



Date: April 5, 2017

To: Patrick H. West, City Manager *P.H. West*

From: Amy J. Bodek, Director of Development Services *A. Bodek*

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Implementation of the Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance – Status Update**

Since 1993, the State of California has mandated that local jurisdictions comply with the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO), a document authored by the Department of Water Resources, which promotes the conservation and efficient use of water in public and private landscape projects. The most recent update of the MWELO resulted from Executive Order B-29-15, which was issued by Governor Brown in April 2015. This update specifically regulates the budgeting and allocation of water used for the irrigation of landscape projects, as well as the design of new irrigation systems. Further, this update reduces the size of new landscape projects subject to MWELO from 2,500 square feet to 500 square feet, and eliminates the City's current MWELO exemption for homeowner-provided and/or homeowner-hired residential landscape projects less than 5,000 square feet. The update also introduces a streamlined prescriptive compliance option for new and rehabilitated landscape areas less than 2,500 square feet, which reduces the complexity and costs associated with smaller landscape projects now subject to the Ordinance. Staff anticipates a significant percentage of customers with residential projects and smaller commercial projects in Long Beach will choose this option.

The updated MWELO Ordinance, adopted by the City Council in conjunction with adoption of the triennial Building Code update in November 2016, allocates approximately 20 percent less water from the prior MWELO adopted by the City Council in 2010, with modifications. It is anticipated the reduced water allowance will result in a Citywide increase in the usage of drought-tolerant plants and the installation of more water-efficient irrigation systems.

The Department of Development Services staff has targeted early April 2017 for implementation of the landscape permit requirement for the City's MWELO. A number of outreach and implementation efforts will be undertaken, including branding these new water-saving efforts using the term *Smartscape*. Additional outreach efforts will include, but are not limited to:

- Producing counter cards to be displayed publicly at the Development Permit Counter, libraries, and City information counters (see attached).
- Mail-out of counter cards, in the form of flyers or handouts, to landscape architects, contractors, and general architects, as well as to local hardware stores and nurseries.

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- Posting information and a comprehensive set of resources to guide and assist property owners, landscapers, and residents on the Development Services website (www.lbds.info/lbsmartscape).
- Broadcasting a public service announcement (PSA) and a “How-To” video on the LBTV station.
- Informing the public of the new law and requirements through a social media campaign on the Development Services Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube pages.
- Collaborating with the Long Beach Water Department on various public awareness efforts.

Additionally, staff will be working with a local consultant, who is experienced in administering this program in other cities, to assist staff with program rollout. The consultant will train the permit and inspection staff who will be involved in the permit issuance and inspection functions for this program when they are brought on board in the coming months.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call Linda Tatum, Planning Bureau Manager, at (562) 570-6261.

AJB:LT:AR

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ATTACHMENT

CC: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR
TOM MODICA, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
ANITRA DEMPSEY, INTERIM DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
REBECCA JIMENEZ, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER
OSCAR W. ORCI, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
LINDA F. TATUM, PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER
CHRIS GARNER, GENERAL MANAGER, WATER DEPARTMENT

A photograph of a well-maintained garden. A gravel path leads through various plants, including large agave-like plants and a tree with bright yellow flowers. A pergola structure is visible on the right side. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. A dark banner with white text is overlaid at the bottom.

New landscaping projects over 500 square feet now require a permit.

SMARTSCAPE

SENSIBLE • ECONOMICAL • BEAUTIFUL



Thinking about a new landscape project?

Starting April 3, 2017, Executive Order B-29, issued by the State of California, will be implemented locally in the City of Long Beach. From that date on, new landscape projects consisting of more than 500 square feet and relandscaping projects consisting of more than 2,500 square feet must meet water efficiency design standards requiring the issuance of a permit and applicable fees.

There's good news!

To help you with your project, the City of Long Beach has streamlined the permit process for all applicants. Our knowledgeable and friendly staff is available to help you navigate the application process and understand the plan requirements to help ensure both residents and businesses comply. We look forward to working together to make Long Beach a more water-wise and beautiful city.

For more information on the City's new landscaping regulations, call (562) 570-6194 or visit www.lbds.info/lbsmartscape.



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