leader in protecting the environment and preserving limited natural resources.

PREPARED BY: Margaret Ambrose, Community Funding Review
Committee Chair
Vanessa Pellegrino, Assistant Analyst

Attachments:

- Attachment #1 – 5-year Grant Award Summary
- Attachment #2 – Grant Award Recommendations